

הגדה של פסח



PASSOVER HAGGADAH

HOUSTON RED SEDER 2019/5579 EDITION

ABOUT THIS HAGGADAH:

WHY IS THIS SEDER DIFFERENT FROM OTHER SEDERS?

We have come together to celebrate the Jewish Festival of Passover, practiced for thousands of years across every continent humans lived on, and in dozens of languages. The festival is meant to mark the anniversary of the biblical story of Exodus, or how the children of Abraham found freedom from slavery in Ancient Egypt. The story has been celebrated as a signal for emancipation, justice and democracy not just for Jews, but for all people in the world fighting for these things. There are many traditions to the seder dinner, but one in the inclusion of a stranger, perhaps those who are not Jewish, and anyone who needs a table to share. It is not enough that we celebrate liberation in the seder, we must attempt to share and expand them. It is from there that we depart.

The spirit of Passover for us are the things that are universal, all living beings should have these things we are celebrating. From Ferguson to Palestine to the US-Mexico Border, people are continuously fighting for freedom from walls and chains. Because of this, great freedom fighters such as Harriet Tubman and Martin Luther King Jr. have been seen as the personifications of Moses. We want to share the Passover story because we know that it already must belong to everyone if it is to mean anything at all.

Despite its universality, given its ancient origins, Passover has been celebrated many different and particular ways. We are a particular group of people, revolutionaries and friends of the socialist movement, gathering in Houston, Texas. So while we are celebrating values we believe are universal, we also have the opportunity to have a seder unlike any ever before, one that could truly be ours. There have been other haggadot and sidarim which has had a similar aim to ours for the past 100 years. We take great influence and direction from other haggadot, however we have decided to go forward with one of our own. We hope that others have the same inspiration.

We also know a few things about the Exodus story which cannot be true for us going forward. We will not be saved by a new Moses figure, but rather by people fighting for liberation of themselves. For us, it is the proletariat, the dispossessed and downtrodden, who is the new Moses. There is no new covenant to be formed by which we might find any new security, only the self organization of the proletariat. For us, we must have a Seder which overcomes its own limits.

We also must remember to not take ourselves too seriously and to have a good time. It is both shabbat and Passover this night, let us enjoy each other and have a seder to remember for years to come. Let us take relief and refuge, if just for tonight. Tonight, we are not just a family united by a memory of Exodus alone, but comrades dedicated not just to each other, but a new world where the spirit of liberation can be realized by everyone, everywhere. Let us cherish each other. Workers of the world, unite!

- Space City Red Seder

The Seder Plate:

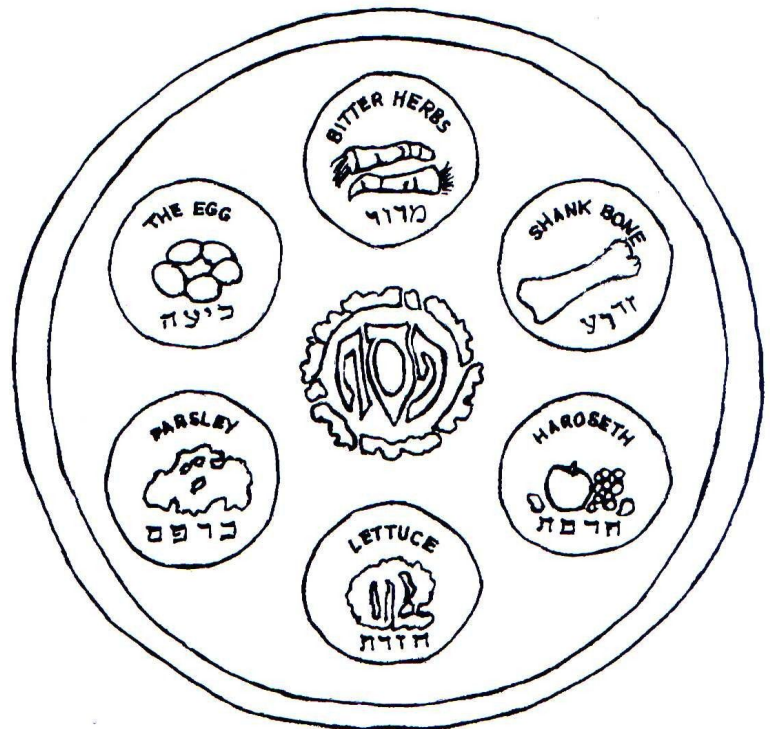
Maror - Bitter Herbs/Lettuce, Horseradish (hazeret): symbols of the bitterness of class society and oppression.

Karpas - Green Vegetable, Parsely: A symbol of spring, the possibility of new growth, including the welcoming of new comrades and friends, and the strengthening of friendships already consummated.

Charoset - Mixture of Fruit and Nuts: A symbol of the means of production, which we seek to collectively own.

Beitzah - Egg: A symbol of the cycle of life—of past, present and future, of the cycles of time and cycles of struggle.

Zeroa - Shankbone, (beet): The lamb bone symbolizes three ideas: 1) It is a tool for marking, a way of understanding our comradeship as the ancient Hebrews understood theirs. Through this we may understand who our comrades are, and who aren't. 2) It both represents the danger of marking people as with us or against us, but also the hope of finding a way to survive the coming apocalypse with others in solidarity. Finally, 3) it is a symbol of sacrifice and death, of what remains after our brief breath on this rock is extinguished.



KADESH - SANCTIFICATION

קדש

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES AND BLESSING OF THE WINE

Blessing of the Candles:

(The candles are lit)



(Leader and Group):

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו,
וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל (שַׁבָּת וְשָׁל) יוֹם טוֹב.

*Baruch atah adonai eloheynu melech ha'olam asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu
l'hadlik ner shel shabbat v'shel yom tov.*

Blessed be the class, master of our history, who lights the spark of world revolution, which has come together to celebrate this day of leisure.

(Participant 1):

Tonight is not simply passover, where we celebrate movements for freedom and democracy, but also the sabbath, a sacred day of rest for the Jewish people.

(Leader and Group):

For this sabbath, let us clear our heads and have relief from the work week, and enjoy each other.

(Participant 3):

Let the light of this candle guide us through the worry and bother which burdens the lives of working people so greatly.

(Participant 4):

Let the light guide us to a timeless place in our hearts where all the children of Adam enjoy peace, freedom and well-being.

(Leader and group):

Let us imagine for a moment, a world liberated from exploitation, oppression and hunger.

Blessing of the Wine:

(Please fill your glass with wine. Please do not pour your own glass. Instead, pour the glass for the person to your left. Hold the cup with your right hand and recite the following blessing with the leader)

(Leader and Group):

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגָּפֶן.

Baruch atah adonai elohaynu melech ha'olam borei p'ri hagafen

Blessed be the class, master of our history, who produces the wine which we enjoy in celebrating liberation and freedom in a night of leisure.

(Please drink of the first cup!)

(Leader):

The first step to the seder is known as “Kadesh”, from the Hebrew root “QDSH” קדש . It generally implies a holy process of separation from one thing, and the growing towards another. Because biblical Hebrew did not always have known vowel forms, “QDSH” can be read as a number of different words. Most commonly this is manifested in the ritual we just performed, the blessing of the wine, known as “Kiddush”. In this sense, “QDSH” translates to “to sanctify”. However, “QDSH” can also mean “to transcend”. Another meaning relevant to this seder, is the understanding of that of “devotion” and “dedication”. It is in the great spirit of all of these meanings that we are joined tonight.

(Participant 5):

For us tonight, Kadesh is our challenge to the existing world, and the proposal of a new one.

(Leader and Group):

Let us drink to revolution!

(Participant 6):

For us tonight, Kadesh is our bond, our devotion and dedication to each other as comrades.

(Leader and Group):

Let us drink to our comrades!

UR'CHATZ - WASHING HANDS



(Leader):

The second step of the seder is “Ur’chatz” or “Washing”. Normally this handwashing is performed without a blessing, however tonight we are invoking a less common but important tradition, the washing of *each others* hands. There are a few different origins of this practice, some women’s seders were known for this practice, as well as other red seders.

(Participant 7):

Tonight, we wash each others hands because of our inter-dependence as a class. On our own, we are disempowered and dispossessed. It is only in each other that we will find a solution.

(Participant 8):

We also wash each others hands as a reminder of our ability to refuse to labor for those that would exploit us, and instead dedicate our labor to each other and our collective liberation.

(Leader and Group):

Tonight, we wash each others hands, because we are comrades. We will carry each other when we fall, we will care for each other and look after each other.

(Leader):

Today, we struggle just to “function”, we care for ourselves in such a way that we are actually caring for a worker whose labor is bought by someone else. Even our “free time” gets dominated by our work. But tonight, we take this caring task of each other at our liberty. Please take this moment to reflect on overcoming something that is burdening you as you navigate class society, and “let it go” as we our the water over each others hands.

(From the bowl near the table, each person pours water over each hand of the comrade to their left. For the sake of science, this isn’t that sanitizing of a process as it spreads the same water over everyone’s hands, so feel free to use hand sanitizer afterwards)

KARPAS - VEGETABLE

כרפס

(Leader):

The third step is “Karpas”, the eating of vegetables dipped in saltwater.

(Grab a small bite worth of the greens and dip them saltwater)



(Leader and group):

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
בוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָאָדָמָה.

Baruch atah adonai elohaynu melech ha'olam, borei p'ri ha'adamah

Blessed be the class, master of our history, who produces the vegetables which we enjoy in celebrating liberation and freedom in a night of leisure.

(Eat the greens dipped in saltwater)

(Participant 9):

The saltwater is meant to symbolize our tears, our suffering under an exploitative and oppressive society.

(Participant 10):

The green represents growth, our potential for the overthrow of capitalism and the saving of our planet.

YACHATZ - BREAKING OF THE MIDDLE MATZAH

יָחַץ

(Leader):

The fourth step is “Yachatz”, the breaking of the communal matzah in half. May this be the bread of our affliction! Ha lachma anya! **הָאֵלֶּיךָ לַחֲמַתְּנוּ**

(The leader breaks the middle matzah of the three in half and obscures the larger half from view)

(Leader):

There are many meanings to the breaking of the matzah. One is for the unfulfilled human potential, the time and labor stolen from us by the capitalist. Another is the breaking of our hearts, when we witness or experience injustice in the world, a part of us feels broken and longing to be made whole. The final interpretation is the breaking of our shackles and the celebration of human emancipation, the rupture from the cycles of history. The larger half is hidden to be found later by the end of the evening. The meaning of this is to express “the unknown”, what was faced by the children of Abraham is their exodus from Egypt, and what we face when we struggle today, we fight for a better future, even though we don't have all the answers yet.

(Leader and group):

Tonight, we take a break from the world of having the need to take a break in the first place.

(Participant 1):

A world where our life is split between working for someone's profit, and the time we spend as we will, if at all, is a broken world.

(Participant 2):

We will stop at nothing against injustice, oppression and exploitation, which breaks our hearts. So long as one person suffers at the hand of another, we are incomplete.

(Leader and group):

Tonight we celebrate as the oppressed and dispossessed break out of history and make their own, taking back what has been stolen from them by the ruling class.

MAGGID - THE STORY OF EXODUS



(Leader):

The fifth step is “Maggid”, the telling of the story of liberation, and the drinking of the second cup of wine. This step involves the youngest participants, to ask the following questions, and any others that they might have. These are known as the 4 questions, sometimes opening with “what makes this night different than other nights?”.

(Pour the second glass of wine for the neighbor to your left, even if just a bit for the slow drinkers. Drink of the second cup. L’chaim)

(The four youngest participants):

1. Why do we eat Matzah on this night?
2. Why do we eat Bitter Herbs on this night?
3. Why do we dip our vegetables twice?
4. Why do we recline on this night?

(Leader):

Because we were slaves in Egypt. Because slaves were brought from the shores of Africa to these lands. Because the Karankawa people who lived in the land we now occupy were exterminated, and no one is left from their tribe to tell their story. However, people have always fought back and resisted.

(Leader and Group):

Because once the world was suffering, and someone fought to make it better.

(Leader):

Because of the stories that we each have, where a world of pain and conflict has seemed impossible to overcome.

MAGGID - THE STORY OF EXODUS



(Leader):

Tonight we ask 4 more questions, from 4 comrades

(Participant 3):

1. Why are some able to enter this land, while others are not?

(Leader and Group):

1. Because 500 years ago, people crossed the ocean and said “this is mine”, and brought with them death and disease.

(Participant 4):

2. Why do we poison the earth, air and oceans we depend on?

(Leader and Group):

2. Because we live in a world that values profit over all. Because not even an existential threat to us all can stop them.

(Participant 5):

3. Why are trans women face violence and rejection trying to live their lives?

(Leader and Group):

3. Because we live in a world that both oppresses women and has a backwards view of gender

(Participant 6):

4. Why must we sell our arms to lift a piece of bread to our mouths?

(Leader and Group):

4. Because we have nothing else left to reproduce ourselves.

MAGGID - THE STORY OF EXODUS



(Leader):

Tonight, we are skipping the boringly literalized Exodus story we all know, the descendents of Abraham were enslaved in Egypt and lived under a tyrannical Pharaoh until Moses brought them freedom, God inflicted the 10 plagues, the Red Sea was parted etc. The point is, people were oppressed, struggled and then were redeemed. Tonight when the feast commences, try to listen to or tell a story from your life or the lives of your comrades, about fighting back and our collective liberation. Talk about 10 things plaguing the working class (white supremacy, gendered oppression, preventable disease, climate change, etc.), and the 10 plagues we want to inflict on the ruling class (solidarity, freedom, revolution, etc.)

(Leader and Group):

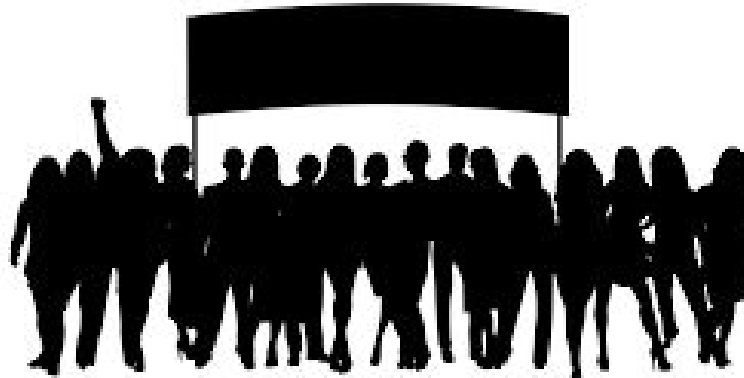
Tonight, we drink 4 cups, ask 4 questions, and make to each other 4 promises, as God made to the Children of Abraham.

(Leader and Group):

We will lead each other, we will deliver each other from oppression, we will redeem each other with outstretched arms, and we will take each other as our people.

(Leader):

For as Jews were
slaves in Egypt, we
are all comrades in
the revolution!



RACHTZAH - THE WASHING OF HANDS BEFORE MEAL

רְחִיצָה

(Leader and Group):

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

Baruch atah adonai eloheynu melech ha'olam asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al netilat yadayim.

Blessed be the class, master of our history, who feeds each other, and tonight washes each other.

MOTZE-MATZAH - THE BLESSING AND EATING OF MATZAH מִצֵּה - מַצֵּי

(Leader and Group):

*Baruch atah adonai eloheynu melech
ha'olam hamotzi le'chem min ha'arets.
Baruch atah adonai eloheynu melech
ha'olam asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav
v'tzivanu al achilat matzah.*

Blessed be the class, master of our
history, who harvests the bread from the
earth.

Blessed be the class, master of our history, who feeds each other, and tonight eats of
matzah.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
הַמוֹצֵיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ:

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

MAROR - THE BLESSING AND EATING OF MAROR

מָרֹר

(Leader and Group):

*Baruch atah adonai eloheynu
melech ha'olam asher
kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al achilat maror.*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מָרֹר:

Blessed be the class, master of our history, who feeds each other, and tonight eats of
matzah.

KORECH - THE EATING OF MAROR, CHAROSET, AND MATZAH

ךךך

(Leader):

A tradition of many years has us eating of the matzah, charoset and second bitter herb, to remind us that in times of sweetness there is also bitterness.

(Participant 7):

In times of freedom, there is still oppression.

(Leader and group):

In times of pain and suffering, let there be hope and liberation.

(Participant 8):

In times of fear, let us find refuge in each other.

(Leader and group):

Towards a world where we shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; where nation shall not lift up sword against nation.

(Take of the bitter herb, charoset and make a sandwich with matzah and eat it)

SHULCHAN ORECH - THE PASSOVER FEAST

שלחן-עורך

(Wash your hands while the previous blessing is still in effect, and partake in the passover feast! If you are going to partake in the optional custom of eating the egg, which is an avocado for our purposes, do so now. Relax and recline, we have earned it! Shabbat shalom and chag sameach!)

TZAFUN - THE EATING OF THE AFIKOMEN

תזפון

(As the youngest children engage in an activity, we gather from our meal for a few final steps)

(Leader):

One of the last traditions is to eat of the afikomen, the bread of affliction which is split earlier in the meal. It is reunified after the most important intervention left from our real leaders, the youngest among us! Let the last thing we taste be a reminder of our struggle.



(Pass around the afikomen, to be eaten as people will, with charoset or not, if any is left)

BAREICH - THE BLESSING AFTER THE MEAL

ברכה

(Fill up the third glass of wine of the partner to your left)

(Leader):

The actual Hebrew blessing for this section is very long, even in its shorter version. We will instead give thanks in our own way. It is also during this part that we open the door for Elijah.

(Leader and group):

Tonight, we thank the farmer who grew and harvested the food, the comrades who cooked it, and people all over the world, struggling to tear down walls and build up each other. To the millions of comrades who gave their lives for a better world. L'Chayim and Amen!

(Drink of the third cup. The children follow the leader to the door to look for Elijah)

HALLEL - PRAISE

הלל

(Leader and group):

מִן הַמֵּיצָר קָרָאתִי יְיָ, עֲנֵנִי בַמֶּרְחָב יְיָ.

Min hameitzar karati ya, anani bamerchav yah

I called upon the class, and the class gave to me expansiveness.

(Leader):

The struggle is where we find the rational resolution to our problems today. In each of our lives, there are moments where we feel trapped and lost, overcome by anger, fear and hopelessness.

(Leader and Group):

We can instead be grateful for the opportunity that we have to overcome, by finding a solution in each other.

(Leader):

The working class is diverse, and differentiated by our differences in race, nationality, culture, faith, genders, sexualities, and so much more.

(Leader and Group):

Let us be grateful for the opportunity to learn from each other and be there for each other, from this expands a world of possibility.

NIR'TZAH - ACCEPT



(Fill up the fourth and final glass of wine of the partner to your left)

(Leader):

This is the final stage of the Seder, where account for and are conscious of all the stages of the seder we have commenced. We recall upon the moments of joy and laughter, of discomfort and pain, and allow for a synthesis of our hearts.

We have asked 4 questions (or if you include the jokes, 4 sets of 4 questions), drank of 4 glasses of wine, made to each other 4 promises. We will remind each other of the promises now,

(Leader and Group):

We will lead each other, we will deliver each other from oppression, we will redeem each other with outstretched arms, and we will take each other as our people.

(Leader):

The phrase “Next year, in Jerusalem” at the end of the Seder, is a millenia-old diasporic statement that may require context, so as to give this the Seder the most diasporic and revolutionary plans we can make.

(Leader and Group):

Next year, an end to occupations and deportations,
Next year, an end of the oppression of women and queers,
Next year, world revolution and no more walls and prisons,
Next year, peace and freedom for all the people in Jerusalem!

(Drink of the final glass, L'chaiym and amen!)

WHO KNOWS ONE?

אחד אני יודע

A FUN GAME TO TEST OUR LUNG CAPACITY AFTER 4 GLASSES OF WINE

The goal is to recite the entire verse in one breath, starting from “Who knows one? I know 1”, and working our way up as go, but reciting it from the highest. You don’t need to recite “who knows 2, I know two?”, etc., each time. The leader will explain. Instead of using biblical numbers and their meanings, we are going to use a little bit of our history and politics as revolutionaries.

Who knows twelve? I know twelve. Twelves are the months of our new vacation.
Who knows eleven? I know eleven. Eleven are the years left to end climate change.
Who knows ten? I know ten. Ten were the days the working class ruled Paris.
Who knows nine? I know nine. Nine were the weeks of the Warsaw uprising.
Who knows eight? I know eight. Eight were the martyrs of Haymarket
Who knows seven? I know seven. Seven will be the days in our new weekend.
Who knows six. I know six. Six are the places on the Seder plate.
Who knows five? I know five. Five are the days Harvey kept us underwater.
Who knows four? I know four. Four are promises, glasses, and questions.
Who knows three? I know three. Three are the volumes of Marx’s Capital.
Who knows two? I know two. Two are the classes, bourgeoisie and proletariat.
Who knows one? I know one. One is the world revolution to end them all!

