



BETH DAVID

REFORM CONGREGATION

Seek. Learn. Do.

Haggadah Supplement 2025

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

Karpas: Struggle and Aspiration

We dip a green vegetable—karpas—into saltwater, to taste the tears of grief our ancestors shed during slavery in Egypt, mingled with their hope for a future of freedom. Tonight, we recognize that these tears and hope are also our own ...

Tears of outrage at disasters, inequality and injustice in our midst.

Tears of fear for the uncertain future of our planet.

Hope that we can repair these wounds.

Hope for equality, peace and justice.



בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה

Baruch Atah A-donai, E-loheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-adama.

We praise You, Eternal, Ruler of the Universe, Creator of the fruit of the earth.

Don't Silence Your Seder: Four New Questions

Intergenerational infighting is part of Jewish tradition, but it doesn't need to destroy our Seders. Here are four new questions for us to debate, even vigorously, with our families this Passover



- 1) How do you measure the safety of the Jewish people, and what has most shaped that understanding?
- 2) When you think of Jewish power, once the dream of a powerless people, now embodied in a state, a military, and relative security in the West, what do you see, what do you fear, and what do you believe it should look like?
- 3) What moral responsibilities do you think Jews have because of our history? And what does it mean to heed the oft-repeated biblical commandment, so salient during Passover: do not oppress the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt?
- 4) What do you hope the Jewish people will be a century from now, when our descendants sit down at the Seder table, and what do you most fear we might become?

- Ami Fields-Meyer

Passover, Protest, and Power

Since our earliest history, Jews have challenged authority. We have challenged God and governments, either overtly or in subtler acts of sabotage, from Abraham openly arguing with God about the plan to destroy an entire city, to Yocheved (Moses' mother) quietly hiding baby Moses from Pharaoh's genocidal decree.



Yet, since our earliest history, Jews have also accepted authority with humble, unquestioning obedience. Our very archetype of principled protest, Abraham himself, meekly complies when God commands he sacrifice his own child. As much as he is some ancestral proto-activist speaking truth to power, Abraham is also the paragon of wordless obedience.

When should we defy authority, and when should we obey? When should we raise our voices to the sky to make demands like Abraham did once, and when should we work behind the scenes, maintaining plausible deniability, like Yocheved?

There Are No Strangers

We gather at Passover to retell the foundational story of the Jewish People; a story of an oppressed people fleeing a life of hardship for freedom and safety in a new land.



Thirty-six times the Torah, Judaism's holiest text, references that freedom journey as a reminder that we are called not only to have empathy for the *ger* (stranger, sojourner, refugee, asylee, immigrant, or migrant), but also to take action to ensure that person is cared for in our communities.

We are explicitly commanded, "You shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the feelings of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in the land of Egypt (Exodus 23:9)." We know the heart of the stranger because we were once strangers, too...

The Haggadah instructs, "In every generation, each person must see themselves as if they went out of Egypt," reminding us to keep a personal connection to the ongoing plight for freedom and justice for all migrants. Through the generations of Jewish history since the Exodus, the Jewish people has known what it means to be refugees, desperate to escape violence, poverty, and prejudice. This Passover, we affirm our support for immigrants and refugees.

A Dandelion on the Seder Plate

It has become custom in some Jewish communities to add new symbols to the seder plate in honor of our own identities or causes that are important to us. For me, trans liberation covers both, and it deserves its spot on the Passover table. Last Passover I added a dandelion to the seder plate for the first time. This year, as trans people continue to face vicious attacks in the United States and around the world, I am solidifying it as tradition. Whether you pick a flower from your yard, use dandelion greens from the market, or find some dandelion tea — add some dandelion to your seder plate for trans liberation and celebration!



A dandelion on the seder plate
For trans love and celebration
Trans joy deserves to take up space
While we move from narrow place to liberation

Dandelions transition too
First they appear as bright as the sun
Then the flower needs to catch its breath
For its journey has just begun

The petals close while new seeds form
And yellow becomes green
Before you know it the time has come
It lets its new self be seen
- Eliana Kayelle

A Seder in Captivity

I remember Passover there [in Hamas captivity in Gaza]
— a sad holiday. We were depressed. We were
enslaved....



There was one moment of hope in the perpetual darkness we were held in, and that took place on Passover as Agam Berger and I prepared to mark the Seder. A few days before the holiday I took a pen and paper and improvised a Haggadah. I wrote down verses from a Siddur [prayerbook] we had, drew some pictures, and added Passover songs. We sat down for the "Seder", and read from our Haggadah. It was a bonding moment for Agam and I. Despite our difficulties, it was important for us to observe the holiday and maintain the belief that our freedom would soon come. We prayed

that the holiday would bring with it the news we so yearned for. Although we were not released then, that moment gave us the strength to carry on....

I stand here tonight before you, free—but my heart remains with everyone still in captivity. I stand here to be their voice. The voice of those who cannot speak, shout, or ask for help... This week is Passover — the festival of freedom. But what kind of freedom is it when 59 people are still in Hamas hell?

- Compiled from the speeches and writings of Liri Albag, Captivity Survivor

Multitude

We are a mixed multitude: some frozen in trauma, some burning with grief. Each of us carries at least one image of a child's unjust death seared into our hearts. How do we walk free?

Tell me the story again of how God said,
"My children are drowning and you sing praises?!"
Every human being is a child of God,
even the ones on the other side.

This year nobody's cup of joy is full.
Our souls feel as fragile as matzah.
Even if we and our children and our children's children
aren't certain what freedom would feel like,

maybe we can agree that this state of brokenness
isn't it. I want to believe we can get there from here.
Maybe the only way is as a mixed multitude
holding hope for each other until we can feel it again.

- Rabbi Rachel Barenblat

