

Temple Shabbat Shalom Guide to Creating Your Families Seder

This year you and every participant of your families Seder are invited to lead. We believe in the self evident truth that all are created equal. Moses was our leader during the Exodus but the Seder suggests that we go beyond a single actor version of the story by not mentioning him. We do open the door to Elijah, inviting the question of why the world remains enslaved to tyrants and tyranny. History books are narratives of idolatry.

Nor do history books highlight the story of the children of Israel. In fact, in the oldest records of Egypt and Babylon we find no mention of our people. Our great leader David is ignored by ancient chroniclers. The name of Solomon and the record of his Temple are found only in our Torah. We preserve our identity by telling our story from our book.

Your story begins in your home and on Passover is told in your home. Tell the story of your parents and grandparents and great grandparents all the way back to the generation of the first Exodus. Bring as many photographs that you can find to your table.

Now you are ready to create your actual Haggadah. Remember, Haggadah means “the story”. The text is a discussion guide.

A thousand years ago, before books, the text of the Seder was found in the general prayer book, hand written by a scribe. You would copy this Seder into a version used by your family in your home on the night of the Seder. Everyone edited the ritual to fit their need. The family Haggadah was decorated with Hebrew letters or biblical illustrations. With the advent of the first printed edition of the Haggadah at the end of The Fifteenth century this custom faded.

The Twenty First Century and the computer revolution invite us to recreate this wonderful custom. Create your own Seder.

Time to do some research. Kindly “google” Passover Seder and create your own outline for this years Seder. Now, add whatever you like from the following supplement to your Haggadah.

Discuss with the participants of your family Seder. Assign readings. Design a cover and print a copy for everyone attending.

(Do not Forget Elijah!)

Kindly send us a copy of your family Seder for our Temple archives.

Searching for leaven. (*Chamatez*)

Before the Ten Commandments, which were given for Tikkun Olam, to fix our broken world, the children of Israel witnessed the Ten plagues. Updating the ten Plagues we have:

- 1.) Ignorance
- 2.) Idolatry
- 3.) Profanity
- 4.) Violence
- 5.) Dishonor
- 6.) Death
- 7.) Adultery
- 8.) Stealing
- 9.) Dishonesty
- 10.) Coveting

Discuss these Ten, fill in the particulars, and hide the pieces. (First, write the name of one plague on each of ten pieces of paper with a piece of bread.) Find and dispose.

The Seder

Kiddush

Remember, on the Sabbath and Holydays our custom is to recite Kiddush, wash our hands and without interruption or speech to break bread. The reordering prompts the children to question.

Kavannah (Meditation)

We are ready to follow Gods path with the first cup to recall the Redemption and the burden of our first exile and the afflictions of the first Pharaoh.

Baruch ata adoneigh elohaynew melech haolam boray pree hagafen.

Urchatz. We wash our hands.

Prayer: (All) We separate ourselves to the way of holiness. Praise be to the God of the Pharisees.

Karpas Dip a green in salt water and say: The First exclamation:

How different this night is from all other nights!

On all other nights to sanctify the holiness of time we wash and break bread without interruption. Tonight we eat a green in-between.

My friends, what other questions will we explore during this Seder? (Examples)

**Why is everyone reclining? Why the pillows at the table?
Where is the bread? Why the bitter herbs?**

The youngest asks the four questions. All present ask their questions.

Yahchatz.

Everyone receives a Matzah and splits it into two pieces. One piece is put in a napkin with a question for Elijah the Prophet. Everyone hides their piece (Afikomen) for the end of the Seder.

(Examples)

When will we see a world without the plagues of poverty and war?

What would a leader who is a modern day Moses be like?

What will the role of religion be?

Maggid- The Haggadah

This is the essential moment of the Seder. If anyone is hungry it is time to eat. Ask the children to tell you their understanding of Passover in their own words. Continue.

We are going to tell this story in the round. When it is your turn, continue, ask for help or pass. A Hebrew pun reads Passover Pesach as Pe sach, the mouth speaks. Listen carefully for your part in the story.

Lift your Matzah. Recite together:

**This is the bread of the poor, the same type our ancestors ate as slaves.
Let all who hunger enter, let all who yearn for wisdom question.
This year we are here. Next year let us be reborn as children of freedom.**

The Story

Our story begins with the first exile, when Adam and Eve were forced to leave Paradise, the Garden of Eden. We are told in the Book of Genesis that a flaming sword flashing back and forth guards the way to the Tree of Life. This myth inspires us to ask: How do we turn our knowledge of the past into the wisdom needed to have a better future? How do we experience knowledge that leads to life?

Our story continues with a mixture of history and myth, the first time the children of Israel come (return) to their homeland. Joshua sets the stage for the future history of our people, when we return to our Land of Promise. This night we review the Judges of Ancient times and the Kings as recorded in the Torah and we ask: Why were they so easily led astray? The memory and spirit of the Hebrew prophets demand an answer. Why were the ways of the Cohaneem and the Maccabbeans corrupted, leading to the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem?

Who are our leaders today and what is the way to our redemption?

When will the nations stop raging?

Who will redeem us from the plagues of our modern world?

Will religion be part of the cure and not the disease?

The Ten Plagues (Traditional) May be done in Hebrew.

Updated version

- 1.) Aids
- 2.) Pollution
- 3.) Anthrax
- 4.) Mad cow disease
- 5.) Tuberculosis
- 6.) Malaria
- 7.) Acid rain
- 8.) Locusts
- 9.) Fallout
- 10.) War

Chief Rabbi Gamaliel taught: The spirit of the ritual of the Seder includes three supreme themes:

- 1.) The Passover Sacrifice**
- 2.) The Mattzah**
- 3.) The Maror Bitter herbs**

Discuss

(The Pesach Passover offering is discussed because The Holy One passed over the homes of our ancestors. The unleavened bread is eaten because we had no time to wait for the bread to rise. The bitters are eaten to experience the bitterness of our lives back then.)

Hallel: Singing (Traditional and modern songs about freedom)

The Second Cup

We are ready to fulfill the teaching of remembering the Exodus by recalling the second promise of Redemption (Exodus 6:6) "I will deliver You from bondage"

Bless the wine

Rachtzah Washing of Hands

Kavannah

In Ancient times, in The Holy Home of Our Lord, the Temple in Jerusalem, the Priests were required to wash their hands before approaching the Altar. In our time we have no Temple, no Sacrifices and no Priests.

**May this Covenant Meal hasten our Redemption.
We do this in Remembrance of You
Lord our God
Guardian of the doorposts of Israel.**

Wash Hands

Motzee Matzah

Look at the Ten fingers holding the Matzah and recite the following ten words in Hebrew:

Baruch Attah Adoneigh Elohanu Melech Haolam Hamotzi Lechem Min Ha arêtez.

Combine with bitters and add:

We eat these bitters as a reminder of our bitter lives as slaves.

Combine with charoset and add;

In remembrance of the ancient custom we eat this *charoset*, symbolic of the mortar used to make the Tombs for the tyrants of old. We will eat this mortar as a reminder of the Temple which we will rebuild with our own hands, beginning with our homes and then every structure sanctified in your Name, the Lord of Peace.

Eat.

At the Meal continue discussing the Exodus

- A.) As the story of the liberation from Egypt
- B.) As The story of every tyrant and liberation.
- C.) As the story of the life of each and every one of us.

Revealing the Hidden. Afikomen

Now the real Haggadah begins. Go in search of the hidden pieces of Matzah from the beginning of the Seder. Discuss the questions you will ask Elijah. Agree upon their order of importance. Ask one another. Ask Elijah to come and answer.

May the All merciful send us Elijah the prophet, who brings good news deliverance and comfort. (From the traditional Grace After meals)

The Cup of Blessings. (Drink half)

Baruch Ata Adoneigh elohanew melech haolam boray pri Hagafen.

We finish this cup only when our exile ends.

Feed all who are hungry Lord,

Save us from ourselves.

Teach us that to be your people

We must be one people

Turn the hearts of parents to children

And children to parents.

Send us Elijah and our Redeemer

**So the final chapter of your story, The Redemption, may begin.
Amen. Sealah.**

Continue by passing around Elijah's Cup. Ask and answer and discuss.

Shalom. Call (518) 893-0808 or e-mail RabbiAlpern@AOL.com and I will work with you on your family Haggaddah.

Happy Passover to you and yours, sincerely

Rabbi Alpern