

SHTIEBEL SEDER SUPPLEMENT 2024

Pesach beckons us to embrace the profound act of storytelling, from Exodus to Empowerment. It is a commandment passed down through generations, reminding us of our duty to transmit the narrative of our Exodus from Egypt to future generations.

Incorporating contemporary readings, songs, and stories enriches the experience, connecting our ancient story to present-day challenges, emphasising values of freedom, equality, and acceptance. These additions inspire us to reflect on current issues and work towards Tikkun Olam, our core principle of repairing the world, through acts of justice and compassion.

These additions to the traditional Haggadah can be used as you wish. Leave them on the table for guests to read and discuss, or integrate them at various points during the Seder to spark meaningful conversations.

PREPARING THE SEDER TABLE

As you prepare your seder table, you may wish to add these additional items.

The Empty Chair

As found in: [Jewish Federation in the Heart of New Jersey](#)

While some families leave an empty chair for the prophet Elijah, you may choose to leave more empty chairs this year to recognize all those celebrating without lost loved ones at their tables this Passover. You may choose to include images and names of victims or hostages that you're honouring.

Before starting the seder, say: Let's take a moment to talk about the extra empty chairs at our table – they represent people who will not be able to celebrate with their families this year.

The Yellow Butterfly

As found in: [Shtiebel Project Butterfly](#)

These butterflies have been lovingly made by the Shtiebel Keep Knitting Together crafters. They represent the 134 hostages still captive in Gaza, those individuals and families who are not yet free. Our Yellow butterflies are not merely decorative; they are symbols of hope, transformation, and the universal longing for freedom that resonates deeply with the story of Pesach.

The Iceblock

As found in: [The Jewish Climate Network](#)

The ice block represents the rapidly melting ice caps and sheets throughout the world caused by human activity. As the ice block shvitzes on our seder table, we are reminded that time is running out for action. This decade is different to all other decades... The seas are rising and there's no Nachson to split them for us so we can walk safely through.

PROJECT BUTTERFLY

A Symbol of Solidarity and Hope

As we gather around our Seder table this Pesach, we introduce a new symbol to our age-old traditions: the crocheted yellow butterfly. This delicate creation is an adornment and a profound emblem of love, solidarity, and remembrance.

The yellow butterfly, inspired by the poignant symbol of the yellow ribbon, represents our heartfelt connection to the Hostages and Missing Families Forum.

Each carefully crafted butterfly on our Seder plate, together with those on tables all over the world, serves as a reminder of our brothers and sisters held in captivity in Gaza.

Pesach, celebrated as *Z'man Cherutenu* – the time of our freedom. Tonight, as we reflect on the journeys of our ancestors, we also hold in our hearts those who are still bound.

Just as butterflies can transform and soar, so too, do we pray that all those deprived of freedom find release and soar into open skies and loving arms.

אֶחֵינוּ - Acheinu

[Click to play the Shtiebel recording of the melody of this prayer](#)

אֶחֵינוּ כָּל בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל,	Acheinu kol beit Yisrael,
הַנְּתוּנִים בְּצָרָה וּבַשְּׁבִיָּה,	han'tunim b'tzara uvashivya,
הָעוֹמְדִים בֵּין בָּיִם	ha'omdim bein bayam
וּבֵין בַּיַּבָּשָׁה,	uvein bayabasha,
הַמְּקוֹם יְרַחֵם עֲלֵיהֶם,	hamakom y'rachem aleihem,
וַיּוֹצִיאֵם מִצָּרָה לְרוּחָה,	v'yotzi'em mitzara lirvacha,
וּמֵאֶפֶלָה לְאוֹרָה,	um'afela l'ora,
וּמִשְׁעָבוֹד לְגְאֻלָּה,	umishi'bud lig'ulah,
הַשָּׂתָא בְּעִגְלָא וּבְזַמַּן קָרִיב.	hashta ba'agala uvizman kariv.

Our brothers, all the house of Israel, who are in distress and captivity, standing between the sea and the dry land, may the Eternal of Mercy, have compassion upon them, and bring them out from distress to relief, from darkness to light, and from subjugation to redemption, now, swiftly, and in the near future.

PREPARING OURSELVES FOR THE SEDER

As found in the Shtiebel Queer Seder Haggadah, adapted by Shtiebel from the [Velveteen Rabbi](#)

Three Questions

There is a Sefardic (Iraqi or Afghani) custom of turning to the person beside you, asking these three questions, and offering the three brief answers.

Try this, and see what opens in you.

Who are you?

Where are you coming from?

Where are you going?

(I am Yisrael)

(I am coming from Mitzrayim)

(I am going to Yerushalayim)

B'chol dor vador, in every generation, it is upon us to consider ourselves as though we had been freed from slavery in Egypt. We are Yisrael, coming out from Mitzrayim, journeying towards Yerushalayim. Each of us are Israel, enslaved in our own ways, leaving our narrow places, heading towards our new personal sanctuary.

A UNIVERSAL STORY

As found in the Shtiebel Siddur, this traditional Yorta Yorta song, adapted from Exodus 15 can be used as both an acknowledgment of country or as part fo the "*Magid*".

Burra Ferra

Womraka Moses yen-yen wala, wala yepuna yeipuch
Ngarra Burra Ferra yumena yala.

Ngarra Burra Ferra yumena yala yala
Ngarra Burra Ferra yumena yala yala
Ngarra Burra Ferra yumena,
Burra Ferra yumena,
Ngarra Burra Ferra yumena yala.

When Moses struck the waters
The waters came together
And drowned old Pharaoh's army, hallelujah!

As found in: [In Every Generation A Haggadah Supplement for 5784](#) from Shalom Hartman Institute

We begin the seder by reciting Kiddush, the blessing over wine, marking the moment and the meal as a sacred occasion. In a symbolic nod to our freedom, many have a custom to pour wine or grape juice for the person next to them, but not for themselves. This year, when so many in Israel are not able to sit at seder tables because they are hostages, serving in the IDF, or displaced from their homes, this ritual of pouring a glass for others takes on even greater significance.

To begin your seder, we invite you to read the following piece, written by Avner Goren for the Kibbutz Nir Oz 1996 Haggadah, which was later republished in the Be'eri Kibbutz Haggadah in 1999. Avner, a child of Kibbutz Nir Oz founders, and his wife, Maya, were murdered in their home when Nir Oz was attacked on October 7. Their adult children, Gal, Asif, Bar, and Dekel, survived, and they are moved by the inclusion of their father's voice in this Haggadah supplement. In this poem, Avner asks the reader to raise a glass. As we read Avner's poem and raise our glasses to begin the seder, we hold in our hearts those who cannot be at seders this year and think about ways we can elevate their voices.

Lift Up a Glass!

Avner Goren (Translated by Ilana Kurshan)

Look at the fruit salad:

Some fruits are sour, and some fruits, sweet

Some are more juicy, some, harder to eat

Some are more smooth, some, rougher-skinned treats.

Each fruit brings its own taste and colors and textures and when all mixed together, they create something new far more than just each fruit alone.

So too with us. We're made up of all kinds:

Some work the land. Some look to heaven for signs.

Some of us are visionaries. Some, more practical types.

We come in all sizes, all shapes, and all stripes.

Some set out on new paths. Some settle rather than roam and each brings their own language, customs, and beliefs from home.

We are an ingathering, a kibbutz (gathering) of peoples, a multicultural nation, an immense, breathing, and living creation renewing itself with so much innovation.

We lift up a glass to all who returned to our land
To the ingathering of exiles,

To immigration, to integration, both present and past,
We lift up a glass.

As found in the Shtiebel Queer Seder Haggadah, adapted from Adrienne Maree Brown

Remember you are water

Remember you are water.

Of course you leave salt trails.
Of course you are crying.

Flow.

P.S.

If there happens to be a multitude of griefs upon you, individual and collective,
or fast and slow,
or small and large,
add equal parts of these considerations:

that the broken heart can cover more territory.
that perhaps love can only be as large as grief demands.
that grief is the growing up of the heart that bursts boundaries
like an old skin or a finished life.
that grief is gratitude.
that water seeks scale, that even your tears seek the
recognition of community.
that the heart is a front line and the fight is to feel in a world of
distraction.
that death might be the only freedom.
that your grief is a worthwhile use of your time.
that your body will feel only as much as it is able to.
that the ones you grieve may be grieving you.
that the sacred comes from the limitations.
that you are excellent at loving.

As shared by [ARZA](#)

This year, breaking the middle matzah symbolises the deep brokenness we feel– the שבר or shatteredness afflicting our community. It serves as a dual memorial: one half for our resilient people, piecing their lives back together amidst grief and trauma, and the other half reminding us of our shared humanity with those celebrating their own holidays amid ruin.

Rabbi Eli Kaunfer of the Hadar Institute suggests a poignant change: start the meal with just two matzot instead of three. When we break one to save the Afikomen, we're left with one and a half matzot, reflecting our solidarity with those still in captivity and marking our "bread of suffering" as a symbol of shared hardship.

The Divided Matzah

By Rabbi Alona Lisitz

This year our heart is also divided, half of it here, around the table, is filled with joy and great gratitude for the family and our togetherness, for our freedom, for our full cups, for all the goodness with which we have been blessed.

And the other half is in Gaza, with our captives, who have neither freedom nor redemption nor do they have "Seder" (order) in their lives.

At the same time, the heart is found in many places around Israel, in the houses where the families of the captives are and empty places around their tables.

Our heart is broken into pieces.

This pain is sharp, and piercing, and wears away in our daily routine.

This year we will give this pain and this brokenness a place in our Seder.

YACHATZ - BREAKING THE MIDDLE MATZAH

As found in: [In Every Generation A Haggadah Supplement for 5784](#) from Shalom Hartman Institute

In the Yachatz ritual of the Passover seder, we break the middle of three matzot, reserving the larger half to be eaten as the afikoman at the end of the meal. In the same way that someone spilling wine on a white tablecloth can break the ice at a formal meal, breaking the fragile matzah opens the door for honest and robust conversation about challenging subjects during the Maggid section that follows.

Inviting the People We Miss to Our Table

Noam Zion

The seder gives us a chance to tell the stories not only of our ancestors, but of those we once knew and loved who are now missing from our tables. They may be beloved parents and grandparents whose chairs are now empty; friends and relatives disconnected from Judaism and our worldwide Jewish family; or family members, friends, and loved ones who could not join us this year for one reason or another. Ritual can help heal the pain caused by these poignant absences.

There are already many traditions around recognizing fellow Jews who are not present at our seders. During WWII, the kibbutzim of Mandate Palestine began pouring a cup of wine “for the missing.” Those present at the seder would dedicate their fourth cup to the many kibbutz members who had volunteered to serve in the British Army fighting the Nazis. In the 1970s and 1980s, many left an empty chair at the table or added a fourth matzah for Soviet Jews and/or Syrian Jews who were not free to celebrate Passover or to make aliyah. This year, consider setting an empty place to acknowledge those massacred and kidnapped on October 7, and the Israeli soldiers who have died in defense of their homes and families.

Questions for Conversation:

- Is there someone whose name you would like to add to the list of those you miss at your seder this year? Would you like to tell part of their story during Maggid?
- Can you think of other rituals, songs, pieces of art, or monuments you have encountered that make space for people who are no longer or unable to be with us?

On page 29 in the Shtiebel Haggadah, we recite the words of B'chol Dor Vador, in every generation.
This reading can be offered following the traditional reading.

I Have No Words

Rabbi Barry L. Schwartz

As found in: [CCAR Haggadah Supplement](#)

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 lives.

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!

The meal is followed by a series of blessings and songs of gratitude, in the Birkat HaMazon (blessings for the meal) and Hallel (the songs and psalms).

The following prayer comes from the Shtiebel Pesach Morning Service Amidah. It is an interpretation of the Hoda'a, the prayer of thanksgiving on this festival day.

Hoda'ah - הוֹדָאָה

We come together in humble gratitude,
on this sacred Pesach, the Festival of Freedom,
to thank You, the Eternal One.

For the miraculous Exodus from bondage,
for the redemption of our ancestors,
for the freedoms we cherish today,
we thank You.

For the matza that sustains us,
for the bitter herbs that remind us of struggle,
for the wine that symbolises joy and liberation,
we thank You.

For the strength to overcome challenges,
for the courage to embrace change,
for the resilience that has carried us through generations,
we thank You.

For the wisdom to pass down our traditions,
for the love that binds us to our heritage,
for the hope that continues to inspire us,
we thank You.

For the gift of this sacred season,
for the chance to retell our story,
for the opportunity to connect with our past and future,
we thank You.

May our gratitude inspire us to seek justice and compassion,
to repair the world, and to walk in Your ways.

ELIJAH'S CUP

As found in the Shtiebel Queer Seder Haggadah, adapted from Machar Congregation

The cup of hope

This is the cup of hope.

The seder tradition involves pouring a cup for the Hebrew prophet Elijah. For millennia, Jews opened the door for him, inviting him to join their seders, hoping that he would bring with him a messiah to save the world.

Yet the tasks of saving the world - once ascribed to prophets, messiahs and gods - must be taken up by us mere mortals, by common people with shared goals. Working together for progressive change, we can bring about the improvement of the world, *tikkun olam* - for justice and for peace, we can and we must.

Let us now symbolically open the door of our seder to invite in all people of good will and all those in need to work together with us for a better world. Let us raise our fourth cup as we dedicate ourselves to *tikkun olam*, the improvement of the world.

As we reach the end of the seder, the final step, Nirtza (acceptance) guides us to reflect on the evening's journey and celebrate our liberation. We seek inspiration and motivation for the days ahead to work towards a world where everyone is free.

We recite the final declaration and offer the words of L'shana haba'a, next year in Jerusalem, next year, may we be free. These words have a much deeper, profound meaning this year.

Our tradition constantly reminds us to find joy in times of hardship and to celebrate the freedoms we have, even if we do not yet feel completely free.

To Hold Onto Hope Without Letting Go

Oded Mazor (Translated by Ayelet Cohen and adapted by Noam Zion)

As found in: [In Every Generation A Haggadah Supplement for 5784](#) from Shalom Hartman Institute

"For everything there is a season ... under Heaven...
A time for weeping and a time for laughing,
A time for mourning and a time for dancing ...
A time for war and a time for peace." (Ecclesiastes 3: 1,4,8)

In those days when each time collapses into the next
We have no choice but to cry and to laugh with the same eyes
To mourn and to dance at the same time
And the long arc of history is compressed into one day and one hour.

We ask for the strength to contain
The intensity of our bursting hearts,
To rejoice with those who are fortunate to embrace today,
To enfold all of those withdrawing into their longing, their souls
trembling,
To hold onto hope without letting go,
And to leave some quiet space for a silent scream.
Please, grant us the room to shatter into pieces,
And the spirit to be rebuilt anew.

Questions for conversation:

- In this poetic prayer, Oded Mazor reminds us that life is not quite as simple as Ecclesiastes describes. Instead, we often feel many emotions at once. What gives you strength in those moments?
- Here, Oded describes a quiet space for a silent scream. How do you release your built up emotions?

