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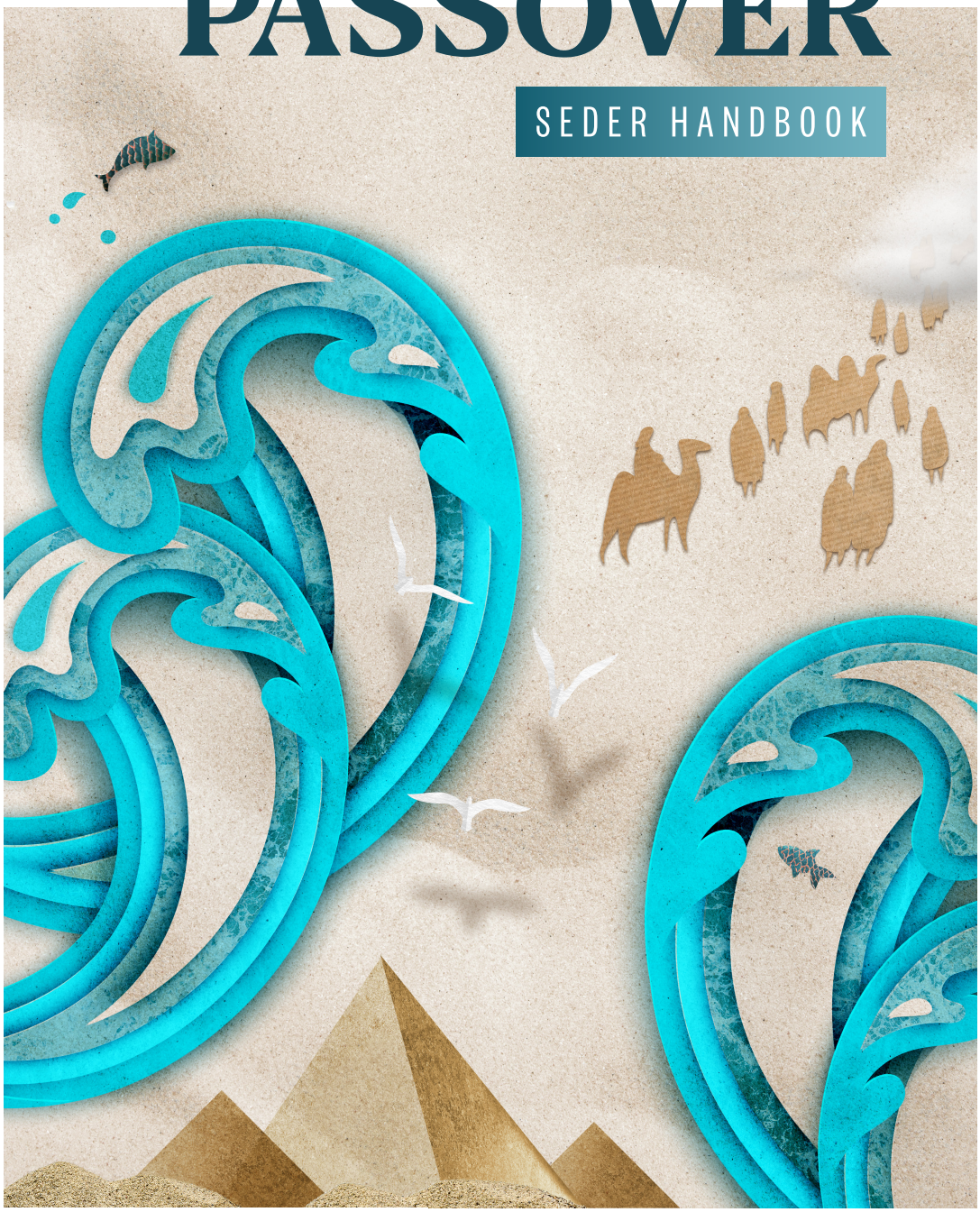
A HILLEL CHABAD COLLABORATION

JLI
JEWISH LEARNING INSTITUTE

PASSOVER

SEDER HANDBOOK



JEWISH LIFE AT VCU

Foreword

Passover, the joyous Jewish festival of freedom, begins this year on **Saturday evening, March 27**, and continues through Sunday, April 4. It marks our ancestors' liberation from Egyptian bondage and the birth of our nationhood and special relationship with G-d. The festival's highlight is the *seder* (ritual meal), observed on Saturday evening, March 27, and repeated on the following night.

Jewish calendar dates do not begin at midnight, but earlier—at nightfall. Not insignificantly, this allows Jewish days to fully progress from darkness (night) to light (day), a theme especially native to Passover Eve: Our national experience began with darkness of exile and the nightmare of bondage, before maturing into freedom and light (the receiving of the Torah). In our own lives, we attempt to replicate this progress when celebrating Passover—to escape from internal darkness, inflicted by self-centeredness and servitude to baser instincts, and to emerge into a liberating existence focused on purpose. In this way, Passover empowers our personal exodus.

The following pages provide impetus for this experience. Fascinating Passover insights, designed to inform and inspire, are paired with practical guidance to facilitate a meaningful commemoration of our past, while supplying liberating tools for the present.

Our goal is to produce results that endure: Although some editions of the *Haggadah* include a concluding declaration—"We have reached the end of the Passover seder"—other editions pointedly shun that notion. For all concur that our inspiring experience is supposed to linger and positively influence us for the rest of the year, until we are ready to leap further on the following Passover. The messages contained in this pamphlet encourage us to head into Passover prepared to never leave; for the personal liberation we will experience is as valuable and immutable as the miraculous disintegration of Egyptian bondage and the gift of divinely guided nationhood that flourishes until today.

Best wishes for a festival of liberating inspiration,

Matisyahu and Chana Rivka Friedman

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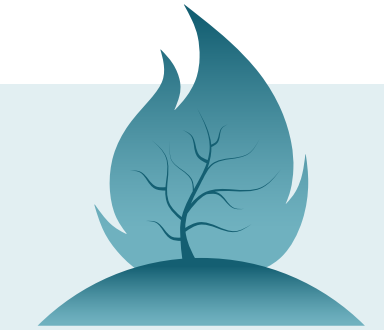
Exile and Redemption

A TIMELINE



1743 BCE
G-d strikes a covenant with Abraham known as the "Covenant between the Parts." G-d informs Abraham that his children will be enslaved in Egypt and then return to Israel to inherit the land.

1533 BCE
On Rosh Hashanah, Pharaoh has two disturbing dreams and Joseph, known to interpret dreams, is brought before Pharaoh. Joseph's interpretation foretells of seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine. He advises a nationwide food storage program. Pharaoh is impressed and appoints Joseph viceroy of Egypt.

1523 BCE
After two years of famine, Jacob and his family come to Egypt, where Joseph provides for them and where they are treated with honor as Joseph's family.

1400 BCE
The conditions of Jewish slavery grow exceedingly harsh and bitter.

BCE 1750 1700 1600 1500

1545 BCE
Abraham's grandson, Jacob, has twelve sons, including Joseph. The brothers sell Joseph into slavery and he is taken to Egypt. Thus begins the saga of Jewish slavery in Egypt.

1429 BCE
Levi, Jacob's last surviving son, passes away. With the last of Joseph's brothers gone, Pharaoh grapples with how to handle the growing Jewish population in Egypt and decides to enslave them.

1394 BCE
Pharaoh decrees that all Jewish male newborns be drowned in the Nile.

1393 BCE
On the seventh of Adar, Moses is born. His mother, Jochebed, places him in a basket in the Nile. Pharaoh's daughter discovers him and raises him in Pharaoh's palace.

1373 BCE
Moses kills an Egyptian for beating a Jewish slave. This is reported to Pharaoh, who decrees Moses's execution. Moses flees to Midyan.

1314 BCE
Exactly one year before the Exodus, G-d appears to Moses in a burning bush and orders him to return to Egypt and liberate the Jews. Moses appears before Pharaoh and relays G-d's instruction, but Pharaoh refuses.

1313 BCE
On the first of Nisan, G-d instructs the Jews to designate a Paschal lamb to be eaten on the eve of their Exodus.

1314 BCE
On Rosh Hashanah, as the third plague commences, Egypt loses control of its Jewish slaves, who are henceforth free of oppression.

1313 BCE
On the tenth of Nisan, the Egyptian firstborns demand that the Jews be liberated. When Pharaoh refuses, a civil war ensues.

1314 BCE
Nine-and-a-half months before the Exodus, the Ten Plagues commence.

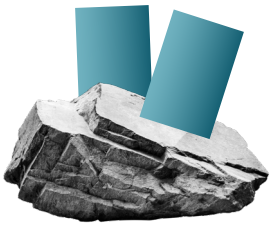
1313 BCE
On the fourteenth of Nisan, Jews slaughter the Paschal lamb and paint their doorposts with its blood.

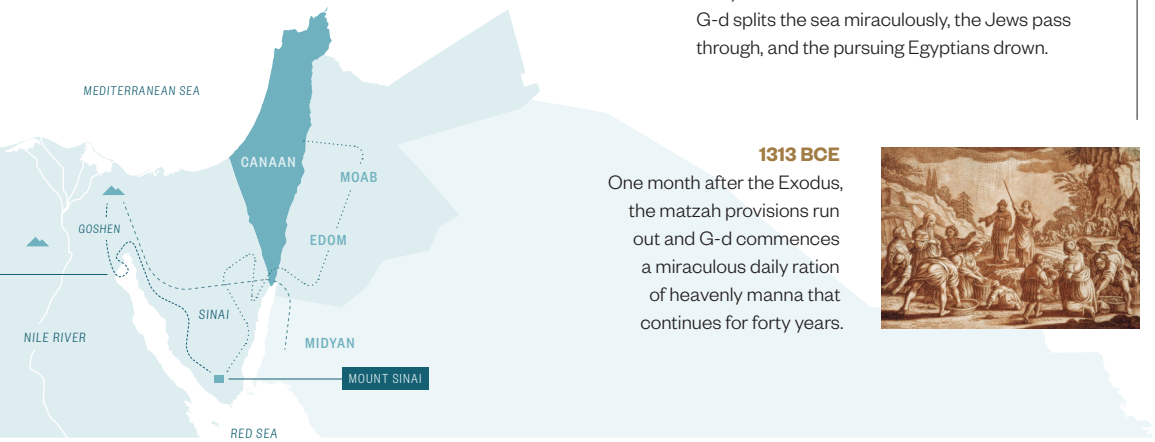
1400 | 1314 TISHREI | CHESHVAN | KISLEV | TEVES | 1313 SHEVAT | ADAR | NISAN | IYAR | SIVAN | TAMMUZ | AV | ELUL

1313 BCE
On the eve of the fifteenth of Nisan, Jews eat the Paschal lamb and celebrate the first Passover *seder* in history. At the stroke of midnight, the tenth plague strikes all Egyptian firstborns, but passes over the Jewish homes. Jews spend the night collecting valuables from their Egyptian neighbors and baking matzah for their journey. At midday, the Jews leave Egypt.

1313 BCE
On the twenty-first of Nisan, Pharaoh and his army reach the Jews at the Sea of Reeds. G-d splits the sea miraculously, the Jews pass through, and the pursuing Egyptians drown.

1313 BCE
On the sixth of Sivan, seven weeks after the Exodus, the Jews receive the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai.





1313 BCE
One month after the Exodus, the matzah provisions run out and G-d commences a miraculous daily ration of heavenly manna that continues for forty years.

SOURCES

Mechilta, Shemot 12:40, 12:41; *Yalkut Shimoni*, Shemot 1, *Tanchuma*, Shemot 8, Shemot 2:11–15; Rashi, Shemot 6:16, Rabbeinu Bechaye, Shemot 10:5, Talmud, Rosh Hashanah 11a, Sotah 12a, Kidushin 38a, and Shabbat 86b.

Passover Checklist

SEDER CHECKLIST

- ☐ *Seder* plate
- ☐ *Shemurah matah*
- ☐ Wine/grape juice
- ☐ Hardboiled egg
- ☐ A roasted piece of meat or poultry, e.g., chicken neck
- ☐ Romaine lettuce
- ☐ Ground horseradish
- ☐ *Charoset* (mixture of fruits and nuts, e.g., apples, pears, walnuts)
- ☐ A *seder*-plate vegetable, e.g., cooked potato or raw onion
- ☐ Salt water
- ☐ Candles
- ☐ *Haggadah*

BEWARE OF *CHAMETS*!

Throughout the festival of Passover, the Torah forbids the owning, eating, or derivation of any benefit from *chamets*. *Chamets*, or "leaven," refers to any food in which grain and water come in contact long enough to possibly ferment.

Commercially produced foods used during the festival should therefore be certified "Kosher for Passover." And in the weeks before the festival, we remove all *chamets* from our homes. On the night before Passover—this year, we perform this on **Thursday night, March 25**—we conduct a search for any remaining *chamets*; on the following morning, we burn what we found and renounce all ownership of any leaven that may have escaped our notice.

Chamets that one wishes to have after Passover should be sold to a non-Jew for the duration of the holiday. This sale must be enacted properly, and it can be done online at: **www.jewishvcu.org/passover**

RECIPE

Grape Juice Sorbet

3 cups water
1 ½ cups sugar
3 cups grape juice
⅔ cup lemon juice

SERVES 6

Refreshing and delicious!

In a large pot combine water and sugar. Bring to a boil. Add the grape juice and lemon juice and bring to a boil again.

Allow to cool completely. Freeze flat in a 9x13 pan.

Blend until it reaches a smooth consistency. Refreeze before serving.

Passover Calendar 5781

Times for Richmond, Virginia

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SHABBAT
				25 12 Nissan Search for *chamets* after 7:53 PM	**26** 13 Nissan Sell and burn *chamets* by 12:13 PM at 7:09 PM	**27** 14 Nissan Finish Eating *chamets* by 11:09 AM after 8:07 PM*
28 15 Nissan after 8:08 PM* ***Passover First Day***	**29** 16 Nissan Holiday ends: 8:09 PM ***Passover Second Day***	**30** 17 Nissan ***Passover (Chol Hamo'ed)***	**31** 18 Nissan ***Passover (Chol Hamo'ed)***	**1 Apr** 19 Nissan ***Passover (Chol Hamo'ed)***	**2** 20 Nissan at 7:16 PM ***Passover (Chol Hamo'ed)***	**3** 21 Nissan after 8:14 PM* ***Passover Seventh Day***
4 22 Nissan Holiday ends: 8:15 PM ***Passover Eighth Day***						

* LIGHT ONLY FROM A PREEXISTING FLAME.

Shabbat and Holiday Candles

Baruch atah Ado-nai, Elo-heinu melech ha'olam, asher kidshanu bemitsvotav, vetsivanu lehadlik ner

FOR SHABBAT	FOR HOLIDAYS	FOR SHABBAT AND HOLIDAYS
shel Shabbat kodesh.	**shel Yom Tov.**	**shel Shabbat veshel Yom Tov.**

Baruch atah Ad-onai, Elo-heinu melech ha'olam, shehecheyanu, veki'yemanu, vehigi'anu lizman hazeh.

Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d,
King of the Universe, Who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to kindle the

FOR SHABBAT	FOR HOLIDAYS	FOR SHABBAT AND HOLIDAYS
light of the holy Shabbat.	Yom Tov light.	Shabbat and Yom Tov light.

Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the Universe, Who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה אֲ־דֹנָי אֱ־לֹהֵינוּ
מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר

FOR SHABBAT	FOR HOLIDAYS
שֶׁל שַׁבָּת קֹדֶשׁ.	שֶׁל יוֹם טוֹב.

FOR SHABBAT AND HOLIDAYS

שֶׁל שַׁבָּת וְשֶׁל יוֹם טוֹב.

ON THE FIRST TWO NIGHTS OF PASSOVER ADD

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה אַד־נָי, אֱל־הֵינוּ
מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהֶחֱיָנוּ וְקִיְּמָנוּ
וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לַזְּמַן הַזֶּה.

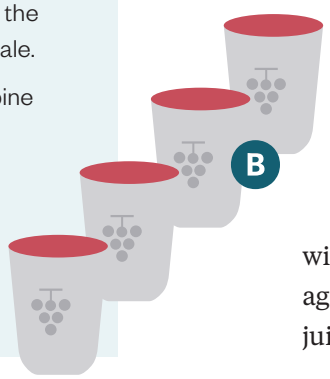
THE 8 Items of the Seder

For the *seder*, a table is set with the matzah, a cup for wine, and a *kaarah* (plate) that holds six items. The arrangement of these six items varies with local tradition; the Chabad custom is illustrated below—along with clarification about each item and additional insights.

SAVOR AND SERVE Wine is a beverage rich in flavor and easy to appreciate. The *seder*'s delectable four cups of wine are therefore associated with our internalization and appreciation of Judaism's brilliant insights and observances.

In stark contrast, the matzah is flavorless, simple, and bland. Historically, it was the fare of the destitute and the enslaved. Matzah is associated with the elements of our relationship with G-d that we cannot rationally savor or understand. For these, we summon our inner matzah—the rock-hard nucleus of faith that G-d plants within our souls, that inborn connection that runs deeper than logic and outranks the familiar flavors of rationale.

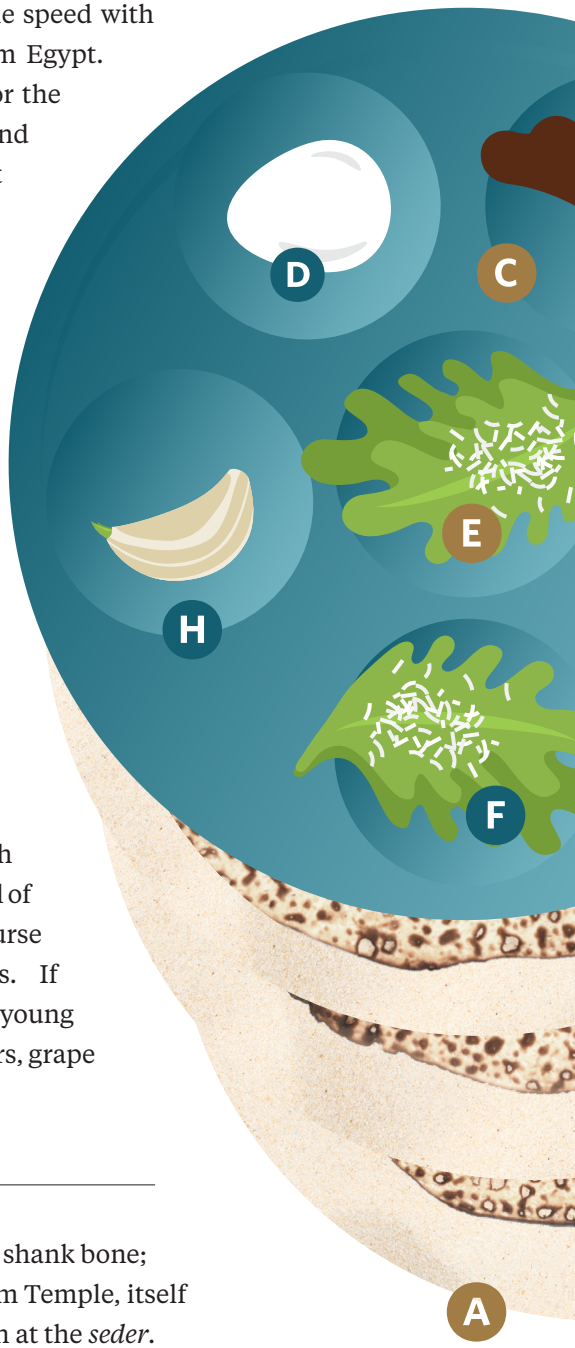
Wine and matzah combine in a *seder*, for both are essential to Judaism. Faith and appreciation must blend in the *seder* of daily Jewish life.



A MATZAH The Torah instructs us to eat matzah on Passover eve to recall the incredible speed with which G-d extracted the Jews from Egypt. Our ancestors did not have time for the dough they had prepared to rise, and on their first stop outside of Egypt they hurriedly baked it into matzah. We use three *matzot* for the *seder*.

It is especially preferable to use *shemurah matzah*: it is circular, without start or end, symbolizing G-d's infinity; its grain is protected against contact with water from its harvesting; and it is handmade, replicating the matzah baked in Egypt and ever since.

B WINE For the *seder*, the sages ordained that each person drink a total of four cups in the course of the proceedings. If wine is unworkable due to young age, health, or other factors, grape juice may be used.



C ZERO'A ("arm"); a small roasted segment of meat or poultry. Some use a shank bone; others, a chicken leg or neck. It recalls the Passover offering in the Jerusalem Temple, itself a commemoration of the Paschal lamb eaten in Egypt. This item is *not* eaten at the *seder*.

D BEITSAH, a cooked egg; to recall the *chagigah*—personal festive offering brought on all festivals, including Passover. The absence of the Holy Temple evokes a sense of mourning. Hence the egg, a traditional mourner's food (its oval shape symbolizes the life cycle). It is a prevalent custom to dip it into salt water and eat it at the start of the *seder's* meal.

THE SEED OF THE REDEMPTION A freshly laid egg appears to an uninformed onlooker as an end product. In truth, it is merely a preparation for the subsequent emergence of an entire creature—a live chick. Similarly, the Exodus appears as a completed achievement, but in truth, it merely set in motion the preparations for our final Redemption.

E MAROR, "bitter herbs," invokes the bitter agonies of servitude. *Maror*'s precise identification is debated; prevailing customs call for romaine lettuce, horseradish, or both. Note that romaine is not bitter unless it is left unharvested for too long; similarly, our ancestors arrived in Egypt as royal guests of their relative (Joseph, the viceroy), but as their stay lengthened, their fate became increasingly bitter.

F MAROR—a second helping, because *maror* is used twice during the *seder*.

CHANNELING BITTERNESS Our passion for performing goodness is symbolized by the matzah, whereas our inclination towards wicked choices is represented as *maror*, for its products are indeed bitter. During the *seder*, we perform *korech*—combining matzah and *maror*. This represents our objective: to unite our passions in G-d's service by inspiring our evil inclination to embrace the directions of our good inclination, thus forming an upgraded force for goodness.

G CHAROSET, "edible clay"; a mixture of ground raw fruit and nuts with a dash of wine to recall the thick mortar with which our enslaved ancestors constructed cities for Pharaoh. (The *maror* is dipped in *charoset* before it is eaten.)

H KARPAS, a vegetable. Prevalent options include celery, parsnip, radish, cabbage, raw onion, or cooked potato. It is dipped in salt water during the *seder* to pique the curiosity of children (of all ages!).

FROM SOIL TO SOUL Honest reflection on our spiritual lowliness could lead us to consider ourselves unworthy of G-d's love. But look at this vegetable! It was buried in dirt with only its leaves piercing the soil. And now it graces a *seder* table in G-d's service. G-d did the same with our ancestors, and He will do it for us as well. We can rise from a spiritually vegetative state, rise from the dirt, join the King's table, and reach tremendous heights.

SOURCES

Savor and Serve
The Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (1902–1994), *Likutei Sichot* 26, pp. 44–45

The Seed of the Redemption
Rabbi Yaakov Leiner of Izhbitz (1814–1878), *Seder Haggadah, Sefer Hazemanim, Shulchan Orech*

Channeling Bitterness
Rabbi Moshe Alshich (1508–1593), Shemot 13:11

From Soil to Soul
Rabbi Yerachmiel Yisrael Danziger (1853–1910), *Yismach Yisrael, Haggadah Shel Pesach, Karpas*

The **Fifteen Steps** of the **Seder**

Kadesh קַדֵּשׁ

1 **SANCTIFY** · Recite the kidush over the first cup of wine. If you cannot drink wine, grape juice may be used.

It is appropriate for women and girls to light the festival candles on/near the *seder* table before sunset (and after nightfall on the second night). See p. 7 for the candle lighting blessings.

While drinking the four cups of wine or eating matzah, we recline (lean to the left) as a sign of freedom and luxury.

Urchatz וּרְחַץ

2 **CLEANSE** · Ritually wash your hands (as before eating bread), but without reciting a blessing.

Karpas כַּרְפַּס

3 **GREENS** · Eat a small piece of vegetable dipped in salt water in order to stir the children's curiosity, so that they ask about tonight's unusual practices.

In addition, dipped appetizers were a practice of royalty, hence a sign of freedom, whereas salt water evokes the tears of our enslaved ancestors.

Yachats יַחַץ

4 **DIVIDE** · Break the middle matzah in half. Put aside the larger half to be eaten at the end of the meal (Step 12—*afikoman*); reinsert the smaller half between the two whole matzahs; it is the symbolic "bread of poverty" over which we retell the story of the Exodus.

Some use the *afikoman* to keep the children *seder* focused by appointing them as afikoman guardians and suspending it over their shoulders—reminiscent of the unleavened dough that accompanied our ancestors from Egypt, "bundled in their robes upon their shoulders" (Exodus 12:34). Others hide the afikoman and reward the child who finds it.

Magid מַגִּיד

5 **TELL** · Pour the second cup of wine.

If there are children present, they pose the Four Questions to the adults. If not, the adults pose them to each other. Those who are celebrating alone pose them aloud to themselves.

In response, read the *Haggadah's* narrative of the Exodus that incorporates history, textual analysis, prayers, and songs. For selected highlights, see pp. 12–14.

At the conclusion of this step, drink the second cup of wine.

Rachtsah רָחְצָה

6 **WASH** · Wash your hands ritually and recite the blessing that concludes with *al netilat yadayim*.

Motsi מוֹצִיא

7 **BRING FORTH** · In preparation for eating the matzah, touch the three matzahs and recite the blessing Hamotsi —"Blessed are You G-d ... who brings forth bread from the earth." Proceed immediately to the next step.

Matzah מַצָּה

8 **UNLEAVENED BREAD** · Touch the top two matzahs and recite tonight's unique blessing over "the eating of matzah." Eat a piece from each of them.

Matzah reminds us of the speedy Exodus: Our ancestors prepared dough, but in the rush to leave Egypt they could not wait for it to rise. At their first stop outside Egypt, they hurriedly baked their unleavened dough into matzah.

Maror מָרוֹר

9 **BITTERNESS** Recite the blessing over the *maror*, bitter herbs, symbolizing the bitterness of slavery. Before eating, dip it in *charoset*—the paste resembling the mortar used by our ancestors in forced labor.

Korech כּוֹרֵךְ

10 **WRAP** · Dip a second portion of bitter herbs in *charoset* and place it between two pieces of matzah (use the bottom matzah) to create a matzah-*maror* sandwich.

Shulchan Orech שֻׁלְחָן עוֹרֵךְ

11 **SET TABLE** · Enjoy a festive meal. It is customary to begin with the egg from the *seder* plate.

Tsafun צָפוּן

12 **HIDDEN** · Retrieve and eat the *afikoman* (see step 4), which represents the original *afikoman* ("dessert") eaten at the end of the *seder* meal—the meat of the Passover lamb.

Berach בָּרֵךְ

13 **BLESS** · Recite the *Haggadah's* "Grace After Meals" over the third cup of wine, and then drink the wine.

Hallel הַלֵּל

14 **PRAISE** · Pour the fourth cup of wine.

Pour a fifth cup (just one for the table, not for each individual). This is not consumed; it is the Prophet Elijah's Cup, demonstrating that, in addition to the four cups of our past liberation, we anticipate our future, ultimate Redemption that will be heralded by Elijah the Prophet.

Open the door of your home for the passage indicated in the *Haggadah*; it signifies trust in G-d's protection, as well as our longing to greet Elijah as he announces our final Redemption.

Recite the *Hallel* (psalms of praise) to thank G-d for the miracles of the Exodus.

Nirtzah נִרְצָה

15 **ACCEPTED** · Having fulfilled the *seder*'s steps as prescribed, we are confident that G-d accepts our performance. In conclusion, we joyously proclaim: ***"Next Year in Jerusalem!"***

Essential Passages of the Haggadah

Call for Curiosity

G-d instructed His liberated nation to discuss the Exodus on this night. We begin with curiosity arousing inquiries—for progenies to pose to parents, and for individuals to ask themselves.

מה נשתנה

WHAT MAKES THIS NIGHT DIFFERENT FROM ALL [OTHER] NIGHTS?

On all nights we need not dip even once; on this night we do so twice!

On all nights we eat chametz or matzah, and on this night only matzah.

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

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

Four-Sentence Summary

This is a lead-in to the *Haggadah* that sums up tonight's story, mission, and scope of duty.

עבדים היינו

WE WERE SLAVES to Pharaoh in Egypt, and the L-rd, our G-d, took us out from there with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm. If the Holy One, blessed be He, had not taken our fathers out of Egypt, then we, our children and our children's children would have remained enslaved to Pharaoh in Egypt. Even if all of us were wise, all of us understanding, all of us knowing the Torah, we would still be obligated to discuss the Exodus from Egypt; and everyone who discusses the Exodus from Egypt at length is praiseworthy.

To download and print (before Yom Tov) a complete Hebrew-English *Haggadah* (which will allow you to perform the mitzvah of retelling the story of the Exodus in the complete and traditional manner), visit: **www.chabad.org/4354402**

Edible Messages

This section is indispensable. Reading it satisfies tonight's verbal obligations, and in clarifying the *seder*'s edible duties it solves questions posed at the *seder*'s start.

רבן גמליאל

RABBAN GAMLIEL used to say: "Whoever does not discuss the following three things on Passover has not fulfilled his duty, namely: Passover (the Passover sacrifice), matzah (the unleavened bread) and *maror* (the bitter herbs)."

THE PASSOVER LAMB that our fathers ate during the time of the Beit Hamikdash — for what reason [did they do so]? Because the Omnipresent passed over our fathers' houses in Egypt, as it is said: "You shall say, "It is a Passover offering to the L-rd, because He passed over the houses of the Children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians with a plague, and He saved our houses." And the people bowed and prostrated themselves."

THIS MATZAH that we eat for what reason? Because the dough of our fathers did not have time to become leavened before the King of the kings of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, revealed Himself to them and redeemed them. Thus it is said: "They baked matzah cakes from the dough that they had brought out of Egypt, because it was not leavened; for they had been driven out of Egypt and could not delay, and they had also not prepared any [other] provisions."

THIS MAROR that we eat— for what reason? Because the Egyptians embittered our fathers' lives in Egypt, as it is said: "They made their lives bitter with hard service, with mortar and with bricks, and with all manner of service in the field; all their service which they made them serve with rigor."

Getting Personal

This paragraph contains the *seder's* inspirational punchline. It thereby solves any remaining inquiries from the start of the evening.

בכל דור ודור

IN EVERY GENERATION, we are required to view ourselves as having personally left Egypt...

Seder Interaction

Enliven your *seder* by posing and discussing the following questions with family and friends. Assign each participant a question from each of the two sections (*What Do You Think?* and *What's the Right Answer?*). Each then takes a turn at sharing their thoughts and impressions.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Which Passover tradition triggers your emotions in a most powerful way?

Have you ever experienced a personal "exodus" moment?

What is your message to each of the "four prototypical children"?

If you could time-travel to another period in Jewish history, whose *seder* would you visit?

Is there more than one way to define slavery/freedom? How so?

Why have the Jews been singled out for persecution and hate throughout history?

What is the value in retelling the Exodus story if we already know it?

What should Jews do today toward ensuring Jewish continuity?

Is there an item on the *seder* plate that you can creatively link to someone sitting around the table?

WHAT'S THE RIGHT ANSWER?

1. When was the first *Haggadah* printed?

2. What is the meaning of the word *afikoman*?

3. What are the names of Moses's mother and sister?

4. How many times is Moses's name mentioned in the *Haggadah*?

5. What are some other names for the Passover holiday?

6. What is the meaning of the word *seder*?

7. What Passover-related slogan did an astronaut proclaim while on a moonwalk?

ANSWERS

1. Scholars assume that the first *Haggadah* was printed in 1482, in Guadalajara, Spain (ten years before the Expulsion). The only known surviving copy of this edition is at the National Library in Jerusalem. The first illustrated *Haggadah* that has survived in its entirety was produced in Prague in 1526. It is owned by the Swiss collector René Braginsky.

2. Based on the Greek *epikomen* or *epikomion*, which means, "that which comes after" (i.e., dessert). Alternatively, it comes from the Aramaic *afku man*, which means "bring out the food."

3. Moses's mother was Yocheved (Jochebed), and his sister was Miriam.

4. In some versions of the *Haggadah*, his name isn't mentioned at all. Some versions have one mention of his name: "They believed in G-d and in Moses, His servant."

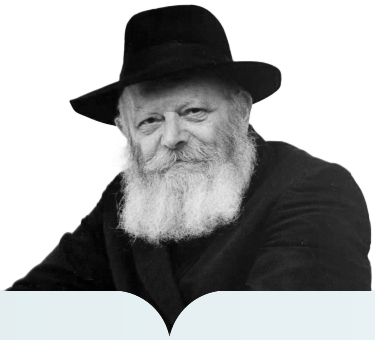
5. This holiday has several names. In the Bible, it is known as *Chag Hamatzot*. In the prayers, it is referred to as *Zeman Cheirutenu* (Season of Our Liberation). It is popularly called *Pesach* (Passover).

6. *Seder* is the Hebrew word for "order." In decidedly un-Jewish fashion, tonight everything is done in a particular order, following an exact sequence.

7. In 1973, Apollo 17 astronaut Gene Cernan shouted, "Man, oh, Maniscewitz!" (the matzah company's slogan) in the middle of his moonwalk.

Life Lessons from Passover

From the Lubavitcher Rebbe,
Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson



FINDING THE FIFTH

The *Haggadah* describes four disparate types of youth, but with a common denominator: all of them, even the most rebellious one, is present at the *seder*. They meet, their lives intersect, and they share varying degrees of association with Torah and *mitzvot*. Consequently, there is strong hope that even the most wayward child will eventually see the beauty of a Torah life. Unfortunately, the present era of spiritual confusion has produced a fifth, unmentioned category: the absent child. This one knows nothing of a *seder*, Passover, Torah, or Judaism. Our attention to the absent children must begin long before Passover. With love and sacrifice, we must reach out to Jews who do not know what being Jewish means. No Jewish child is expendable. All energies must be directed to introducing absent Jews to the "*seder*" of Jewish life.

Public letter, 1957, *Igrot Kodesh* 15, pp. 33–34

A NATION OF INDIVIDUALS

For centuries, the Passover lamb had collective overtones: it was prepared in assembly, at the Jerusalem Temple, and eaten within the city's limits—a central location belonging to the Jewish collective. By contrast, its foundations were steeped in individuality: G-d commanded our ancestors in Egypt to prepare and eat the original Passover lamb in *private homes*, as an *individualized* family project.

The necessity of providing this collective-toned endeavor with an individualized foundation is instructive: It was precisely as they stood on the brink of nationhood that G-d emphasized their individuality. For a nation, rather than swallowing its individuals for collective benefit, must seek to *enhance* the individuality of its members.

Likutei Sichot 18, pp. 104, 113–114

A PERPETUAL MESSAGE

To each of us in our personal lives, the Exodus speaks loud and clear: free yourself from the obstacles and limitations that stand in your way, preventing you from being what you should be and acting as you truly should.

Moreover, like our constant retelling of the Exodus story, its personal message is perpetual: The personal exodus you achieved yesterday was marvelous only by yesterday's standards, for you have subsequently grown from that experience, and it is therefore insufficient for the standards of today. Nor will the personal exodus you achieve today be sufficient for tomorrow.

The soul within feels enslaved when stationary; it is truly free when it experiences growth.

Igrot Melech 2, pp. 19–21

Passover Insights on Education

PUT YOUR MOUTH WHERE YOUR MATZAH IS

Sarah Schenirer (1883–1935)

The Torah requires parents to provide Exodus education on the anniversary of the event. More specifically, it must be delivered at night during the *seder*, while the matzah and bitter herbs are set out on the table.

Therein lies the secret of Jewish education: Do not offer abstract ideas divorced from reality. Even on the anniversary, simply explaining the event is inadequate. First put the matzah on your table and then talk! You can provide your children with deeper appreciation for a mitzvah, but only when they see you—their parent—actively observing it.

Em BeYisrael, p. 74

AN EDUCATOR'S GAIN

Nechama Leibowitz (1905–1997)

The Torah says, "In order that you may tell in the ear of your child and your grandchild the things I have done in Egypt, and the wonders I performed among them, so that you may know that I am G-d." (Shemot 10:2)

When we read this verse in the original Hebrew, we notice that the first "you" is written in the singular (*tesaper*), while the second "you" is written in the plural (*vidatem*). Why this change? One possible answer is that genuine educational dialogue allows the one transmitting knowledge to also learn and grow.

Studies on the Haggadah: From the Teachings of Nechama Leibowitz (New York: Urim Publications, 2002)

THE SANCTITY OF A QUESTION

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks (1948–2020)

Teaching the young to ask questions is an essential feature of *Pesach*, so much so that the Haggadah—the narration—must be in response to a question from a child. If there is no child present, adults must ask one another, and if one is eating alone, one must ask oneself. In Judaism, to be without questions is a sign not of faith, but of lack of depth. "And the [child] who does not know how to ask," you must begin to teach him how. . . . Asking a question is itself a profound expression of faith in the intelligibility of the universe and the meaningfulness of human life. . . . Far from faith excluding questions, questions testify to faith—that history is not random, that the universe is not impervious to our understanding, that what happens to us is not blind chance. We ask, not because we doubt, but because we believe.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks's Haggadah: Hebrew and English Text with New Essays and Commentary (New York: Continuum, 2006), pp. 105–106

The Haggadah Throughout History

The Agudas Chasidei Chabad Library in New York houses the priceless Judaica collections of the Chabad rebbes, including that of the seventh rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson. The library has some two thousand editions of the *Haggadah* that were printed or illustrated over the past four hundred fifty years, some of which are quite rare. Five samples are displayed here.

Images provided by Rabbi Shalom Dovber Levine, director and curator of the library.

HIGHEST FORM OF FLATTERY (AMSTERDAM 1695)

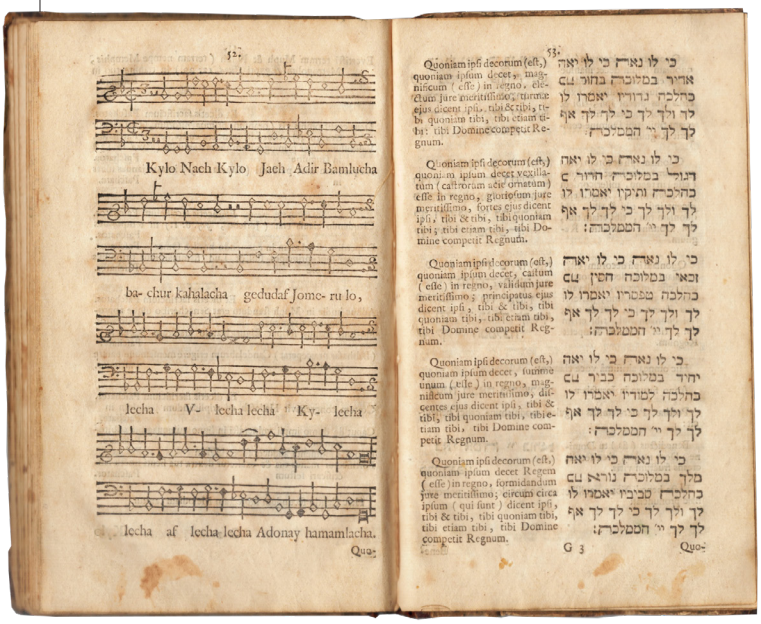
The artwork of this famed *Haggadah*, created by Avraham Bar Yaakov, a former pastor who converted to Judaism, was copied and imitated more than any other *Haggadah* in history, leaving an impact well into the twentieth century.

Presented here is the title page along with a page of the text accompanied by the commentary of Rabbi Yitschak Abarbanel (1437–1508). This page also features an illustration of the angels' visit to Abraham and Sarah to announce the birth of Isaac.

LATIN AND LYRICS (FRANEKER 1698)

Johann Stephan Rittangel (1606–1652), a Christian Hebraist, authored *Liber Rituum Paschalium,* a translation of the Passover *Haggadah* in Latin and German (Konigsberg 1644). In 1698, his *Libra Veritatis*, a Christian work, was printed in Franeker, the Netherlands, and the publishers appended to this his Latin translation of the *Haggadah*.

The image here is from this 1698 print. What's particularly unique about this *Haggadah* is that Rittangel included musical notations for two traditional Passover songs that Jews sung at that time. These are the oldest extant musical notes for a Jewish song.



A map of the Land of Israel, one of the oldest of its kind, is featured at the end of this volume.

TRIPARTITE COMMENTARY (METZ 1767)

This *Haggadah*, titled *Beit Chorin*, uses many of the illustrations from the Amsterdam edition of 1695. Three celebrated commentaries are provided in this edition: *Gevurot Hashem* by Rabbi Yehudah Loew of Prague (ca. 1512–1609), *Olelot Efraim* by Rabbi Shlomo Efraim Luntshitz (1550–1619), and an eponymous commentary from Rabbi Moshe Alshich (1508–1593).

Presented here is a page of text along with an illustration of Pharaoh's daughter saving Moses from the Nile. Although Moses's name is barely mentioned in the text of the *Haggadah*, he is prominently featured in many editions via the illustrations.

ON NEW SHORES (NEW YORK 1857)

Henry Frank (1804–1868), a Hebrew publisher in Bavaria, joined many Jews who emigrated in 1848 due to the 1848–9 revolutions in Germany. He settled in New York where he set up his printshop. He printed the *Haggadah* in 1850 with an English translation (the first *Haggadah* printed in the United States was accomplished thirteen years earlier). The popularity of his edition and the growing Jewish population of the United States led Frank to reprint it many times. The pages shown here are from his 1857 edition, which also included illustrations.

Depicted here are the Ten Plagues.

A WORK OF ART (KITTSEE 1760)

This *Haggadah* on parchment was handwritten and drawn by Chaim ben Asher Anshel, a famous calligrapher (d. 1784) in Kittsee, near Pressburg (today: Bratislava).

Presented here is the title page and a page of text that also features an image of Moses killing an Egyptian overseer who had beaten an enslaved Jew. Notice how the name of G-d is written on the third to last line: with two *yuds* inside an upside down *vav*. Notice as well the upside down *shin* at the end of the second to last line, filling the empty space and alluding to the first letter on the next line.

לשנה הבאה בירושלים!

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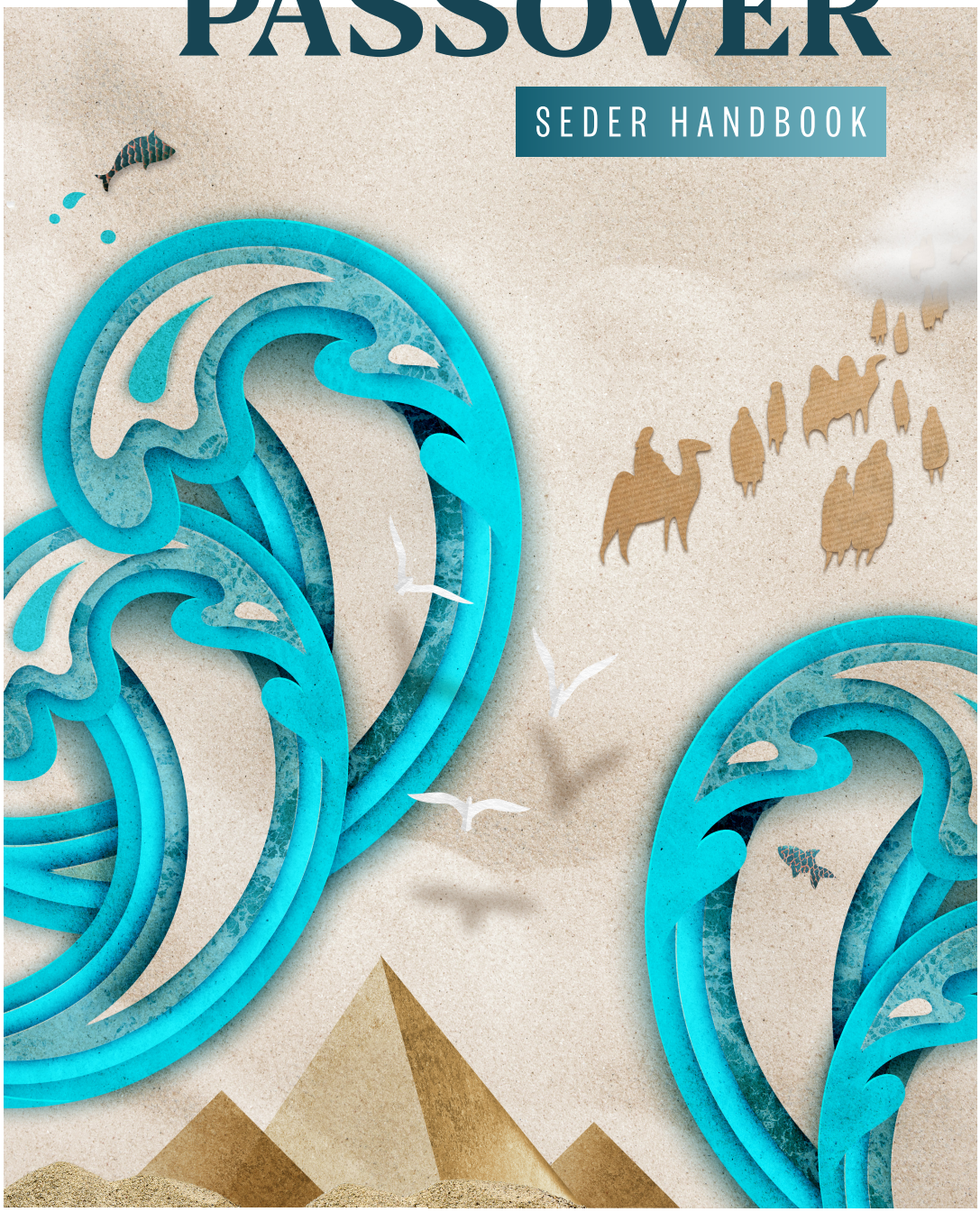
PASSOVER

SEDER HANDBOOK



CHABAD IN SUNSET PARK