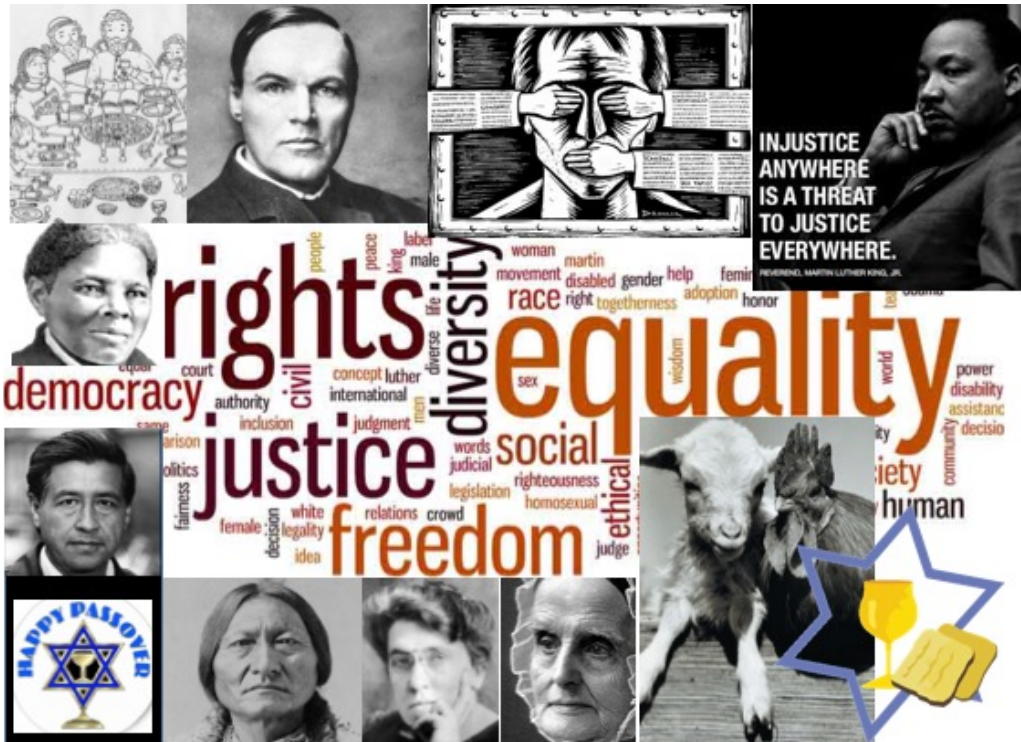


# Haggadah for Holistic Non-violence



*“There are many forms of oppression and violence in society that, for reasons of culture or tradition, remain largely unexamined. Walking the path of holistic nonviolence is about questioning ALL forms of oppression and violence, seeking to better understand their common roots, and choosing alternatives. It is about being unwilling -- directly or indirectly -- to take part in violence, to profit from the harm of others, or to willfully ignore oppression. It is about refusing to intentionally take away the dignity, bodily integrity, freedom, or the life of another individual, no matter how they may differ from ourselves, be they a fellow human or a fellow animal.*

*Pursuing this path is not about being perfect, but about challenging ourselves to ever expand our understanding of how our actions affect others, and over time, to come closer and closer to the ideal of nonviolence toward all. It is a long term path of self-development, integrity and service. It places a special focus on respecting, advocating for, and, when possible, empowering those who are being oppressed, exploited or killed. Most importantly, it is a path based on cherishing and protecting life, and celebrating the beauty and joy we can create together.”*

## Introduction

The Passover Seder is a special ceremonial dinner in which we gather together and retell the story of the Israelite's freedom from bondage in Egypt. The Hebrew word for this Holiday, "Pesach" has two meanings. The first is "Passing over" and refers to the fact that the angel of death passed over the Israelite's homes, when they were slaves in Egypt. Pesach is also a reference to the pascal lamb -- which was ritually sacrificed, according to the story, to protect the Israelites from the angel of death and similar sacrifices became part of early celebrations of Passover.

In biblical times people were faced with frequent food insecurity, and killing animals may have aided survival. But in America today we can abstain from such violence, without putting our survival at risk. Furthermore, we may even harm ourselves by continuing traditions that kill other animals. As Dr. William Roberts, editor of the American Journal of Cardiology has said, "When we kill animals to eat them, they end up killing us because their flesh was never intended for human beings who are naturally herbivores." Heart disease is our leading cause of death.

We tell the story of Passover using a "Haggadah" which means, "telling" in Hebrew, and there are many variations of Haggadah that can be used as the narrative for the Seder.

Passover invites us to not only retell this story of freedom from slavery in the past, but to also consider the plight of those who are not free today and reminds us to be welcoming to those seeking freedom. Even with no personal experience of slavery, most beings seem to passionately want freedom. Because as MLK says, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere, let us take note of where others are currently not free. Can you give an example of someone who is not free? (Go around room.)

The Seder officially begins with a physical act: lighting the candles. Lighting candles and saying a blessing over them marks a time of transition, from the day that is ending to the one that is beginning, from ordinary time to sacred time. The flickering light reminds us of the importance of keeping the fragile flame of freedom alive in the world. As we light the candles, notice that just as they brighten our table, good thoughts, good words and good deeds brighten our lives.

(Light the candles and recite together) *Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Yom Tov. Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has sanctified us with laws and commanded us to light the festival lights.*

Baruch atah Adonai, eloheinu Melekh ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tsivanu lirdof tzedek Brucha Yah Shechinah, eloheinu Malkat ha-olam, asher kid'shatnu b'mitzvotayha vitzivatnu lirdof tzedek Blessed is the Source, who shows us paths to holiness, and commands us to pursue justice

## The Seder Plate

We place a Seder Plate at our table as a reminder to discuss certain aspects of the Passover story and the meaning of this holiday. Each item has its own significance.

**Maror** – The bitter herb. This symbolizes the harshness of lives of the Jews in Egypt.

**Charoset** – A delicious mix of sweet wine, apples, cinnamon and nuts that resembles the mortar used as bricks of the many buildings the Jewish slaves built in Egypt

**Karpas** – A green vegetable, usually parsley, is a reminder of the green sprouting up all around us during spring and is used to dip into the saltwater

**Zeroah** – A roasted beet in place of the traditional shank bone (historically from the pascal lamb) is a reminder of tenth plague and symbolizes the sacrifice made at the great temple on Passover. By using a beet in place of a bone, we express our desire to more fully embrace the spirit of Passover: i.e. we recognize the injustice of slavery, and don't want body parts of enslaved others on our table.

**Beitzah** – An avocado pit evokes a sense of mourning for the destruction of the temple and replaces the traditional egg -- so as to not have products of slavery on our table.

**Orange** - The orange on the Seder plate has come to symbolize full inclusion in modern day Judaism: not only for women, but also for people with disabilities, interfaith couples, and the LGBT Community.

**Fair Trade Chocolate** - Because chocolate, like some other agricultural products is often produced using child-slave-labor, we have added fair-trade chocolate to our Seder plate as a reminder that we can choose to support what is non-violent, just and fair.

**Coconut that is not harvested by enslaved monkeys**--In many places, monkeys are chained around the neck and trained with whips to climb trees and harvest coconuts. These monkeys are kidnapped from the wild as babies, after their mothers are killed. Because coconut is a common ingredient in many traditional Passover desserts, we have added it to the Seder plate to raise awareness of this injustice. This coconut was not harvested by any slaves – human nor monkey.

**Matzah**-- this is the unleavened bread we eat to remember that when the jews fled Egypt, they didn't even have time to let the dough rise for their bread. According to rabbis, to be kosher for Passover, matzah must be made from wheat, rye, barley, spelt or oats. But growing numbers of people cannot safely eat these grains, so some choose to serve a homemade, gluten free matzo, as an "inclusive option" enabling those who can't eat gluten to fully participate in our Seder.

### **Elijah's Cup**

A special cup of wine poured during the Seder is left untouched in honor of Elijah, who, according to tradition, will arrive one day as an unknown guest to herald the advent of the Messiah. At one point during the Seder dinner, the door is briefly opened to welcome Elijah. This commemorates the historical redemption from Egyptian bondage of the Jewish people and reminds us of our future redemption.

### **Miriam's Cup**

This is a newer Passover tradition. The cup is filled with water and placed next to Elijah's cup. Miriam was the sister of Moses. After the exodus while wandering through the desert, legend says that a well of water followed Miriam. It was called 'Miriam's Well'. We seek to honor Miriam's role and the spirit of all women, who nurture their families.

### **Pesach is a time of inclusion.**

On Seder night, we metaphorically open our doors and invite others in. We say, "All who are hungry come and eat." Today especially this is an important message. We were once slaves; poor and hungry, we honor our redemption by sharing what we have with others. We also open the door for Elijah the Prophet as a statement of our faith in the goodness of others and ourselves and thus in our responsibility to contribute to the well-being of others when we are able to do so.

Inclusion motivates us to make this Seder plant-based. A plant based meal is more easily kosher, is inclusive for Muslims, Hindus, Catholics celebrating lent, environmentalists seeking to lower their carbon and water footprints, and for vegans. Vegans often feel left out of traditional Seders because they find celebrating their ancestor's freedom from slavery, while sitting at table filled with the body parts of contemporary victims of slavery hypocritical and disturbing. A plant-based meal is most consistent with the spirit of Passover. We can celebrate our ancestor's freedom from slavery, without having our celebration contribute to present day enslavement of others. This is why we have not knowingly placed on our table any items that require intentional violence against, nor enslavement of any being. Passover celebrations incorporate much symbolism, so we give careful consideration to the items that we include on our table. From the most downtrodden to the most celebrated, the message is clear: everyone is welcome and everyone is necessary.

During the Exodus, food was an issue. This is true today too. Environmental issues are linked to diet as well as health. A meat and dairy based diet initiates a chain of events which threatens our survival. Cattle grazing leads to loss of topsoil and desertification.

Confined animal feeding operations (CAFO's) provide most of the meat and dairy in the US, but create mountains of excrement, that run into streams and the ocean creating vast dead zones, yet there is not enough land in America to feed all those who eat meat and dairy using pasture-based systems. Most of the grain currently grown, is used to fatten animals for the most privileged humans to eat -- with huge inefficiencies. It takes 5-12 pounds of grain to produce a single pound of meat. Though the world currently produces enough grain to adequately feed every human on the planet, much of that grain is used to fatten animals, who become "meat" for the wealthy, while less privileged humans go hungry. Animal agriculture is inherently unjust on many levels.

We fear the loss of effectiveness of antibiotics, and the biggest factor causing antibiotic resistance is their routine use in farm animals. We fear the emergence of new pandemics, while few realize that most infectious diseases plaguing humanity originated in animals and spread to humans as a direct result of our exploitation of them. Meat production consumes vastly more water and creates more greenhouse gasses than growing fruits, vegetables and beans. The Torah commands us to have compassion for animals, to care for our health and to repair the world (Tikkun Olam.) For all of these reasons, a plant-based diet is most consistent with Jewish ethics.

Writings from other religions can be used to support not harming other beings too. The Prophet Mohammed said:

*"A good deed done to an animal is as meritorious as a good deed done to a human being, while an act of cruelty to an animal is as bad as an act of cruelty to a human being."*

### **Are legumes and rice kosher for Passover?**

Although the avoidance of leavened breads (hametz) is central to what is kosher for Passover, around the 13<sup>th</sup> century rabbis in certain geographic areas, out of an abundance of caution, added beans and rice to the list of foods prohibited on Passover. But this was not adopted by Rabbis in other regions. Then in 1997 Rabbi David Golinkin of the Rabbinical Assembly of Israel--Vaad Halacha said it is not only permissible, but obligatory that we consume both legumes and rice on Pesach, in order to eliminate this custom as it is divisive between Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews. Adhering to this custom and not eating legumes tends to diminish the importance of hametz (leavened bread) on Passover. In Torah when the holiday is first pronounced by Moses the food that is directly forbidden is leavened bread, and many believe we should keep the emphasis on this. But there is another important reason to discontinue this tradition. Restricting legumes and rice, encourages people to consume more animal-based foods.

## Kadesh

The Hebrew word “Kiddush” means sanctification. Wine is a symbol of the sanctity, the preciousness, and the sweetness of this moment. Held together by sacred bonds of family, friendship, peoplehood, we share this table tonight with one another and with all the generations who have come before us.

The kiddush begins every shabbat and holiday meal. But kiddush – a ritual .sanctification of time – has an intimate and unique connection to Pesach’s central theme: freedom. How so?

A slave’s time is not his own. He is at the beck and call of his master. Even when the slave has a pressing personal need, his taskmaster’s needs will take priority. In contrast, freedom is the control of our time. We determine what we do when we wake up in the morning; we prioritize our day. Controlling and crafting our time is the critical first act of freedom.

Kiddush says this out loud. We sanctify the day and define its meaning! We proclaim this day as significant, holy and meaningful. We fashion time, claim ownership of it. This is a quintessential act of freedom.

Today, we often feel short of time; that time controls us. Kadesh reminds us that true freedom is to master and control time for ourselves, to shape our life in accordance with our values. wine, or grape juice is a symbol of our joy.

**הַגָּפֶן פְּרִי בּוֹרָא, הָעוֹלָם מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְיָ הָאֵת בְּרוּךְ**

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p’ree hagafen.  
We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who creates the fruit of the vine.

**הַזֶּה לְזָמַן וְהִגִּיעָנוּ וְקִיְמָנוּ יְבוֹשֶׁהָ, הָעוֹלָם מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְיָ אַתָּה בְּרוּךְ**

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, she-hechyanu v’key’manu v’higiyanu lazman hazeh.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who has kept us alive, raised us up, and brought us to this happy moment. Drink the first glass of wine or grape juice.

## Urchatz (hand washing)

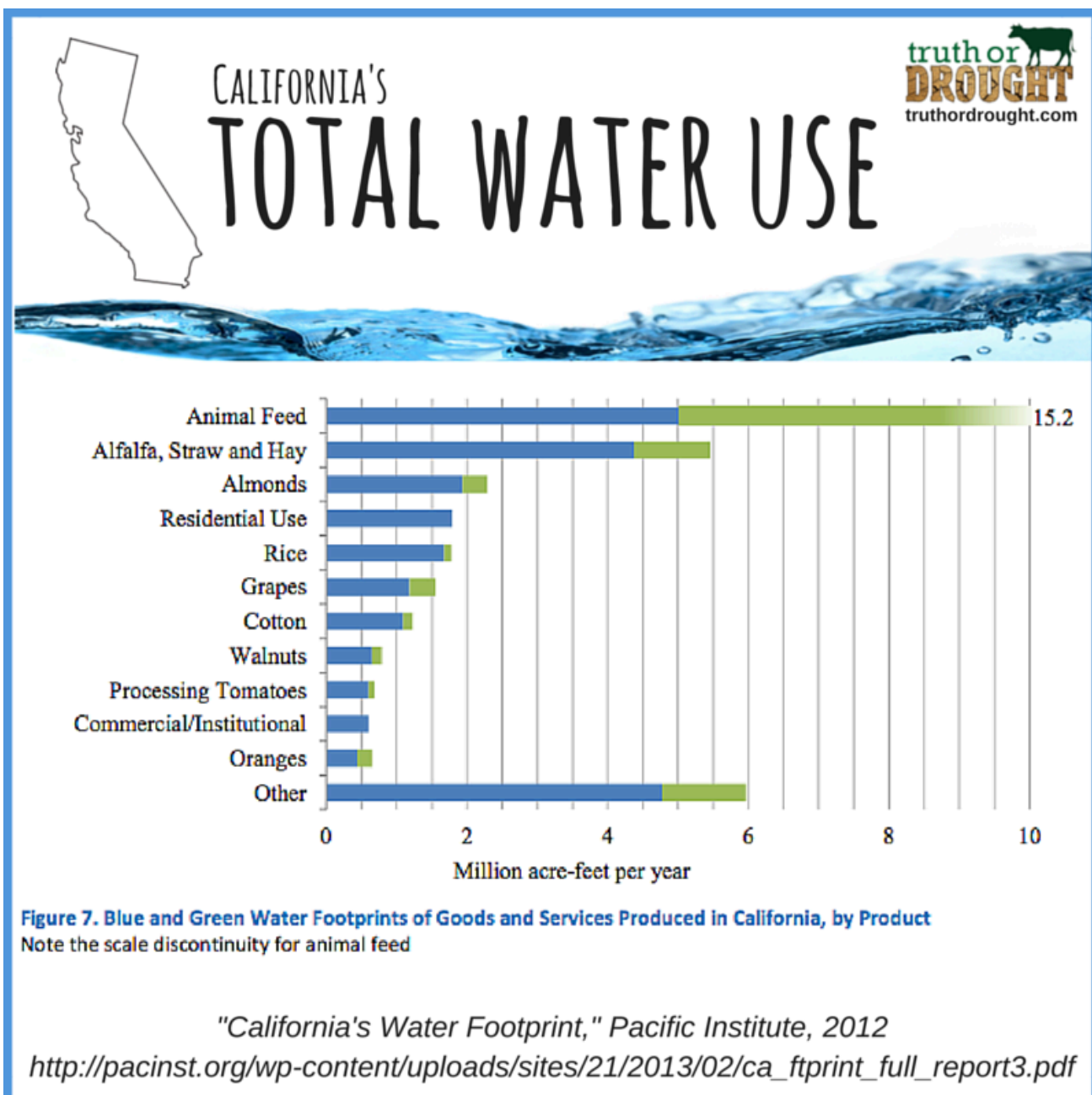
Water is refreshing, cleansing, and clear, so it’s easy to understand why so many cultures and religions use water for symbolic purification. We will wash our hands to get us ready for the rituals to come and to prepare us for the meal.

To ceremoniously wash your hands, you don’t need soap, but you do need a cup to pour water over your hands. Pour water on each of your hands three times, alternating between your hands. Pass a pitcher and a bowl around so everyone can wash at their seats.

Too often during our daily lives we don’t stop and take the moment to prepare for whatever it is we’re about to do, so let’s pause to consider what we hope to get out of our evening together tonight. (Go around the table and share one hope or expectation you have for tonight’s *seder*.)

As we prepare to wash our hands, let us remember that many in the world do not have access to clean water. Clean water is a basic human right. One in ten people currently lack access to clean safe water. That's nearly 1 billion people in the world without clean, safe drinking water. Almost 3.5 million people die every year because of inadequate water supply.

In Hebrew, urchatz means "washing" or "cleansing." In Aramaic, sister language to Hebrew, urchatz means "trusting." As we wash each other's hands, let us rejoice in this act of trust, while remembering the lack of trust between those in Flint, Michigan, and those who supply and control their access to water. Let us also remember that the number one consumer of fresh water in the US is for the raising of animals to produce meat, dairy and eggs. In response to California's recent drought, citizens were prohibited from watering their vegetable gardens, but no such restrictions were placed upon meat and dairy farmers. Cumulatively, 90% of the state's water is used in the rearing of animals.



Pass the bowl & pitcher around the table, pouring a few drops of water onto your neighbor's hands.

After you have poured the water over your hands, recite this short blessing.

**יְדִים נְטִילַת עַל וְצִוּנוּ, בְּמִצְוֹתָיו קִדְּשָׁנוּ אֲשֶׁר, הָעוֹלָם מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יי אַתָּה בְּרוּךְ**

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al n'tilat yadayim.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who made us holy through obligations, commanding us to wash our hands.

### **Karpas (raw vegetables dipped in salt water)**

Passover, like many of our holidays, combines the celebration of an event with a recognition of the cycles of nature. As we remember the liberation from Egypt, we also recognize the stirrings of spring and rebirth happening in the world around us. The symbols on our table bring together elements of both kinds of celebration.

We look forward to spring and the reawakening of flowers and greenery. They haven't been lost, just buried beneath the snow, getting ready for reappearance just when we most needed them. We all have aspects of ourselves that sometimes get buried under the stresses of our busy lives. What has this winter taught us? What elements of our own lives do we hope to revive this spring?

### **If the Earth Could Speak, It Would Speak with Passion**

*(By Rabbi Warren Stone, Temple Emanuel, Kensington, MD)*

*As you dip the beauty of greens into the water of tears, please hear my cry. Can't you see that I am slowly dying? My forests are being clear cut, diminished. My diverse and wondrous creatures -- birds of the sky and beasts of the fields -- small and large are threatened with extinction in your lifetimes. My splendid, colorful floral and fauna are diminishing in kind. My tropical places are disappearing before us, and my oceans are warming. Don't you see that my climate is changing, bringing floods and heat, more extreme cycles of cold and warm, all affecting you and all our Creation? It doesn't have to be! You, all of you, can make a difference in simple ways. You, all of you, can help reverse this sorrowful trend.*

*May these waters into which you dip the greens become healing waters to soothe and restore. As you dip, quietly make this promise:*

*Yes, I can help protect our wondrous natural places. Yes, I can try to use fewer of our precious resources and to replant and sustain more. I can do my part to protect our forests, our oceans and waters. I can work to protect the survival of creatures of all kinds. Yes, I will seek new forms of sustainable energy in my home and in my work, turning toward the sun, the wind, the waters. I make this promise to strive to live gently upon this Earth of ours for the good of all coming generations.*



We now take a vegetable, representing our joy at the dawning of spring after our long, cold winter. We now dip it into salt water, a symbol of the tears our ancestors shed as slaves. Before we eat it, we recite a short blessing:

הַאֲדָמָה פְּרִי בּוֹרָא, הָעוֹלָם מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְיָ אֱתָה בְרוּךְ

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p'ree ha-adama.  
We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who creates the fruits of the earth

### Yachazt (Breaking the Middle Matzo)

There are three pieces of matzah stacked on the table. We now break the middle matzah into two pieces. The host will wrap up the larger of the pieces and, at some point between now and the end of dinner, hide it. This piece is called the afikomen, literally “dessert” in Greek. After dinner, the guests will have to hunt for the afikomen in order to wrap up the meal... and win a prize.

We eat matzah in memory of the quick flight of our ancestors from Egypt. As slaves, they had many false starts before finally being let go. So when the word of their freedom came, they took whatever dough they had and ran with it before it had the chance to rise, leaving it looking something like matzah.

Uncover and hold up the three pieces of matzah and say (altogether):

*“This is the bread of poverty which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. All who are hungry, come and eat; all who are needy, come and celebrate Passover with us. This year we are slaves; next year we will be free.”*

These days, matzah is a special food and we look forward to eating it on Passover. Imagine eating only matzah, or being one of the countless people around the world who don't have enough to eat.

(Everyone should hold up a bit of Matzah as we recite together)

הָאֶרֶץ מִן לֶחֶם הַמוֹצֵיא, הָעוֹלָם מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְיָ אֱתָה בְרוּךְ:

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

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who brings bread from the land.

מִצְוָה אֲכִילַת עַל וְצִנּוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו קִדְּשָׁנוּ אֲשֶׁר, הָעוֹלָם מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְיָ אֱתָה בְרוּךְ:

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

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who made us holy through obligations, commanding us to eat matzah.

*{“As long as people will shed the blood of innocent creatures there can be no peace, no liberty, no harmony between people. Slaughter and justice cannot dwell together.”*  
*- Issac Bashevis Singer}*

The bitter herbs serve to remind us of how the Egyptians embittered the lives of the Israelites in servitude. When we eat the bitter herbs, we share in that bitterness of oppression. We must remember that slavery still exists all across the globe, and even here in America where some are victims of sex trafficking, or undocumented immigrants who get trapped working in certain industries. When you go to the grocery store, where does your food come from? Who picked the sugar cane for your cookie, or the coffee bean for your morning coffee? Many people still face the bitterness of oppression, in many forms. (Everyone dip some bitter herbs in the salt water and hold it up.) Together, we recite:

אַתָּה בְּרוּךְ  
אֲכִילַת עֵלְצָוְנוֹ, צְוֹתָיו מִבְּשֵׁנוֹ קֵדְשֵׁנוֹ, אֵלֵהָעוֹלָם מֶלֶךְ הַיְנוֹ אֵלֵי  
מָרוֹר.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al achilat maror.*

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has sanctified us with Your commandments and ordained that we should eat bitter herbs.  
(all should now eat the bitter herbs.)

### **Korech: Mixing the Bitter and the Sweet**

A favorite moment of the seder comes just before dinner is served. It is called Korech, also known as the Hillel sandwich, in which we eat maror (the bitter herbs) and the charoset (the sweet apple and nut mixture) on a piece of matzah. What a strange custom to eat something so bitter and something so sweet all in one bite. Why do we do this? We do it to tell our story.

Hillel, the rabbi who lived in Jerusalem during the time of King Herod, invented the “Hillel sandwich” a combination of the three elements given in the biblical commandment to eat matzah, bitter herbs and the Pascal lamb.

Instead of eating the lamb, however, today we substitute charoset. We take some matzah and place maror on one end and some charoset on the other. We then top off the sandwich with another piece of matzah.

When we eat, we begin with the bitter side and move to the sweet side, reminding us that though our slavery was indeed bitter, our redemption is sweeter still...

One interpretation of the Hillel sandwich is that part of the challenge of living is to taste freedom even in the midst of oppression, and to be ever conscious of the oppression of others even when we feel that we are free. (Take a piece of matzah now and make a Hillel sandwich and eat it.)

### **Maggid**

*Pour the second glass of wine for everyone. Now we tell the story of Passover as we begin the Maggid portion of the Seder.*

## Group song:

When Israel was in Egypt Land, Let my people go.  
Oppressed so hard they could not stand, Let my people go.  
Go down Moses way down in Egypt land, Tell old Pharaoh,  
Let my people go.

Thus saith the lord bold Moses said, Let my people go.  
If not I'll strike your first born dead, Let my people go.  
Go down Moses way down in Egypt land, Tell old Pharaoh,  
Let my people go.

The Lord told Moses what to do, Let my people go.  
To lead the children of Israel through, Let my people go.  
Go down Moses way down in Egypt land, Tell old Pharaoh,  
Let my people go.

When they had reached the other shore, Let my people go  
They sang a song of triumph o'er, Let my people go.  
Go down Moses way down in Egypt land, Tell old Pharaoh,  
Let my people go.

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By participating in a Seder we recall the injustice of slavery, Unfortunately, some 2,000 years after the time of Moses, slavery has not been eradicated in the world. The trafficking of women and children within domestic, agricultural and sex industries is an enduring reality. Anti-Slavery International estimates that there are currently 20 million people being held as slaves throughout the world. The most common form of modern slavery is debt bondage, in which a person is made to give their body as a condition of their loan repayment. Frequently, in order to afford the journey to "freedom," these people pay with their life savings and go into debt to individuals who make promises they have no intention of keeping. Instead of opportunity, what the immigrants find when they arrive is bondage. These modern-day slaves live in all 50 states, working as farm hands, domestic servants, sweatshop and factory laborers, gardeners, restaurant and construction workers and prostitutes. "...we are living in the midst of a tragic paradox: no longer is there an underground network to guide slaves to freedom, but rather, there is an underground criminal network to entrap people and sell them into slavery.

Non-human beings are also enslaved. For example, most of the coconut that comes from Thailand (and many other places) is harvested using animal slaves. Adult macaque monkeys are shot, so that their children can be captured and trained from a young age to scale palm trees and twist free the coconuts. These monkeys have chains around their necks and are beaten to force them to do this. This is why the coconut used in this meal comes from sources that do not use animals to harvest it. But animal slavery is more insidious too – female cows are forcibly impregnated, their babies stolen from them and their milk confiscated for human profit and use. Female birds are forced through selective breeding to produce eggs in numbers far exceeding what nature equipped their bodies to handle

healthfully -- prolapsed uterus is common if allowed to live their natural lifespan, but usually their masters kill them first, when they are no longer profitable.

The Holocaust enslaved people too. Legal Scholar, Sherry Colb, is the daughter of two Holocaust survivors. Professor Colb has written eloquently about how her family's experience with the Holocaust has impacted her in her extraordinary essay, "Decoding, "Never Again."

*"I rarely even considered the possibility that my legal scholarship interests in criminal procedure, feminist theory, or evidence law had anything at all to do with my identity as the child of a Holocaust survivor and savior... I now understood... I was participating in doing to animals, [by consuming dairy and eggs] paralleled what I had long objected to men in patriarchal settings doing to women: treating females as reproductive machines, to be owned, violently used, sexually abused, and sometimes killed when they served no one's purposes...I came to understand that the animal rights movement was a justice movement...When people say "Never Again" about the Holocaust,...I interpret the deep message of that plea to be that we must remember how ready people were to place the "other" outside their circle of compassion and moral concern and to demote that "other" to the status of a thing to be stripped of earthly possessions and then used and destroyed....we see this too, most dramatically, in our relationship with the "other" animals who, in virtue of their "other" DNA—regardless of what we learn about them (their use of tools, communication, maternal love, inter-species altruism, and the list goes on)—remain things for our use...People imagine that it is enough to say that they are "only animals," just as others were content to invoke the fact that my people were "only Jews."*

Alex Hershaft, a Holocaust survivor himself has said, *"My friends, the oppressive mindset is not about the victims, be they animals, Bosnians, Tutsis, Cambodian victims of Pol Pot, or European Jews. It's about us. "Never again" should not be about what others shouldn't do to us, It should be about what we should not do to others. 'Never again means that we must never perpetuate mass atrocities against other living sentient beings."*

Hundreds of thousands of children, some as young as 5, work in cocoa fields. This has been documented in Cameroon, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, (leading supplier, accounting for around 40% of production) Guinea and Nigeria they spray pesticides and apply fertilizers without protective gear, use sharp tools, like machetes, sustain injuries from transporting heavy loads beyond permissible weight, do strenuous work like felling trees, and clearing and burning vegetation. They are not accompanied by their parents, and are sometimes sold into this work.

The Passover Seder celebrates our liberation as a people from the oppressive slavery we experienced in ancient Egypt. As we celebrate this freedom during Passover, we are compelled to reflect on how freedom continues to be elusive for others. We each have the power and the obligation to free today's slaves with a "strong hand and outstretched arm." What does this mean to us? How can we do this? We must reach beyond ourselves, beyond the usual extent of our gaze. Our realm of influence, our chance to exert that divine capacity, is not an opportunity lurking in the distance—it is right here, within reach, just beyond us.

Slavery does not end through hope and passivity, but by powerful action. Our action to end slavery is not only important for our own time but also for its effects on future generations. This is our chance to shape the future. This is why have Fair Trade chocolate on the Seder plate. (Lift the Seder plate) "This is Fair Trade chocolate. Unlike most chocolate today, it is made without the labor of child slaves, and to remind us that slavery still exists today, and that we have the freedom and obligation to choose products made without slavery" Tonight we eat chocolate to remember all the trafficked and enslaved children in the Ivory Coast who toil in the cocoa fields,



## The Four Questions

We begin this section of the Seder with four questions asked by the youngest at the table, but it is important to remember that everyone at the table is free to ask questions and not just the ones in the book. The Seder is a time for contemplation and discussion. As we ask and answer the traditional four questions, think about what would be your four questions?

- 1) On all nights we need not dip even once, on this night we do so twice!

*Slavery:* The salt water into which we dip the *karpas* (onion, or other vegetable) represents the tears we cried while in Egypt. Similarly, the *charoset* (fruit-nut paste) into which the bitter herbs are dipped reminds us of the cement we used to create the bricks in Egypt.

*Freedom:* Dipping food is considered a luxury; a sign of freedom -- as opposed to the poor (and enslaved) who eat "dry" and un-dipped foods.

- 2) On all nights we eat *hametz* or matzah, and on this night only matzah!

*Slavery:* Matzah was the bread of slaves and poor, it was cheap to produce and easy to make.

*Freedom:* Matzah also commemorates the fact that the bread did not have enough time to rise when the Jews hastily left Egypt.

3) On all nights we eat any kind of vegetables, and on this night maror!

*Slavery:* The maror (bitter herbs) reminds us of the bitterness of slavery in Egypt.

4) On all nights we eat sitting upright or reclining, and on this night we all recline!

*Freedom:* We commemorate our freedom by reclining on cushions like royalty.

Jacob and his children arrived in Egypt settled in the city of Goshen and their numbers grew and grew. There arose a new king in Egypt who feared the Jew's growing numbers. His way of dealing with this "Jewish Problem" was to enslave the Jews. They were forced into backbreaking labor, compelled to build cities of treasure houses for Pharaoh. His priests predicted a male savior would be born to the Jews and liberate them, so Pharaoh commands that all Jewish newborn males be killed.

Moses is born about this time and his mother puts him into a basket to float down the Nile river while his sister Miriam keeps a watchful eye hidden in the reeds. Pharaoh's daughter comes to bathe in the river and finds the baby Moses and decides to rear him as her own son. Miriam sees this and offers to find a wet nurse for Pharaoh's daughter to nurse her new baby and is able to get Moses's real mother a job caring him, while Pharaoh's daughter raises Moses as her own son.

As a young man, Moses leaves the palace and discovers the hardship of his brethren. He sees an Egyptian beating a Hebrew and kills the Egyptian and Moses is forced to flee to Midian and becomes a shepherd.

One day as Moses is shepherding his flock, he comes upon a burning bush, in which G-d appears to him and instructs him to go to Pharaoh and demand: "Let My people go." But Pharaoh refuses to let them go and increases the burden of labor on his Hebrew slaves, commanding their taskmasters to cease bringing the Israelites straw to make the bricks. Now, they must go to the fields to collect the straw themselves, but maintain the same quota of brick production.

Moses repeatedly comes before Pharaoh to demand in the name of G-d, "Let My people go" but Pharaoh repeatedly refuses. So G-d sends a series of plagues upon the Egyptians. In the throes of each plague, Pharaoh promises to let the Children of Israel go; but he reneges the moment the affliction is removed.

Let us enumerate the ten plagues now. Altogether we say each plague out loud and as we do so, dip your pinky finger in your wine or grape juice and tap a drop onto your plate:

- 1) Blood (The Nile waters turn to blood)
- 2) Frogs (Swarms of frogs overrun the land;)
- 3) Lice (They infest all men and beasts.)
- 4) Beasts (Hordes of wild animals invade the cities.)
- 5) Pestilence (Kills the domestic animals.)
- 6) Boils (Afflict the Egyptians.)
- 7) Hail (Descends from the skies.)
- 8) Locusts (Swarms of locusts devour all the crops and greenery.)
- 9) Darkness (Envelops the land.)
- 10) Death of the firstborn (Killed by the angel of death.)

The death of the firstborn finally breaks Pharaoh's resistance. He allows the Children of Israel to leave. They depart hastily fearing Pharaoh will change his mind. There is no time for their dough to rise. (Pour cup of wine and open door for Elijah. Everyone recites the final blessing altogether.)

### **Final Blessing:**

This food is a gift of the whole universe, numerous living beings and much hard work.

May we eat in mindfulness and gratitude. May we transform unwholesome states of mind and learn to eat with moderation.

May we eat in such a way as to keep our compassion alive, reduce the suffering of living beings, preserve our planet and halt climate change.

We accept this food so that we may nourish our connections with others, strengthen our will to engage in right livelihood and realize our ideal of compassion for all beings.

### **The Meal is now served**



## Blowing in the Wind

How many roads must a man walk down,  
Before you call him a man?  
Yes'n how many seas must a white dove  
sail, Before she sleeps in the sand?  
Yes'n how many times must the cannonballs fly,  
Before they're forever banned?

The answer my friend, is blowin' in the wind.  
The answer is blowin' in the wind.

How many times must a man look up  
Before he can see the sky?  
Yes'n how many ears must one man have,  
Before he can hear people cry?  
Yes'n how many years can a mountain  
exist Before it's washed to the sea?  
Yes'n how many years can some people  
exist Before they're allowed to be free?

## Hevenu Shalom Aleichem

Hevenu shalom aleichem,  
Hevenu shalom aleichem,  
Hevenu shalom aleichem,  
Hevenu shalom, shalom Shalom aleichem.  
(repeats 4 times)

## Amazing Grace

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me.  
I once was lost but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see.  
T'was Grace that taught my heart to fear.  
And Grace, my fears relieved.  
How precious did that Grace appear  
The hour I first believed.

*"It is not your right—based on YOUR traditions, YOUR customs and YOUR habits—to deny animals THEIR freedom so you can harm them, enslave them and kill them. That's not what rights are about. That's injustice."*

*--Gary Yourofsky*

## Eliyahu Hanavi

Eliyahu hanavi  
Eliyahu hatish'bi  
Eliyahu Eliyahu Eliyahu hagil'adi -

Bim'herah (beyameinu) yavo eleinu  
im Mashi'ach ben David.  
im Mashi'ach ben David.

## We Shall Overcome

We shall overcome,  
We shall overcome,  
We shall overcome, some day.  
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe  
We shall overcome, some day.

We'll walk hand in hand,  
We'll walk hand in hand,  
We'll walk hand in hand, some day.  
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe  
We shall overcome, some day

We shall live in peace,  
We shall live in peace,  
We shall live in peace, some day.  
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe  
We shall overcome, some day

We shall all be free,  
We shall all be free,  
We shall all be free, some day.  
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe  
We shall overcome, some day

We are not afraid,  
We are not afraid,  
We are not afraid, TODAY  
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe  
We shall overcome, some day  
We shall overcome,  
We shall overcome,  
We shall overcome, some day.  
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe  
We shall overcome, some day.