



BETH DAVID  
REFORM CONGREGATION *Seek. Learn. Do.*

## Haggadah Supplement 2024

*Rituals and readings compiled by Rabbi Beth Kalisch for this year,  
with hopes that they spark conversation at your seder!*

### A Fifth Question?



The Four Questions, traditionally recited by the youngest guest at the table, is one of the most touching parts of the Passover seder, a reminder of Jewish continuity and survival. This year, you may want to ask the central question one more time — *“ma nishtanah ha'layla hazeh mikol ha'leylot?”* — as a chance for guests at the table to share how this Passover feels different than other years. Ideally, you can give everyone's feelings respect and space, and not make it a moment for bitter family arguments. This could be a good chance for kids to express their feelings and struggles about these past months, and for adults to be vulnerable. After singing the fourth question, say: Now we are going to sing the question one more time, and everyone can take a turn answering: How does Passover feel different to you this year?

### Two Pieces of Matzah, Not Three

How might we celebrate Passover differently this year? With so many Israelis brutally murdered on Oct. 7, so many soldiers killed or wounded in battle, so many people — Palestinians and aid workers — dead or suffering in Gaza, we cannot simply celebrate as we did last year.



I propose a very simple but powerful shift in the food at the seder. Instead of the three [sheets of matzah] that are included on the seder table (usually wrapped or covered in cloth), use only two. When it comes time to break one of the matzot to hide half for later (the afikomen), we will have only one and a half matzot left ... instead of abundance we will feel absence.... This - the brokenness and the diminished amount of food — is the bread of affliction, the symbol of suffering.

My prayer is that next year we can celebrate with a full set of three matzot again. But for this year, let's mark the suffering of those still in captivity by reducing our plenty and reclaiming the power of the “bread of suffering” at our seder.

Rabbi Elie Kaunfer

## *I Have No Words*

RABBI BARRY L. SCHWARTZ  
Congregation Adas Emuno, Leonia, New Jersey



Words fail and we stand in shaken silence.  
Words fail and we stand in despairing tears.  
And then, because we are human, and because we love life, we try to summon words.  
Maybe it is the somber verse of the Haggadah that rings truest:  
*Ela sheb'chol dor vador om'dim aleinu l'chaloteinu.*  
“But in every generation they rise against us to destroy us.”

In our great grandparents' generation they rose up to slaughter us in the pogroms.

But the people of Israel live.

In our grandparents' generation they rose up to slaughter us in the Holocaust.

But the people of Israel live.

In our parents' generation they rose up to slaughter us in the War of Independence and the Yom Kippur War.

But the people of Israel live.

In our generation they rise up to slaughter us on the borders.

But the people of Israel live.

We live as we count the dead, and mourn the dead.

We live as we tend to the wounded, and pray for the wounded.

We live as we fight on for the captives, and redeem the captives.

We live as we cry out for justice.

We live as we pray for the soldiers.

We live as we comfort the afflicted.

With a broken heart and a clenched fist all I can manage to choke out:

The people of Israel live!

## **I Belong to the Jewish People**

**Eleanor Harrison Bregman**

After Shabbat dinner on October 6, I turned to our host, a rabbi who is a dear family friend, and said “Can we have a conversation soon? About converting. I’ve been considering it for over a year, and it feels right on many levels, but I’ve identified as the ‘non-Jew in the room’ for so long. Could I actually belong to the Jewish people? Would I ever really feel Jewish in my bones?” Eight days later, a lifetime later, there was time set aside at Shabbat services for beginning to process what had happened on October 7 and I attempted to say something. I tried to say, in so many words, “As someone who does not belong to the Jewish people, I’m with you. I am here for you in this grief. I’m in solidarity with you.” As I spoke, however, I stumbled over the word “you.” It felt like the most awkward thing to say “you,” as if, like the wicked child of the seder, I was saying this happened to you and not to me. It was at that moment I knew in my body and in my heart: I was one of the Jewish people in the room, because this happened to me, too. After nearly 30 years of being part of a Jewish community and after 24 years of marriage to a Jewish man, I knew for sure I belonged to the Jewish people. I converted in March, and so, when I sit at the seder table this year, I will be like the wise child, claiming this heritage as my own.



## **Questions for Conversation**

- Share a moment when you have felt particularly connected to the Jewish people or actively claimed your belonging. What gave you that sense of connection to the Jewish people?
- What do you think is driving the increased interest in conversion since October 7? Have those same factors affected your connection to the Jewish community or Judaism? If not, what has kept you connected?

## Intention for Pesach / Tammy Levitan, Kibbutz Nahal Oz

The spring is exploding again in all its power  
Carrying on its wings the scent of citrus flowers  
And the bright colors of wildflowers  
And the drumbeat steps of Pesach approaching  
Are heard more and more clearly  
Pesach – the holiday of freedom – Really?  
This year? For all the children of Israel?  
One hundred thirty four brothers and sisters  
Are rotting in tunnels and in cages under torture  
And we're to celebrate as usual?  
Today we have a heartless government.  
If what I met on the 7.10.23 was the cruelty of Hamas,  
What I'm meeting today and everyday  
Is the cruelty of our government.  
In spite of this and in spite of it all –  
Tonight we'll celebrate, we'll make our hearts into  
Nests for hope, and as it says in the Pesach Haggadah, "you shall tell your children" –  
We will tell our children  
All about the injustices.  
As it is written, "Next year in Jerusalem"  
We will say "as fast as possible, bring them home,"  
Only then will our world be filled with joy,  
With color, and perhaps, with some ease.

*(English: Rabbi Daniel Burstyn)*



## Next Year In Jerusalem:

Additional texts and visions for the end of your seder



- Let all who find the city holy, live in peace and freedom.
- Let Jerusalem live up to the vision of the prophets that nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they know war anymore (Isaiah 2:4).
- Let the gates of justice open for all Israelis and Palestinians to experience collective freedom.

# How is this Passover different from all other Passovers?



At Passover seders each year, family and friends gather to tell the ancient Jewish story of freedom and liberation, to ask questions inspired by our tradition, and to express hope for a world of greater wholeness and peace. As we gather for Passover, we pray for the safe return of those held hostage, and our hearts break for all those who suffer.

This year, the October 7th attacks in Israel and the war in Gaza have created a rupture in our Jewish communities as people struggle in their relationships with those who hold differing viewpoints. Many of us may worry that the conversations around our tables this year will be fraught, or even impossible. But now, more than ever, it is critical to ask questions and to listen to one another.

Here are four questions to help all who gather to engage with open hearts and open minds.

- 1 Passover is a holiday of storytelling, and the Haggadah commands us to tell the story as though we had been present in it. What is one story that has shaped how you understand the war in Gaza?
- 2 Passover warns that great suffering comes from hardening our hearts. How are you feeling hard-hearted right now? How are you feeling tender-hearted?
- 3 Passover is a time to ask questions. When you think about the current war in Gaza, what questions come to mind? What is something you'd like to understand?
- 4 The seder ends with the aspiration: "Next Year in Jerusalem." What do you hope will be true one year from now? How do you hope you will feel?

## All Four (Are One)

Today the Four Children are a Zionist, a Palestinian solidarity activist, a peacenik, and one who doesn't know what to even dream.

The Zionist, what does she say? Two thousand years we dreamed of return. "Next year in Jerusalem" is now, and hope is the beacon we steer by.

The solidarity activist, what do they say? We know the heart of the stranger. To be oppressors is unbearable. Uplift the downtrodden.

The peacenik, what does he say? We both love this land and neither is leaving. We're in this together. Between the river and the sea two peoples must be free.

And the one who doesn't know what to even dream: feed that one sweet haroset, a reminder that building a just future has always been our call.

All of us are wise. None of us is wicked. (Even the *yetzer ha-ra* is holy—without it no art would be made, no future imagined.)

We are one people, one family. Not only because history's flames never asked what kind of Jew one might be, but because

the dream of collective liberation is our legacy. We need each other in this wilderness. Only together can we build redemption.

R. Rachel Barenblat

