
A Synthetic Family's Haggadah Good to the last drop

Brian Sniffen

Ariel Segall*

April 19, 2008

For thousands of years the people of Israel have not forgotten that their ancestors were slaves in the land of Egypt. The passage from slavery into freedom became the chief event of Israelite history. Classical Hebrew writings lay stress on the fact that the external liberation was not an end in itself but the necessary precondition for the receiving of the Law on Mount Sinai—the sublime climax of Israel's liberation which took place thirty-two centuries ago.

In every generation let each one feel as if he or she came forth out of Egypt. This tenet strove to make the Exodus from slavery into freedom a living personal experience. It was in this spirit that the story of the liberation was told and handed down from generation to generation, each generation in turn growing up in the knowledge that it would have the responsibility to tell the story to the next one.

On Hebrew

Many of the prayers and songs in the Haggadah are in the Hebrew language. Out of consideration to those who don't speak Hebrew—or who can make the sounds but do not understand the words—these are provided in several formats. Where possible, they are provided in Hebrew characters with vowel marks. Right now, very little is in Hebrew letters: X̄q̄l̄t̄ĒX can typeset them, but Brian's no good at typing them¹. So we just have GIFs embedded. Even if you don't understand the language, try to follow along! It's written right to left, roughly one character per syllable. Vowels are the marks under the letters.

They are also provided in transliteration into Roman characters. Early transliterations are phonetic (e.g., ve-tzi-va-nu), but later transliterations will tend towards the traditional (e.g., v'tzi-vanu). As to be expected of a ritual, many phrases are repeated. You'll get used to unusual consonant pairs over the evening.

Everything's also provided in English translation. It is suggested that the prayers to be read in unison be said twice: once in Hebrew so God can understand, and once in English so the rest of us can.

Here's a quick cheat-sheet of words and roots:

*With significant text from Robert Parnes, Amy Scheinerman, and Maxwell House. Kaddish from Tracey Rich of JewFAQ.org.

¹Comments on this year's new Hebrew typesetting are most welcome. Only the Aramaic call to Pesach in section 7 uses the old embedded images.

Baruch (ברוך) blessed

Adonai (written יי) Lord

Eloheinu (אלהינו) God

mitzv (as in מצוות, b'mitzvo-tav)law, joyous obligation²

On Leaders

A traditional Seder involves many prayers and readings designed for a family atmosphere. Some of these are allocated by tradition to the father, mother, or child. At a table of peers, these don't quite apply.

Passages below have been marked with a suggested reader: "Leader", "Participant", or "All Together". "Leader" usually starts off a section, and recites technically difficult passages or those where synchronization is important. As many sections as possible have been reallocated to "Participant": go around the table, each person reading one section aloud.

By all means appoint an individual "Mother," "Father," and "Child" before the meal. If you are at a table where all are children together, or with no clear children, then treat "Child" as "Participant" and rotate there as well.

On this publication

This is an amateur publication. It's greatly in need of improvement. Please take advantage of the margins to make notes. Hand your copy back in later, and point out any improvements you can make. Also, ask questions! This is a ritual of celebration, but it is also a ritual of questions: from the faithful to their history, from guests to hosts, from the untutored to the wise, and from children to parents.

Contents

Setup	4
⌘ Kadesh: Sanctification of the Day	4
⌘.1 Lighting the Festival Candles	4
⌘.2 The First Cup: The Cup of Sanctification	5
⌘ Ur-Hatz: Washing the Hands	6
⌘ Karpas: Rebirth and Renewal	6
⌘ Yachatz: A Bond Formed by Sharing	8

²This is a very complex concept to the Hebrews. Ask somebody to explain it to you!

ה	Maggid: The Story of the Exodus	9
ה.1	Mah Nishtanah: Why is this night different?	9
ה.2	Arba Banim: The Four Children	9
ה.3	Avadim Hayinu: We were slaves to Pharaoh...	11
ה.4	Mi-techilah ovdei: beginning with degradation	12
ה.5	Baruch shomeir	13
ה.6	Arami oveid avi: My father was a wandering Aramean	13
ה.7	Makot <i>Mitzrayim</i> : the Plagues of Egypt	15
ה.8	Dayenu: it would have been enough	16
ה.9	Pesach, matzah, maror	18
ה.10	B'chol dor ve-dor: in every generation	20
ה.11	Le-fi-chach: let us rejoice	20
ה.12	Hallel: psalm 114	21
ה.13	The Second Cup: the cup of Deliverance	21
ו	Rochtzah: Washing our Hands	21
ז	Motzi: A Blessing for Bread	22
ח	Matzah: A Special Blessing for Matzah	22
ט	Maror: A Blessing for the Bitter Herbs	22
י	Koreich: Continuity with Past Tradition	23
יא	Shulchan Oreich: The Meal is Served	24
יב	Tzafun: The Afikomen is Found and Eaten	24
יג	Bareich: Thanks for Divine Sustenance	25
יג.1	The Third Cup: the Cup of Redemption	25
יג.2	Kos Eliyahu: the Cup of Elijah	26
יג.3	Kaddish: a prayer of praise and peace	32
יד	Hallel: Praise	33
יד.1	Psalm 117	33
יד.2	The Great Hallel: Psalm 136	33
יד.3	Nishmat: a hymn as old as the Talmud	34
טו	Nirtzah: Conclusion	34
טו.1	The Fourth Cup: the Cup of Acceptance	34
טו.2	Kerovah: from a medieval liturgical poem	35

Setup

Leader: We begin with a few pieces of setup. One is explained later. One you will have the opportunity to question later.

Set a cup for Elijah. Pour some wine into it.

Scour the house for chametz: any starchy product that isn't on the explicitly approved list. It's advised to bring a candle so you can see the crumbs, and a feather to sweep them.

⌘ Kadesh: Sanctification of the Day

Leader: Welcome to our Passover Seder. Together with Jews everywhere, we recount tonight a story told every year for the last 3000 years; a story about the community of Israel eternally linked with humanity's divine passion for justice and liberty. We remember the event that became the great symbol of liberation—the Exodus from *Mitzrayim*, the “narrow” of the biblical land of Egypt. Tonight we remember our ancestors. We vow that we will not allow their stories, their experiences, their wisdom to be taken from us. It is our legacy and we will study it and teach it to our friends and to our children. For it is written:

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

Leader: We assemble in fulfillment of the *mitzvah*:

All Together: Remember the day on which you went forth from *Mitzrayim*, from the house of bondage, and how Adonai freed you with a mighty hand.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question.

⌘.1 Lighting the Festival Candles

Leader: Our Seder starts with the lighting of two candles accompanied by a blessing. It is traditionally done by the mother of the house.

The candles are lit as the blessing is recited.

Mother: Ba-ruch A-ta A-do-nai E-lo-hay-nu me-lech ha-o-lam a-sheer ki-de-sha-nu be-mitz-vo-tav ve-tzi-va-nu le-had-lik ner shel yom tov.

Mother: Blessed are You, Lord our God, ruler of the universe, who makes us holy with commandments and instructs us to light the festival lights.

All Together: In praising God we say that all life is sacred. In kindling festive lights, we preserve life's sanctity. With every holy light we kindle, the world is brightened to a higher harmony. We praise You, Adonai, majestic Sovereign of all Life, Who hallows our lives with commandments and bids us kindle festive holy light.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question. A prayer for laws!

8.2 The First Cup: The Cup of Sanctification

Pour the first cup of wine for each participant.

Leader: Tonight we will drink four cups of wine. Our tradition abounds with explanations of this custom.

Next Participant: It has been said that the four cups represent the four corners of the universe, for we seek freedom everywhere.

Next Participant: It has been said that they symbolize the four seasons of the year, for freedom must be guarded at all times.

Next Participant: It has been said that the four cups represent the four ancient empires³ that tyrannized Israel and have since passed away, for tyranny will pass away once and for all in the Kingdom of God.

Next Participant: It is also said that the four cups are the four promises of God to His people. With each cup, we recall one of these promises.

Take up the cup.

All Together: "I will free you from the forced labor of the Egyptians."

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

All Together: Ba-ruch a-ta A-do-nai E-lo-hay-nu me-lech ha-o-lam bo-ray pri ha-ga-fen.

Blessed are you, Lord our God, ruler of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question. A prayer for wine!

Next Participant: We praise You, Adonai, Sovereign of Life! You have called us for service from among the peoples, and have hallowed our lives with commandments. In love You have given us festivals for rejoicing, seasons of celebration, this Festival of Matzot, the time of our freedom, a day of sacred assembly commemorating the Exodus from *Mitzrayim*. Praiséd are You, who gave us this joyful heritage and who sanctifies the people of Israel, and the festival days.

Next Participant: We have thanked Adonai for the commandments which add holiness to life, for the wine which adds joy to life, and for the festivals which add beauty to life. Now let us thank Adonai for the wonder of life itself.

³Rome, Babylon, Egypt, Persia?

All Together:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
שֶׁהַחַיִּים וְקִיּוּמָנוּ וְהַגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמַּן הַזֶּה.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, she-heh-che-yanu, v'ki-y'manu,
v'higi-anu lazman hazeh.

We praise You, Adonai, Sovereign of Life, for giving us life, and keeping us alive, so
we may celebrate this season of joy.

All drink the first cup of wine. If possible, recline to the left while drinking.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question.

ב Ur-Hatz: Washing the Hands

Leader: Traditionally, the high priests in the Temple washed their hands before all
holy duties. We will wash our hands now to help us feel that holiness, but since we
will not be eating just yet, we won't recite the hand-washing blessing.

Everyone goes to wash hands.

ג Karpas: Rebirth and Renewal

Leader: Many Jewish holidays have their origins in the rhythms of the harvest and
seasonal changes.

Next Participant: People throughout the world celebrate similar festivals at roughly
the same time throughout the year. Like all people, our people in ancient, pastoral
times celebrated the liberation of the earth itself from wintry darkness, and rejoiced
in the yearly rebirth of nature. In the spring of the year, the season of rebirth and
renewal, on the festival Pesach, we read from the Song of Songs.

Next Participant: Come, my beloved, my lovely one, come.

Behold, winter is past, the rains are over and gone.

Flowers appear on the earth.

The season for singing has come,

and the song of the turtledove is heard in our land.

The fig tree is forming its first green figs

and the blossoming vines smell oh so grand.

Come then, my beloved, my lovely one, come.

Next Participant: Come, my beloved, let us go to the fields.

We'll spend the night in the village,
and in early morn we'll visit the vineyards.
We'll see if the grapes have blossomed,
if the pomegranate trees are in flower.
For then shall I give you the gift of my love.

All Together: O women of Jerusalem,
Swear by the wild field doe
That you will not disturb us
Till we fulfill our love.

Next Participant: The Midrash⁴ teaches that Jewish women played a major role in the Exodus, by keeping alive the spirits of their husbands, preventing them from becoming depressed under the burden of slavery and from giving up in despair.

Next Participant: They accomplished this by paying special attention to their appearance, and charming and enticing their husbands, thus keeping their marriages and the Jewish Family alive, under extremely difficult circumstances. They did this by using mirrors made of copper.

Next Participant: Later, when donations were requested for the Construction of the Tabernacle, the women donated these mirrors for use in the copper elements of the Sanctuary. Their acceptance for this purpose demonstrates the important principle that in Judaism, feminine beauty serves a great role, (primarily) within the holy and modest context of marriage.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question.

Next Participant: We dip karpas, greens, symbol of the renewal of the earth at spring-time, into salt water, symbol of the bitter tears shed by the slaves in *Mitzrayim*. This, the first dipping of the Seder, evokes the imagery of the birth of the Jewish people at the time of the Exodus.

All Together:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
בוֹרֵא פְּרִי הָאָדָמָה.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-adamah.
We praise You, Adonai, Sovereign of Life, Who creates the fruit of the earth.

Each person takes some non-maror greens, dips them in salt water, and eats them.

Next Participant: May we never be so comfortable that we become complacent, forgetting the pain of others.

⁴commentaries on the law

7 Yachatz: A Bond Formed by Sharing

Leader: There are three matzot under the cloth on the matzah plate. We take the middle matzah and break it in half. The smaller piece is replaced between the other two matzot. The larger piece is wrapped and set aside as the afikomen⁵. Later we will share it as a symbol of the Paschal lamb offering, which was shared during this service at the Temple in Jerusalem. Among people everywhere, sharing of bread forms a bond of fellowship.

Break the middle matzah and return half⁶.

Next Participant: For the sake of our redemption we say together the ancient words which join us with our own people and with all who are in need, with the wrongly imprisoned and the homeless. For our redemption is bound up with the deliverance from bondage of people everywhere. Now let us repeat, in ancient Aramaic, the call to Pesach.

All Together:

הָא לַחֲמַא עֲנִיא דִּי אֲכָלוּ אַבְהַתְנָא בְּאַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם:

Ha lachma anya dee a-cha-lu a-va-ha-sa-na b'ara d'mitzrayim.

This is the bread of affliction, the poor bread our ancestors ate as slaves in the land of *Mitzrayim*.

All Together:

כָּל-דִּצְרִיחַ יִתֵּי וְיִכְלֵי. כָּל-דִּצְרִיחַ יִתֵּי וְיִפְסַח:

Kol dichfin yay-say v'yaychul; kol ditzrich yay-say v'yifsach.

Let all who are hungry come and eat. Let all who are needy share the hope of this Passover celebration.

All Together:

הַשְּׁתָּא חָכָא. לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בְּאַרְעָא דְּיִשְׂרָאֵל:

Ha-shata hacha, l'shana ha-ba'ah b'ara d'Yisrael.

This year we are here. Next year may we be in the land of Israel.

All Together:

הַשְּׁתָּא עֲבָדֵי. לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בְּנֵי חוֹרִין:

Ha-shata avday, l'shanah ha-ba'ah b'nay chorin.

This year we are all still in bonds. Next year may all be free.

⁵A word of Greek origin meaning "dessert"

⁶This half will be vanishing at some point during the meal, to be ransomed back.

7 Maggid: The Story of the Exodus

Leader: Questioning is a sign of freedom, proof that we are free to investigate, to analyze, to satisfy our intellectual curiosity.

Even more than during the rest of the ritual, feel free here to ask further questions.

Next Participant: The Talmud states that anyone can ask questions; the youngest, the oldest, even a scholar at the table of scholars.

Next Participant: Because we encourage our children to question and to join in our observance, now let one of them ask the Four Questions, about the differences that mark this night.

7.1 Mah Nishtanah: Why is this night different?

Child:

מַה נִּשְׁתַּנָּה הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה מִכָּל הַלַּיְלוֹת?

Mah nishtanah ha-lailah ha-zeh mi-kol ha-laylot?

Why is this night different from all the other nights?

Child: On all other nights, we eat either leavened bread or matzah; why, on this night—only matzah?

Child: On all other nights, we eat all kinds of herbs; why, on this night, do we especially eat bitter herbs?

Child: On all other nights, we do not dip herbs at all; why, on this night, do we dip them twice⁷?

Child: On all other nights, we eat in an ordinary manner; why, tonight, do we dine with special ceremony?

7.2 Arba Banim: The Four Children

Next Participant: Four times the Torah bids us tell our children about the Exodus from Egypt. Four times the Torah repeats: “And you shall tell your child on that day...” From this our tradition infers that there are four kinds of children. To each we respond in a different manner, according to the question, the situation, and the need. The wise child questions:

⁷Yes, there'll be another dip coming later

Child: “What are the precepts, laws, and observances which Adonai our God commanded us?”

Next Participant: In response to this child we explain the observances of the Passover thoroughly, the very last one of which is: After the Passover Seder, we do not turn to other kinds of entertainment. We talk with this child about the nature of freedom and justice and about the need to act to transform the world.

All Together: It is the wise who want to know the service it is theirs to do.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question.

Next Participant: The wicked⁸ child questions:

Child: “What does this Seder mean to you?”

Next Participant: Notice that this child says “*to you*” as would a person who does not feel personally a part of the Jewish people. By being distant from us this child denies redemption by rejecting the essential tenet of our faith: the unity of Adonai our God and the community of Israel. To this child we say: Join us tonight. Be fully here. Listen closely. Be with us, become part of us. Then you will know what the Seder means to us.

All Together: It is the scornful who withdraw the self from anything beyond the self; and so, from the joy of redemption.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question.

Next Participant: When the simple child questions:

Child: “Mah zot, what is this?”

Next Participant: then we say, “We are remembering a time long ago in another land when we were forced to work for other people as slaves. With a mighty arm Adonai our God made us a free people and we are celebrating our freedom.” Growing older, learning more about our people, and observing the Seder year by year, this child too will come to love Pesach and to appreciate its beauty and its message.

All Together: To those of open simplicity, give a straightforward answer; for “The Torah of God makes wise the simple.”

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question.

Next Participant: And with the child who doesn’t think to question, we must take the initiative. With patience and tenderness we say: This wondrous evening happens in the spring of every year, so we may remember how out of death and sorrow and slavery come life and joy and freedom. To remember the sorrow we eat bitter herbs; to remember the joy we drink sweet wine.

All Together: With one who has not started to inquire, you must begin to awaken the mind.

⁸Some texts are much harsher to this child. We’re good enlightened twentieth-century types, though.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question.

Next Participant: As in the pages of our histories, so too in the events of our time, in the encounters of our daily lives, these figures, the wise, the scornful, the simple, the innocent, reappear in various guises. To this day, their questions must be pondered and answers sought anew, the story given life and meaning.

7.3 Avadim Hayinu: We were slaves to Pharaoh...

Leader: The Haggadah sets forth two essential themes:

Next Participant: First: Avadim hayinu l'Pharaoh b'mitzrayim. We, not just our ancestors, were slaves to Pharaoh in *Mitzrayim*, but Adonai our God brought us out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. If the Holy One had not redeemed us, we and our descendants would still be Pharaoh's slaves.

Next Participant: Second: Even if all of us were wise, all of us people of understanding, all of us learned in Torah, it is still incumbent upon us to tell the story of the Exodus. The more we search deeply into its meaning and the more we expand upon its message of freedom, the more praiseworthy are we.

Next Participant: As an example of how important is the search for meaning even in the midst of great adversity, the story is told that long ago, during the first century, five great scholars sat around the Seder table at B'nai Berak one Passover eve and read the words of the Haggadah, deliberating over their meaning. The Romans had destroyed the Temple; the people were plotting their struggle for freedom. And although it was in violation of Roman decree to study or to teach, there they sat—these great scholars—unmindful of the hours that were flying by. The meeting broke up only when one of their students came and said to them, “Our teachers, the time has already come to recite the Sh'ma of the morning service.”

All Together: *Our* Redemption is not yet complete.

Next Participant: The struggle for freedom, for the elusive rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of justice, is a constant one. In every age, some new freedom is won and established, adding to the advancement of human happiness and security. Yet each age creates more Pharaohs and more enslavements, requiring new liberations.

Next Participant: The victory over the first Pharaoh in Egypt was but the beginning, a foreshadowing of all the emancipations that were to follow, and which will yet follow in the days to come. *Mitzrayim* means the narrow place—the place that squeezes the life out of a human soul and body. We are all still enslaved in *Mitzrayim*, because we are all still struggling to be free.

Next Participant: We are duty bound to retell and expand upon the story of our Exodus from *Mitzrayim* to remind us to work for the time when all the Pharaohs of the world will be vanquished, when right will conquer might, when God alone will rule, and all peoples will enjoy peace and freedom.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question.

7.4 Mi-techilah ovdei: beginning with degradation

All Together: Without remembrance there is no redemption.

Next Participant: In the beginning our ancestors worshiped idols, but then Adonai our God called us to holy service. In the city of Ur, our patriarch Abram was the first to understand that God is One, the Eternal. Abram rebelled against the senseless practice of bowing down to the work of one's own hands.

Next Participant: To worship God in freedom, Abram had to flee the land of idolaters and go to the land of Canaan, where he would become the founder of "a great nation." Abram and his wife, Sarai, obeyed God's command and journeyed to Canaan. There God blessed them and their family. Abram and Sarai became Abraham and Sarah. Their son was Isaac, who married Rebecca. Their grandson was Jacob; and it was Jacob and his family who went down to Egypt.

Next Participant: God promised Abraham protection, children, and a mighty nation. God is still delivering on that promise.

Next Participant: God's promise was passed on to Isaac. Isaac meant to pass the promise on to his son Esau. God helped Isaac's more cunning son Jacob steal that inheritance through hard dealing and trickery.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question. Why did God choose Jacob?

Next Participant: Then Jacob went to learn from Laban, whose cunning surpassed his own. Laban tricked Jacob out of 14 years of labor, but God helped Jacob trick Laban out of most of his wealth and both of his daughters.

Next Participant: Yisra-el means literally "one who struggles with God." One night after Jacob had wrestled with a mysterious stranger until daybreak, he had another name given to him, the name Yisra-el—Israel. His descendants were called "The children of Israel."

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question. Why did God wrestle Jacob? How did Jacob pin him?

Next Participant: Then God helped Jacob trick Esau one more time, and set up a family of two feuding wives, instilling competition and backstabbing among his sons. He played favorites, but most of his sons were sure his favorite was Joseph.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question. Why do we enshrine and celebrate such a weirdly dysfunctional family?

7.5 Baruch shomeir

Next Participant: We praise the Eternal who keeps faith with the children of Israel. Adonai's promise of Redemption in ancient days sustains us now. As we read in the Torah: "Know this for certain, that your descendants will be strangers in a strange land, and be enslaved and oppressed for four hundred years. But know with equal certainty that in the end I shall bring judgment on the oppressors, and your offspring will go forth with great prosperity."

All fill and raise their cups of wine.

All Together: It is this promise which has sustained our ancestors and sustains us. For neither once, nor twice, nor three times was our destruction planned; in every generation they rise against us to destroy us, and in every generation a Divine Power delivers us from their hands into freedom.

In memory for those lost, all replace their cups untasted.

7.6 Arami oveid avi:

My father was a wandering Aramean

Leader: The sacred history of our people does not start with the tales of great heroes, nor of the righteous founding fathers, but with humble beginnings.

Next Participant: Our story begins with degradation and rises to dignity.

Next Participant: Our story moves from slavery toward freedom.

Next Participant: Our story opens with idolatry and advances toward the unity of God.

Next Participant: We began not with a heroic chapter but a bleak one. Not only have we known the degradation of physical bondage and spiritual servitude, but we have also been subjected to social degradation. For in the eyes of others we were nothing but a subject people—Arameans.

All Together: My father was a wandering Aramean. He went down to Egypt with a small family and sojourned there, and there became a great and populous nation.

Next Participant: Isaac's son Jacob had many sons, but his favorite was Joseph, who was sold by his jealous brothers to a caravan, and they brought Joseph to Egypt. Joseph rose to become the Pharaoh's minister over all Egypt. He prepared storehouses with grain in anticipation of the great famine.

Next Participant: When the drought and famine fell on all the region, Joseph's brothers came to Egypt to buy food. He recognized them, and had them bring Jacob and Leah and all their families to Egypt. There the Israelites lived and prospered and multiplied.

Next Participant: After Joseph died and all his brothers and all that generation, a new king arose over Egypt who did not remember Joseph. And he said to his people, “Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we. Let us, then, deal shrewdly with them, lest they become more powerful, and in the event of war, join our enemies in fighting against us and gain control over the region.”

Next Participant: So they set taskmasters over us with forced labor and made us build garrison cities for Pharaoh; Pithom and Raamses. The Egyptians embittered our lives with harsh labor at mortar and brick and in all sorts of work in the fields. But the more we were oppressed, the more we increased and spread out, so that the Egyptians came to despise and dread the Israelites. Pharaoh charged those who served as midwives⁹ among our people, saying, “Every boy that is born shall be thrown in the Nile, but let every girl live.” We cried out to Adonai, the God of our ancestors, and Adonai heeded our plight, our misery, and our oppression.

Next Participant: Adonai heard our moaning, and remembered the covenant that was made with Abraham and Sarah, with Isaac and Rebekah, with Jacob, Leah and Rachel, with Bilhah and Zilpah and with every member of the House of Israel, even the generations waiting to be born. And Adonai said, “I will go through the land of Egypt... and I will mete out justice against all the gods of Egypt.” Adonai called to Moses, charging him to appear before Pharaoh and demand that the people be released. But Pharaoh was stubborn; he would not heed the word of God. Nine times Moses went to Pharaoh to convince him of the supreme power of the Almighty. Nine times Pharaoh denied the Almighty and placed his trust in his own powers and his own gods. In the face of all pleas and portents, he refused to free the Israelites.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question. There ought to be a copy of Exodus nearby, for reference and exposition. If there’s curiosity and time, read the whole thing—or at least chapters 1–24.

Next Participant: Many perished and the suffering was great. Pharaoh, nonetheless, remained obstinate; he would not yield. Finally when Adonai visited the tenth plague upon them, the death of first-born sons of Egyptians, a great cry went up throughout Egypt, and Pharaoh ordered Moses to take his people out of the land. And so Adonai brought us out of Egypt by a mighty hand, by an outstretched arm and awesome power, and by signs and portents; not through a messenger, not through any intermediary or any supernatural being, but the Holy One, alone, in solitary glory.¹⁰

⁹But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive. And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men children alive? And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them. Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty.

¹⁰Commenting on the words of Jethro, “For in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them,” the Talmud says: “The Egyptians were cooked in the pot in which they cooked others,” that is, the punishment was made to correspond to their crime. This refers to Pharaoh’s edict to the effect that all Jewish infants were to be cast into the Nile, the Egyptians being punished by the plague that turned the water of the Nile to blood. At the same time this plague proved that the Nile was not a deity as the Egyptians believed. Furthermore, the Egyptians suffered to the full extent the evils of the plagues, and did not derive any benefit, however indirect, therefrom. Hence, the frogs died in heaps “and the land stank”; while the “‘arob;” which the Rabbis say was

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question. Did the common Egyptians deserve this? Why do we celebrate it?

7.7 Makot *Mitzrayim*: the Plagues of Egypt

All Together: Our rabbis taught: When the Egyptian armies were drowning in the sea, the Heavenly Hosts broke out in songs of jubilation. God silenced them and said, “My creatures are perishing, and you sing praises?”

Leader: Though we descend from those redeemed from brutal Egypt, and have ourselves rejoiced to see oppressors overcome, yet our triumph is diminished by the slaughter of the foe.

All Together: Our rabbis taught: “The sword comes into the world because of justice delayed and justice denied.”

Leader: To remember upheaval that follows oppression, we pour ten drops for the plagues upon Egypt.

All Together: Our rabbis taught: God is urgent about justice, for upon justice the world depends...

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question. What does this mean, on justice the world depends?

Leader: A full cup is the symbol of complete joy. Though we celebrate the triumph of our sacred cause, our happiness cannot be complete so long as others had to be sacrificed for its sake. We shall, therefore, diminish the wine in our cups as we recall the plagues visited upon the Egyptians, to give expression to our sorrow over the losses which each plague exacted. We now recite the list of the ten ancient plagues, pouring off wine as each one is mentioned.

a mixture or drove of wild animals (not “a swarm of flies”), disappeared after the plague ceased, and “there remained not one”: so that the Egyptians might not profit from the hides of the animals, which they might have done had the latter died like the frogs. Two theories have been advanced for the plague of darkness, one of which is that the plague was intended to hide the annihilation of the wicked Israelites who, refusing to leave Egypt, died there. The other is a treatment of the Egyptian sun-god similar to the treatment of the Egyptian river-god.

The period of each plague was seven days; and twenty-four days intervened between one plague and the next. The ten plagues lasted nearly twelve months. The order and nature of the plagues are described by R. Levi b. Zachariah in the name of R. Berechiah, who says: “God used military tactics against the Egyptians. First, He stopped their water-supply (the water turned to blood). Second, He brought a shouting army (frogs). Third, He shot arrows at them (lice). Fourth, He directed His legions against them (wild animals). Fifth, He caused an epidemic (murrain). Sixth, He poured naphtha on them (blains). Seventh, He hurled at them stones from a catapult (hail). Eighth, He ordered His storming troops (locusts) against them. Ninth, He put them under the torturing stock (darkness). Tenth, He killed till their leaders (first-born).”

Ten other plagues were inflicted on the Egyptians in the Red Sea, in the various ways in which Pharaoh and his hosts were drowned. R. Jose the Galilean says: “The Egyptians in the Red Sea suffered fifty plagues. In Egypt the ‘finger’ of God was recognized by the ten plagues; but at the Red Sea God’s powerful ‘hand’ was visible, which being multiplied by five fingers makes fifty plagues.” R. Eliezer multiplied these by 4, making 200 plagues; and R. Akiba multiplied them by 5 making 250 plagues. Each adduced his multiplier from the verse: “He cast upon them (1) the fierceness of his anger, (2) wrath, (3) and indignation, (4) and trouble, (5) by sending evil angels among them.” R. Eliezer does not count “fierceness of his anger.”

Lessen¹¹ your cup of wine with each of the following.

All Together: Dam, Blood
 Tzfardeyah, Frogs
 Kinim, Lice
 Arov, Swarms
 Dever, Blight
 Sh'chin, Boils
 Barad, Hail
 Arbeh, Locusts
 Choshech, Darkness
 Makat B'chorot, Death of the First-Born.

Leader: Each additional drop of wine we now pour out of our cups is hope and prayer that people will cast out the plagues that today threaten everyone everywhere they are found, beginning in our own hearts:

Each participant recites one plague in the modern world¹² as we continue to lessen our cups for each plague, ending the set with:

Leader: ...Justice delayed, justice denied, justice mocked.

Write down the plagues mentioned so they can be included next year.

7.8 Dayenu: it would have been enough

Next Participant: How many are the gifts Adonai our God has bestowed upon us!
 Had Adonai:

Next Participant: Brought us out of Egypt and not divided the sea for us,

All Together: Dayenu

Next Participant: Divided the sea and not permitted us to cross on dry land,

All Together: Dayenu

Next Participant: Permitted us to cross on dry land and not sustained us for forty years in the desert,

All Together: Dayenu

Next Participant: Sustained us for forty years in the desert and not fed us with manna,

All Together: Dayenu

Next Participant: Fed us with manna and not given us the Sabbath,

All Together: Dayenu

Next Participant: Given us the Sabbath and not brought us to Mount Sinai,

¹¹Dip in your fingers and spray wine onto the plate.

¹²Examples from past years: Cruelty, envy, lies, greed, hatred, war, famine, pestilence, ignorance, barbarism, spam, pollution, telemarketers, poorly placed page breaks, extraordinary rendition, illegal wiretapping under the guise of executive privilege, paranoia, racism, intolerance, silence, cruelty, bureaucracy, fanaticism, lack of planning, shortsighted thinking, ignorance, ...

All Together: Dayenu

Next Participant: Brought us to Mount Sinai and not given us the Torah,

All Together: Dayenu

Next Participant: Given us the Torah and not led us into the land of Israel,

All Together: Dayenu

Next Participant: Led us into the land of Israel and not built for us the Temple,

All Together: Dayenu

Next Participant: Built for us the Temple and not sent us prophets of truth,

All Together: Dayenu

Next Participant: Sent us prophets of truth and not made us a holy people,

All Together: Dayenu

Next Participant: For all these—alone and together—we say

All Together: Dayenu

Next Participant: What does this mean, “Dayenu—it would have been enough”? Surely no one of these would indeed have been enough for us. Dayenu means to celebrate each step toward freedom as if it *were* enough, then to start out on the next step. Dayenu means that if we reject each step because it is not the whole liberation, we will never be able to achieve the whole liberation. Dayenu means to sing each verse as if it were the whole song—and then sing the next verse!

All Together: Sing:



I - lu ho-tzi ho - tzi - a - nu, ho - tzi a - nu mi - mitz - ra - yim,
 ho - tzi - a - nu mi - mitz - ra - yim da - yei - nu.
 (Chorus) Da - da - yei - nu, da - da - yei - nu, da - da - yei - nu, da -
 yei - nu da - yei - nu da - yei - nu. yei - nu da - yei - nu.

Chorus: Day, Dayenu, day, dayenu, day, dayenu, dayenu, dayenu dayenu. 1: Ilu hotsi hotsianu, hotsianu mi-mitzrayim, hotsianu mi-mitzrayim, Dayenu.

2: Ilu natan natan lanu, natan lanu et ha-Shabot, natan lanu et ha-Shabot, Dayenu.

3: Ilu natan natan lanu, natan lanu et ha-Torah, natan lanu et ha-Torah, Dayenu.

7.9 Pesach, matzah, maror

Leader: The Passover Seder is rich in symbolism, but there are three symbols that are so important and so meaningful that, in the words of Rabbi Gamaliel, grandson of Hillel, no Seder is really complete unless they are fully explained. These symbols are the pesach, the matzah, and the maror.

Leader: What is the meaning of this pesach?

Next Participant: This bone is the symbol of the pesach lamb. After many years of wandering in the desert, the Israelites came to dwell in their own land, where each year, they would gather together at the Temple to celebrate the Exodus with rejoicing and festivity. Families would come from all parts of the land for the occasion, and each family would bring a lamb as its special offering in honor of the festival. This lamb was known as the pesach, in remembrance of the time when our ancestors were spared the tragic fate of the Egyptians, whose first-born were slain. For them, the pesach was a reminder that God passed over—“passed over”—the houses of our ancestors in Egypt during the redemption.

All Together: Today, too, we invoke Adonai as the guardian of the people of Israel, as in our dwellings we renew the family bond and strengthen our ties with the whole people of Israel.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question.

Leader: What is the meaning of this matzah?

Next Participant: There are three matzot, and so the meaning of the matzah is threefold. At the very beginning of the Seder, we learned that the matzah is, first of all, a symbol of the simple bread of poverty our ancestors were made to eat in their affliction, when they were slaves in the land of Egypt. The matzah also reminds us of the great haste in which the Israelites fled from Egypt. So hard did the Egyptians press them that, as we read in the Torah: “They baked unleavened cakes of the dough since they had been driven out of Egypt and could not delay, nor had they prepared provisions for themselves.”

Next Participant: There is a third meaning to the matzah. In ancient times, the Israelites lived in the desert. Like all desert peoples, they lived simply. They dwelt in tents, dressed in plain garments, and ate only the simplest of foods. Even their bread was only an unleavened cake, like the matzah we eat tonight. When the Israelites settled in Canaan, they became farmers. Soon they prospered; and they began to desire fancy homes to live in, fine clothes to wear, and rich foods to eat. This made them greedy and envious. The Prophets cried out against their way of life and pleaded with them to return to the simple and modest ways of the desert.

Next Participant: So, for one week each year the matzah became the symbol of those early days when all people had little, but none had more: when equality prevailed among the Israelites. Let the matzah be a symbol for us this week. Let it teach us to

find delight not in selfish luxuries that excite the envy of our neighbors, but in simple acts of helpfulness and kindness that inspire their respect and love. Luxuries when shared by all are good to have; they add to our enjoyment of life and help to make us happy. But when the few have more than they need, and the many have not even life's necessities, then the plea of the Prophets must be heard. Let us strive to bring about peace with equality and justice for everyone. To the driven of the earth we link ourselves today as we fulfill the *mitzvah*:

All Together: “For seven days shall you eat matzah, that you may remember your departure from Egypt as long as you live.”

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question.

Leader: What is the meaning of this maror?

Next Participant: We eat the maror, or bitter herbs, to remind ourselves that the Egyptians embittered the lives of our people. As it is written: “And they made their lives bitter with hard labor at mortar and brick and in all sorts of drudgery in the field; and they ruthlessly imposed all the tasks upon them.”

All Together: Today, as well, wherever oppression remains, Jews taste its bitterness.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question. What does it mean when Jews are on the other side of oppression?

Leader: What is the meaning of this egg?

Next Participant: There should be two bones of meat there. In the time when the temple stood, there were two bones. Today, the community is broken and the Temple is several times destroyed. The poor can afford no meat, and must eat eggs instead. This roasted egg is here as a reminder that Judaism is homeless.

Leader: What is the meaning of this orange?

Next Participant: The orange is out of place. For years it has been said that a gay Jew had no more place in Judaism than a crust of bread on a Seder plate, or that a woman had no more place in the pulpit than an orange on a Seder plate. Tonight, this orange is our answer: no matter what differences may be visible, we will not let them drive us apart. The orange reminds us how broad these differences may be. Spitting out the pits reminds us how harsh the costs of division can be. We were accepted by God as one people, one family. We will remain one family.

Leader: Pesach, matzah, maror, and orange are the symbolic expressions that represent freedom in all ages. Translated into modern terms, they are sacrifice, preparedness, remembrance, and community. These are major elements in the battle for freedom.

7.10 B'chol dor ve-dor: in every generation

Next Participant: In every generation, each of us should feel as though we ourselves had personally gone forth from Egypt. Every generation must discover freedom anew. For we read in the Torah: “And you shall explain to your child on that day, it is because of what the Eternal did for *me* when *I* went forth from Egypt.” Every generation must earn its claim to liberty. It is an ever recurring theme of history. We continue to remember: “It was *we* who were slaves... *we* who were strangers.” And therefore, we recall these words as well:

All Together: You shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the feelings of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in Egypt.

Next Participant: When strangers reside with you in your land, you shall not wrong them... You shall love them as yourself, for you were strangers in Egypt. You shall rejoice before God with your son and daughter...and the stranger, and the orphan, and the widow in your midst. Always remember that you were slaves in Egypt. You shall not subvert the rights of the stranger or the orphan. Remember that you were a slave in Egypt. Not only our ancestors alone did the Holy One redeem but us as well, along with them, as it is written:

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

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question. How has God liberated us?

7.11 Le-fi-chach: let us rejoice

Raise wine glasses.

Next Participant: Therefore, let us revere, exalt, extol, acclaim, adore and glorify the Holy One who performed these miracles for our ancestors and for us. Let us rejoice at the wonder of our deliverance:

Next Participant: from bondage to freedom,

Next Participant: from agony to joy,

Next Participant: from mourning to festivity,

Next Participant: from darkness to light,

Next Participant: from servitude to redemption.

Next Participant: Hallelujah. Praise the name of Adonai.

Next Participant: Sing praises, you servants of Adonai.

The wine cups are set down without drinking.

7.12 Hallel: psalm 114

All Together: When Israel went forth from *Mitzrayim*,
 When Jacob's house left the alien nation,
 Then Judah became God's holy place,
 Israel God's dominion...
 Tremble, O earth,
 At the presence of the God of Jacob,
 Who turns the rocks into pools,
 The flint into fountains.

7.13 The Second Cup: the cup of Deliverance

Leader: We raise our cups as we recall the second promise of liberation to the people of Israel:

Raise wine glasses already filled.

All Together: "I will deliver you from bondage..."

Next Participant: We praise You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all life, who has delivered us and our ancestors from Egypt and brought us here this night to eat matzah and maror. Adonai, our God and God of our ancestors, help us celebrate future holidays and festivals in peace and in joy. Then we will thank You with a new song.

All Together:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
 בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-gafen.
 Blessed are you, Oh Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Drink the second cup of wine.

1 Rochtzah: Washing our Hands

Leader: Before we eat let us wash our hands and say together:

All Together: Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvo-tav, v'tzivanu al n'tee-las yadayim.
 We praise you, Adonai, majestic sovereign of all life, Who hallows our lives with commandments and bids us wash our hands.

The participants wash their hands.

ז Motzi: A Blessing for Bread

Leader: We are now coming to the Seder meal. As we ordinarily begin with the breaking of bread, we begin tonight with the breaking of matzah. We recite two blessings; first is the regular blessing for bread, then a special one for matzah.

The upper and middle piece of the three matzot are broken and distributed among the group.

All Together:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, ha-motzi lechem min ha-aretz.
We praise You, Adonai, Sovereign of Life, Who brings forth bread from the earth.

ח Matzah: A Special Blessing for Matzah

All Together:

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

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvo-tav v'tzi-
vanu al a-chilat matzah.

We praise You, Adonai, Sovereign of Life, Who hallows our lives through command-
ments, and commands us to eat matzah.

Eat *half* your portion of the matzah

ט Maror: A Blessing for the Bitter Herbs

Haroset is a mixture of chopped apples, nuts, wine, and spices.

Leader: Now each of us will take a bit of the maror, the bitter herb, and dip it into the haroset to fulfill the commandment of this night to eat the maror. Thus, we dip our food the second time.

Modern maror is floppy. Cover the remaining portion of the matzoh in maror, then dip it.

All Together:

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

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam asher kidshanu b'mitzvo-tav, v'tzi-vanu al a-chilat maror.

We praise You, Adonai, Sovereign of Life, Who hallows our lives through commandments, and commands us to eat maror.

Eat the maror.

• **Koreich: Continuity with Past Tradition**

We break the bottom matzoh, and use it to make a sandwich with maror.

Leader: Tradition adds one more custom, in honor of the great teacher, Hillel, head of the rabbinic academy in Jerusalem around the time of the birth of Jesus.

Next Participant: On Passover, Hillel combined the pesach, matzah and maror and ate them together, so he might observe the Law handed down to him, exactly as his ancestors before him: “They shall eat the Pesach lamb offering with matzah and maror together.” The destruction of the Temple by the Romans brought an end forever to animal sacrifices by our people, so our sandwich¹³ today is made only with matzah and maror.

Next Participant: As in a three act play Rabbi Gamliel identifies these foods with three progressive historical moments in the Exodus:

Next Participant: Maror captures the bitterness of the enslavement; horseradish or Romaine lettuce, that when young is like the early days in Egypt, but when picked is bitter.

Next Participant: The Pesach lamb, represented today by the roasted bone (zeroa), recalls the blood on the doorposts and the terror and anticipation of the night of the plague of the first born;

¹³A holy ritual sandwich! A sense of self-humor is important. A *mitzvah*?

Next Participant: Matzah stands for the following morning, when Israel was rushed out of Egypt with no time to let their dough rise

Next Participant: And Haroset has the texture of mortar, but the taste of the sweet honey of hope;

All Together: Together they shall be: the matzah of freedom, the maror of slavery. For in the time of freedom, there is knowledge of servitude. And in the time of bondage, there is hope of redemption.

According to an ancient custom, we now eat the maror sandwiched between two pieces of matzah.

We also eat maror and haroset sandwiches.

סו Shulchan Oreich: The Meal is Served

Leader: It is customary to begin the meal with hard-boiled eggs flavored with salt water. This was the practice in Roman times. The egg is symbolic of new growth, of new life, of hope. The roasted egg on the Seder plate has come to represent the ancient Temple holiday sacrifice in Jerusalem, the holy city.

Eat the egg in salt, and then eat hearty!

Members of some obscure Messianic sects have their own rites to follow here.

יב Tzafun: The Afikomen is Found and Eaten

Toward the end of the meal, the children look for the afikomen, which the leader has hidden. Since neither the meal nor the Seder can be concluded before some of the group has eaten a piece of it, whoever finds the afikomen may demand a reward. Nothing is eaten after the afikomen, so that the matzah may be the last food tasted.

Leader: In temple times the Passover sacrifice was eaten at the end of the meal, when everyone was almost satiated. In remembrance of this, we partake of the afikomen as the very last food to be eaten at our Seder.

Set aside all other food and eat the afikomen.

יָ בָרֵיכַח: Thanks for Divine Sustenance

The third cup is filled.

Leader: We have eaten our Passover meal as free people. Let us give thanks to the source of all life and freedom. Let us say grace.

All Together: May Adonai be blessed from now unto eternity.

Next Participant: Let us praise the Eternal of Whose bounty we have partaken.

All Together: Let us praise the Eternal of Whose bounty we have partaken and by Whose goodness we live.

Next Participant: On this Festival of Matzot, inspire us to goodness.

Next Participant: On this Festival of Freedom, make us a blessing.

Next Participant: On this Festival of Pesach, preserve us in life.

All Together: All Merciful, rule over us forever.

Next Participant: Sustain us with honorable work. Make us worthy of the Messianic promise of a world that is yet to come.

Next Participant: May the One who blessed Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, May the One who blessed Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah, bless this home, this table, and all assembled here; and may all our loved ones share our blessing.

Next Participant: May the One who brings harmony into the spheres on high bring peace to earth for all humanity.

All Together: May Adonai give strength to our people, May Adonai bless all people with peace.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question. All people? Really?

יָ.1 The Third Cup: the Cup of Redemption

Raise wine glasses already filled.

Leader: Together we take up the third cup of wine, now recalling the third divine promise to the people of Israel:

All Together: “I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and through mighty acts of judgment.”

All Together:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
בוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגָּפֶן.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-gafen.

All drink the third cup of wine.

ג'.2 Kos Eliyahu: the Cup of Elijah

Take up the cup of Elijah

Leader: This cup of wine is called “Kos Eliyahu” the cup of Elijah—a cup from which we cannot drink, until all the world is redeemed from pain, injustice, and denial of love. In the ninth century B.C., a farmer arose to challenge the domination of the ruling elite. In his tireless and passionate advocacy on behalf of the common people, and his ceaseless exposure of the corruption and waste of the court, Elijah sparked a movement and created a legend which would inspire people for generations to come.

All Together: May the All Merciful send us Elijah the Prophet to comfort us with tidings of deliverance.

We now read the story of Elijah and the Prophets of Baal, from First Kings

Next Participant: And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, “Go, show thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth.”

Next Participant: And Elijah went to show himself unto Ahab. And there was a sore famine in Samaria.

Next Participant: And Ahab called Obadiah, which was the governor of his house. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly:

Next Participant: For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.)

Next Participant: And Ahab said unto Obadiah, “Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts.”

Next Participant: So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question.

Next Participant: And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, “Art thou he that troubleth Israel?”

Next Participant: And he answered, “I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.

Next Participant: Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel’s table.”

Next Participant: So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.

Next Participant: And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, “How long halt ye between two opinions? If the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him.” And the people answered him not a word.

Next Participant: Then said Elijah unto the people, “I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal’s prophets are four hundred and fifty men.

Next Participant: Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under:

Next Participant: And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God.” And all the people answered and said, “It is well spoken.”

Next Participant: And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, “Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under.”

Next Participant: And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, “O Baal, hear us.” But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made.

Next Participant: And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, “Cry aloud: for he is a god; perhaps he is talking, or perhaps he is out hunting, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awakened.”

Next Participant: And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them.

Next Participant: And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question.

Next Participant: And Elijah said unto all the people, "Come near unto me." And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down.

Next Participant: And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name:

Next Participant: And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

Next Participant: And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, "Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood."

Next Participant: And he said, "Do it the second time." And they did it the second time. And he said, "Do it the third time." And they did it the third time.

Next Participant: And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

Next Participant: And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, "LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

Next Participant: Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again."

Next Participant: Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question.

Next Participant: And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, "The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God."

Next Participant: And Elijah said unto them, "Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape." And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

Next Participant: And Elijah said unto Ahab, "Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain."

Next Participant: So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees,

Next Participant: And said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." And he went up, and looked, and said, "There is nothing." And he said, "Go again seven times."

Next Participant: And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, “Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man’s hand.” And he said, “Go up, say unto Ahab, ‘Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.’ ”

Next Participant: And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel.

Next Participant: And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

Next Participant: And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword.

Next Participant: Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, “So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time.”

Next Participant: And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question.

Next Participant: But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, “It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.”

Next Participant: And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, “Arise and eat.”

Next Participant: And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.

Next Participant: And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, “Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee.”

Next Participant: And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb, the mount of God.

Next Participant: And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, “What doest thou here, Elijah?”

Next Participant: And he said, “I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.”

Next Participant: And he said, “Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD.” And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake:

Next Participant: And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question.

Next Participant: And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, "What doest thou here, Elijah?"

Next Participant: And he said, "I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

Next Participant: And the LORD said unto him, "Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria:

Next Participant: And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy place.

Next Participant: And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay.

Next Participant: Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him."

Next Participant: So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.

Next Participant: And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, "Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee." And he said unto him, "Go back again: for what have I done to thee?"

Next Participant: And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.

Selah. Pause, reflect, and question.

Next Participant: Before he died, Elijah declared that he would return once each generation in the guise of a poor or oppressed person, coming to people's doors to see how he would be treated. By the treatment offered this poor person, who would be Elijah himself, he would know whether the population had reached a level of humanity making them capable of participating in the dawn of the Messianic age.

All Together: Elijah opens up for us the realm of mystery and wonder. Let us now open the door for Elijah!

A child is sent to open the door to the outside.

Next Participant: Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, and he will turn the hearts of the parents to the children and the hearts of the children to the parents before the coming of the great and awesome Day of God!

All Together: Sing:

ELIYAHU HANAVI

Fm (Em) *C7(B7)* *Fm(Em)*
 E - li - ya - hu ha - na - vi E - li - ya - hu
C7(B7) *Ab(G)* *Bbm(Am)*
 ha - tish - bi Ey - li - ya - hu Ey - li - ya - hu
Fm(Em) *Bbm(Am)* *C7(B7)* *Fm(Em)* *Fine* *C7(B7)*
 E - li - ya - hu ha - gil - a - di bim - hey - ra v' -
Fm(Em) *C7(B7)* *Fm(Em)* *C7(B7)*
 ya - mey - nu ya - vo ey - ley - nu im Ma - shi - ah
Fm(Em) *C7(B7)* *Fm(Em)D.C. al Fine*
 ben Da - vid im Ma - shi - ah ben Da - vid

Eliyahu ha-Navi, Eliyahu ha-Tishbi,
 Eliyahu, Eliyahu, Eliyahu ha-Giladi.
 Bimheirah, b'yameinu yavo eileinu,
 Im Ma-shiach ben David, im Ma-shiach ben David.
 Eliyah ha-Navi, Eliyahu ha-Tishbi,
 Eliyahu, Eliyahu, Eliyahu ha-Giladi.

Leader: From beyond, Elijah's spirit enters in these walls And tastes again with us the wine of endless promise.

Door is closed, opened¹⁴, then closed again.

Leader: And may Your day come soon when swords are beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning-hooks, when nation does not lift up sword against nation, nor do they prepare for war any more.

¹⁴Look for servants and strangers at the door who might turn you in to the Spanish Inquisition.

Next Participant: But that day is still far from sight. Ignorance, prejudice, hatred; contempt for truth and justice; hunger and terror; the fear of a world-destroying disaster—these remain to plague the human race. To end these plagues, to summon Elijah—that is the task of all who care. It is our task, for we are the people who know the stranger's heart, the slave's aching bones, the shaking hands of the exile. When will Elijah come with the news of freedom?

All Together: When we have called him by our deeds.

ג'3 Kaddish: a prayer of praise and peace

Leader: It is our tradition to say Kaddish for a loved one who has died. During the Holocaust entire families died with no one to remember them. Tonight we remember; we dare not forget. Tonight we recite the Kaddish for those people.

Read the following passage at your own pace, not in lockstep with the others.

All Together:

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא. בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְרָא כְרַעוּתָהּ וְיִמְלִיךָ מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיִּיכוֹן
 וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֵגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב. וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן
 יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמֵי עֵלְמַיָּא
 יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרֻמֵּם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ
 דְקַדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא. לְעֵלָא (לְעֵלָא מְכָל) מִן כָּל בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבַּחְתָּא
 וְנַחֲמַתָּא דְאִמְרֵיךְ בְּעֵלְמָא. וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן
 יְהֵא שְׁלָמָה רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא, חַיִּים לָנוּ וְלְכָל עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.
 עוֹשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ, וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

Yit'gadal v'yit'kadash sh'mei raba b'al'ma di v'ra khir'utei. V'yam'likh mal'khutei
 b'chayeikhon uv'yomeikhon uv'chayei d'khol beit yis'ra'eil ba'agala uviz'man kariv
 v'im'ru: Amein.

Y'hei sh'mei raba m'varakh l'alam ul'al'mei al'maya.

Yit'barakh v'yish'tabach v'yit'pa'ar v'yit'romam v'yit'nasei v'yit'hadar v'yit'aleh
 v'yit'halal sh'mei d'kud'sha. B'rikh hu l'eila (l'eila mikkol) min kol bir'khata v'shi-
 rara toosh'b'chatah v'nechematah, da'ameeran b'al'mah, v'eemru: Amein.

Y'hei sh'lama raba min sh'maya v'chayim aleinu v'al kol yis'ra'eil v'im'ru: Amein.
 Oseh shalom bim'romav hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu v'al kol Yis'ra'eil v'im'ru: Amein.

All Together: May His great Name grow exalted and sanctified in the world that He created as He willed. May He give reign to His kingship in your lifetimes and

in your days, and in the lifetimes of the entire Family of Israel, swiftly and soon. Now say: Amen. May His great Name be blessed forever and ever. Blessed, praised, glorified, exalted, extolled, mighty, upraised, and lauded be the Name of the Holy One. Blessed is He beyond any blessing and song, praise and consolation that are uttered in the world. Now say: Amen. May there be abundant peace from Heaven and life upon us and upon all Israel. Now say: Amen. He Who makes peace in His heights, may He make peace, upon us and upon all Israel. Now say: Amen.

71 Hallel: Praise

Leader: Not for our sake, Adonai, not for our sake do we give praise, but to reveal Your love and Your truth.

71.1 Psalm 117

All Together: Praise Adonai, all you nations; Sing praises, all you peoples! For great is God's love for us; God's faithfulness never-ending. Hallelujah!

71.2 The Great Hallel: Psalm 136

Next Participant: Give thanks to Adonai, who is good,

All Together: Whose love endures forever!

Next Participant: Give thanks to the God of gods,

All Together: Whose love endures forever!

Next Participant: Give thanks to the Eternal One,

All Together: Whose love endures forever!

Next Participant: Who alone works great wonders,

All Together: Whose love endures forever!

Next Participant: Who, with understanding, made the heavens,

All Together: Whose love endures forever!

Next Participant: Who stretched out the earth above the waters,

All Together: Whose love endures forever!

Next Participant: Who made the great lights,

All Together: Whose love endures forever!

Next Participant: The sun, to rule by day,

All Together: Whose love endures forever!

Next Participant: The moon and stars, to rule by night,

All Together: Whose love endures forever!

Next Participant: Who gives food to all creatures,

All Together: Whose love endures forever!

Next Participant: Give thanks to the God of heaven,

All Together: Whose love endures forever!

7.3 Nishmat: a hymn as old as the Talmud

Next Participant: The breath of all that lives praises you, Adonai, our God. The spirit of all flesh exalts you, our Sovereign, always. Transcending space and time, you are the Eternal. Except for you we have no redeemer, no savior.

Next Participant: Could song fill our mouths as water fills the sea, and could joy flood our tongues like countless waves,

Next Participant: Could our lips utter praise as limitless as the sky, and could the sparkle of our eyes match the splendor of the sun,

Next Participant: Could we soar with outstretched arms like eagle's wings, and could we run with the gentle grace of swiftest deer,

Next Participant: Yet never could we fully state our gratitude to you, nor could we bless your name for even a thousandth part of the enduring love, your most precious blessing Dearest God, that you granted to our ancestors and to us.

Traditionally, many more psalms are recited and songs are sung.

יה Nirtzah: Conclusion

יה.1 The Fourth Cup: the Cup of Acceptance

Pour and raise wine glasses.

Leader: As our Seder draws to an end, we once again take up our cups of wine. The Redemption is not yet complete. The fourth cup recalls us to our covenant with the Eternal One, to the tasks that still await us as a people called to holy service, to a great purpose for which the people of Israel live: the preservation and affirmation of hope.

All Together: “And I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God.”

All Together:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
בוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגָּפֶן.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-gafen.

All drink the fourth cup of wine.

הי.2 Kerovah: from a medieval liturgical poem

Next Participant: Our Seder now has ended with its history-laden rites.

Next Participant: We have journeyed from *Mitzrayim* on this storied night of nights.

Next Participant: We bore witness, we remembered our covenant with You.

Next Participant: So we pray that You redeem us as You pledged Your word to do.

Leader: Peace!

All Together: Peace for us! For everyone!

Leader: For all people, this, our hope:

All Together: Next year may Jerusalem be at peace! Next year may all be free!

All Together:

לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם.

L'shanah ha-ba-ah birush-a-la-yim!

Next year in Jerusalem!

It is appropriate to retire to discussion of theology and history. More questions are always there to be answered. For example:

- Passover spongecake
- *mitzvah*
- Talmudic disputation
- The sacred sandwich tradition
- Oranges on the Seder plate
- Why all this preparation for a holiday reenacting a quick getaway from a mass assassination? What would be recorded from a modern Exodus?
- Past passovers: the full Exodus narrative, the Book of Esther, or the Charlton Heston version.
- What about transgenic wheat? Extraterrestrial wheat?