



Seder for a Better World

An Activist's Hagodeh



הגדה של פסח
סדר פֶּאָר אַ בעסערער וועלט

*Hagodeh shel Pesakh
Seder far a Beserer Velt*

Welcome to the Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring Seder for a Better World /An Activist's Hagodeh

The Passover seder is an activist's dream of cultural ritual—a debate with dinner and drinking: an evening for celebrating liberation through cross-generational questioning, story-telling, challenging, and eating—bitter, sweet, salty—accompanied by music and wine. Why is this night different? Because it has it all going on—cognitive thrills, historical chills, taste temptations, libations—and all with high moral purpose.

The Workmen's Circle cultural seder or “third seder” was among the first alternative Jewish rituals. Long before anyone dreamed of a feminist seder, a peace seder, sustainable food or ecumenical seders, the Workmen's Circle celebrated Passover advocating its cultural/political causes in a communal gathering of progressive Jews. In 1933, thirty Workmen's Circle students and their families gathered in Crown Heights celebrating Passover in Yiddish poetry, song and social justice debate. And it's been going on ever since.

This new Activist's Hagodeh (pronounced ha-gaw-deh) is the resonant ritual guide to the seder meal and to the values and issues that stand behind it. The meal is more than gefilte fish and matseh balls, eye watering horseradish and crackling matseh—though food is a crucial anchor, drawing together sense memories, family history and communal traditions. Seder (pronounced say-der) means order in Hebrew/Yiddish. The evening's historical reflections on slavery and freedom, on historical memory and its present day imperatives, are not a free-for-all (though some seders turn out that way). The order of the evening is presented in the hagodeh (hagaddah in modern Hebrew). We move through a series of cups of wine that we drink for joy and spill in compassion, a sampling of mouthfuls that taste like tears, look like slave-made brick mortar. We prepare our children to ask questions (four at minimum), we evaluate their ability to interact with the burdens of history (four kinds of children) and we adults are urged to tell the story of the passage from slavery to freedom over and over—to make the experience as vivid “as if you yourself had been liberated from slavery in Egypt.” We are urged to use the seder as an imaginative opportunity, so that when and if our time comes, we will have the wherewithal to act.

We hope that **Seder for a Better World/An Activist's Hagodeh** will guide your Passover celebrations for many years to come and act as a manual to inspire us all to use each day in the service of improving the world we live in.

Note from *Hagodeh* author Adrienne Cooper:

Seder for a Better World: An Activist's Hagodeh is the successor to many decades of Workmen's Circle Seder ceremonies compiled by seminal educators, musicians and highly original culture creators, most significantly the work of Joseph Mlotek, Zalmen Mlotek, Moishe Rosenfeld, and Lazar Weiner. Additional ritual material was adapted from Rabbi Judith Seid's secular/spiritual guide *We Rejoice in Our Heritage* (CSJO Press). Rabbi Marc Margolius' midrash on freedom (p. 39) is excerpted from the exemplary *The Open Door: A Passover Haggadah* (Central Conference of American Rabbis, 2002). I am indebted to this rich history that resonates with traditional Jewish practices, while creating a tent big enough to include us all.



Photo credits from left to right: Jewish Musicians for Haiti Benefit Concert, Jan 28, 2010, Photo: Donna Aceto; Revlon Run Walk for Women 2007; East Meadow Shule Bar Mitzvah class Social Justice Action, 2009.

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W E L C O M E T O T H E S E D E R



How good it is when all people live together in peace.

*Hiney ma tov u ma nayim,
Shevet akhim gam yakhad.*

הנה מה טוב ומה נעים
שבת אחים גם יחד

*Vi voyl un vi gut iz
far mentshn tsu lebn besholem*

ווי וויל און ווי גוט איז
פאר מענטשן צו לעבן בשלום

*Gut yontef aykh, gut yontef aykh,
Gut yontef alemen, gut yontef aykh*

גוט יום-טוב איך, גוט יום-טוב איך,
גוט יום-טוב אלעמען, גוט יום-טוב איך!



GRATEFUL FOR LIGHT / LIKHT

In the light of the Passover candles,
We celebrate the spirit of freedom
Our candles a beacon of liberation
For our people, for all people.

It is our task to make from fire
Not an all-consuming blaze
But the light in which we see each other
Each of us distinct, yet
Each of us bound up in one another.

Light the candles and say:

We rejoice in our heritage as we light these candles to illuminate our work for a better world.

In the tradition of our ancestors we say:

Baruch ata adonay elohaynu melech haolam asher kideshanu bemitsvotav, vetsivanu lehadlik ner shel yom-tov.

ברוך אתה יי אלהנו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של יום-טוב.

In Yiddish:

Mir freyen zikh mit undzer yerushe vos git undz di traditsye fun onstindn yontef likht, tsu shaynen af undzer veg tsu a shenerer un beserer velt.

מיר פרייען זיך מיט אונדזער ירושה וואָס גיט אונדז די טראַדיציע פֿון אָנציינדן יום-טובֿ ליכט,
צו שיינען אויף אונדזער וועג צו אַ שענערער און בעסערער וועלט.

We Are Activists for Workers' and Immigrants' Rights

“Once social change begins, it cannot be reversed. You cannot uneducate the person who has learned to read. You cannot humiliate the person who feels pride. You cannot oppress the people who are not afraid anymore.”
– Cesar Chavez (1927 –1993)

Mexican American farm worker, labor leader, and civil rights activist, Chavez together with Dolores Huerta, founded the United Farm Workers (UFW). Their work led to improvements for union labor and important changes in federal immigration laws.

Creating new Jewish Ritual Texts

Alongside the traditional blessings for candlelighting, wine and bread/matseh, The Activist Hagodeh includes three new texts declaring gratitude, adapted slightly from Rabbi Judith Seid's graceful humanistic reframing of traditional prayers. As a cultural Jew, Rabbi Seid highlights the common historical consciousness and sense of peoplehood in the act of declaring gratitude – “We rejoice in the heritage that gives us the tradition of lighting candles to illuminate our work for a better world... We rejoice in the heritage that teaches us to love the earth and respect the laborer who brings bread to our table... We rejoice in our heritage that gives us the tradition of a cup filled with joy.”

GRATEFUL FOR WINE / KIDDUSH

Lift your wine glass and say:

We raise our glass of wine to this liberation, as we will later spill its contents in recognition of the costs of winning freedom.

In the tradition of our ancestors we say:

Baruch ata adonay eloheynu melech haolam borey pri hagafen.

ברוך אתה יי, אלהנו מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן.

In Yiddish we say:

Mir freyen zikh mit undzer yerushe vos git undz di traditsye fun a koyse ful mit freyd.

מיר פֿרייען זיך מיט אונדזער ירושה וואָס גיט אונדז די טראַדיציע פֿון אַ פֿוסע פֿול מיט פֿרייד.

Raise your glass for the sake of liberation
For a world of justice, love and light
Raise high your glass of wine.

*Lomir heybn dem bekher
Dem bekher mit vayn
Far a tseykhn as mir
Veln nokh oysgeleyzt zayn.
Fun a velt fun gerekhtikayt,
libe un shayn –
Lomir heybn dem bekher mitn
gebentshtn vayn...*

לאָמיר הייבן דעם בעכער
דעם בעכער מיט וויין
פֿאַר אַ צייכן אַז מיר
וועלן נאָך אויסגעלייזט זיין.

פֿון אַ וועלט פֿון גערעכטיקייט, ליבע און שנין –
לאָמיר הייבן דעם בעכער מיטן געבענטשטן וויין.

We Are Activists for Liberation

“We were always, in the depths of our hearts, completely free men and women. We were slaves on the outside, but free men and women in soul and spirit.”

– Rabbi Judah Loew, The Maharal of Prague (1525-1609)

Loew, one of the great minds of the 16th century, a forward looking educator who insisted that children be taught in accordance with their stage of development, was fully conversant with the scientific knowledge and scientists of his time. He is famed for the apocryphal story of the Golem of Prague.



USA. California. 1968. California Grape Strike. Cesar Chavez. © Paul Fusco/Magnum Photos

We gather at our seder tables to remember the liberation from Egypt with a vividness of moral imagination that makes each of us to feel as if we personally had been redeemed from slavery.

GRATEFUL FOR BREAD / MATSEH

Take a piece of *matseh* and say:

We rejoice in our heritage that teaches us to love the earth and respect the labor that goes into making our bread.

In the tradition of our ancestors we say:

Baruch ata adonay elohaynu melech haolam hamotsi lechem min ha-aretz.

ברוך אתה יי, אלהנו מלך העולם, המוציא לחם מן הארץ.

In Yiddish:

Mir freyen zikh mit undzer yerushe vos lernt undz lib hobn undzer erd.

מיר פרייען זיך מיט אונדזער ירושה וואָס לערנט אונדז ליב האָבן אונדזער ערד.



Re-experiencing our own passage from slavery to freedom, we think of those who are oppressed today. Next year may all who are unjustly deprived of freedom be liberated.

At this seder we dedicate ourselves to liberation from

The tyranny of poverty

The tyranny of war

The tyranny of ignorance

The tyranny of hate

*Mir hobn ibergelebt undzer knekhtshaft
un mir gedenken di felker vos ranglen
nokh in undzer tsayt. Hayntiks yor knekbt,
dos kumendike yor – fraye mentshn.*

מיר האָבן איבערגעלעבט אונדזער קנעכטשאַפֿט
און מיר געדענקען די פֿעלקער וואָס ראַנגלען
נאָך אין אונדזער צײַט. היינטיקס יאָר קנעכט,
דאָס קומענדיקע יאָר – פֿרייע מענטשן.

We Are Activists for Non-Violence

“It’s the action, not the fruit of the action, that’s important. You have to do the right thing. It may not be in your power or in your time that there will be any fruit. But that doesn’t mean you stop doing the right thing. You may never know what results come from your action. But if you do nothing, there will be no result. A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history.”

– Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869 –1948)

Ghandi was the political and spiritual leader of India’s independence movement, pioneering satyagraha—resistance to tyranny through mass civil disobedience and nonviolence. This movement inspired movements for civil rights and freedom across the world.



We Are Activists for Political Freedom

“The only real prison is fear, and the only real freedom is freedom from fear.”

– Aung San Suu Kyi

Under house arrest for 14 out of the past 20 years, Suu Kyi was elected Prime Minister of Myanmar in 1990, but not allowed to serve by the dictatorship of that country. She is the recipient of the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought and of the Nobel Peace Prize.

S'iz Matse Do/The Matsoh is here

The Matza's here; *choreses* are here,
The cups of red wine.
It's Passover time; time for the seder.
What could be sweeter than that?
The kiddush is here; the four questions are here;
All kinds of good food.
It's holiday time, it's springtime.
What could be more beautiful than that?
Ay-ay-ay-ay-ay ay...

S'iz matse do, kharoyes do
Un koyses royter vayn.
S'iz peysakh dokh. S'iz seyder dokh.
Vos ken nokh ziser zayn?
S'iz kidesh do, kashes do.
Makholim mole-tam.
S'iz yontev dokh, friling dokh.
Vos ken nokh shener zayn?
Ay-ay-ay-ay-ay ay...

The *afikomen* is here; Elijah is here,
Family and good friends.
There's celebration and renewal.
What could be better than that?
The haggadah is here; the four sons are here -
the wise one and the fool;
the one who knows not what to ask
and the one won't ask for no reason.
Ay-ay-ay-ay-ay ay...

Afikoymen do, elyenovi do,
Mishpokhe, gute-fraynd.
S'iz yontev dokh, banayung dokh.
Vos ken nokh beser zayn?
Hagode do, bonim do,
Der khokhem un der tam,
Der vos veyst nisht vos tsu fregn
Un der vos fregt nisht stam.
Ay-ay-ay-ay-ay ay...

The king is here; the queen is here,
kneydlekh and fish must be here.
Herbs and horse radish – of course,
How could it not be so.
The melody is here, *dayeynu* is here,
the little kid *khad-gadyo*.
God willing, next year,
What could be closer?
Ay-ay-ay-ay-ay ay...

Der meylekh do, di malke do,
Kneydlekh, fish muz zayn,
Kraytekhtser un khreyn avade.
Vi ken es andersh zayn?
Der nign do, dayeynu do,
Dos tsigele khad-gadyo,
Mertseshem, leshono habo,
Vos ken nokh neenter zayn?
Ay-ay-ay-ay-ay ay...

ס'איז מצה דאָ

ס'איז מצה דאָ, חרוסת דאָ,
און פוסות רויטער וויין.
ס'איז פסח דאָך. ס'איז סדר דאָך.
וואָס קען נאָך זיסער זיין?
ס'איז קידוש דאָ, קשיות דאָ,
מאכלים מלא-טעם.
ס'איז יום-טוב דאָך, פֿרילינג דאָך.
וואָס קען נאָך שענער זיין?
איין-איין-איין-איין-איין...

אפֿיקומן דאָ, אליהו-הנביא דאָ,
משפחה, גוטע-פֿרײַנד.
ס'איז יום-טוב דאָך, באַנײַונג דאָך.
וואָס קען נאָך בעסער זיין?
הגדה דאָ, בנים דאָ,
דער חכם און דער תם,
דער וואָס ווייסט נישט וואָס צו פֿרעגן
און דער וואָס פֿרעגט נישט סתם.
איין-איין-איין-איין-איין...

דער מלך דאָ, די מלכה דאָ,
קנײַדלעך, פֿיש מוז זיין,
קרייטעכצער און כריין אוודאי.
ווי קען עס אַנדערש זיין?
דער ניגון דאָ, דיין דאָ,
דאָס ציגעלע חד-גדיא.
מערצעשעם, לשנה הבאה.
וואָס קען נאָך נעענטער זיין?
איין-איין-איין-איין-איין...

Beyle Schaechter-Gottesman was born in Vienna and grew up in Chernovitz, Romania, where she survived the war in the Chernovitz ghetto. Since emigrating to the U.S. in 1951, she has been an influential Yiddish poet, songwriter, artist, singer and community activist. Beyle's first book of poetry, *Mir Forn (We're Travelling)* appeared in 1963, and she has published 8 books and recorded 3 CD's since then. In 2005 she received a National Endowment for the Arts – National Heritage Fellowship, the highest cultural honor given by a United States government agency for Folk Culture. Beyle is the first Yiddish poet and composer to receive this honor.

Music & Lyrics: Beyle Schaechter-Gottesman

WHAT'S ON THE SEDER TABLE?

The seder is a portable feast that the Jewish people has adapted and elaborated for centuries. The seder plate, with its symbolic foods, guides us to taste the bitterness of slavery and to viscerally experience the promise of slavery's end.

Horseradish/morer providing the taste of bitterness

Greens/karpas promising Spring and new life, but dipped in salt water to remind us of the bitterness of oppression

Kharoyses/charoset, the mortar-like paste of apples, nuts, wine and cinnamon, reminding us of the forced labor of slavery

The **egg/beytso**, promising rebirth and the possibility of change

The **bone/z'roeh**, reminding us of the preparation of Pesakh lamb – for strength and sustenance in the flight from Egyptian slavery



SONG

In the Land of the Pyramids/ *In dem land fun piramidn*

In the land of the Pyramids an evil ruler
Reigned over enslaved Jews.
Children suffered so
And who could know how long
The dreadful times would last
If, in the land of Pyramids,
A great hero had not emerged
To free us finally.

Ritual Evolution/Revolution: The Orange on the Seder Plate (The real story is better than the myth)

Visiting Oberlin College, Susanna Heschel, daughter of famed activist Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, learned that students were placing bread on their seder plates to protest the exclusion of women and homosexuals from Judaism. Heschel liked the idea but, as it violated Passover dietary norms, she substituted an orange for the bread. Heschel writes: I felt that an orange suggested the fruitfulness for all Jews when lesbians and gay men are active members of Jewish life. And, each orange segment has a few seeds that need to be spit out - a gesture repudiating the homophobia that poisons too many Jews.”

Heschel is nonplussed that the story of the orange has been mythologized as a gesture protesting a rabbi's dismissal of women: “A woman on the bima (leading prayers in public) is like an orange on the seder plate.” In the myth, Heschel's idea is attributed to a man and the act of rejecting homophobia is lost. Now you know.

*In dem land fun piramidn
Geven a kenig beyz un shlekht
Zaynen dort geven di yidn
Zayne diners, zayne knekht.*

אין דעם לאַנד פֿון פּיראַמידן
געווען אַ קעניג בייז און שלעכט,
זינען דאָרט געווען די יידן
זינע דינער, זינע קנעכט.

*Kinder hot men dan farmoyert
Ven a tsigl hot gefelt.
Ver veyt vi lang es volt gedoyert
Ot di viste shklafnvelt.*

קינדער האָט מען דאָן פֿאַרמויערט
ווען אַ ציגל האָט געפֿעלט.
ווער ווייס ווי לאַנג עס וואָלט געדויערט
אָט די וויסטע שקלאַפֿנוועלד.

*Ven in land fun piramidn
Volt nit zayn a groyser held,
Velkher hot gekemft far yidn
Mit zayn khokhme un zayn shverd.*

ווען אין לאַנד פֿון פּיראַמידן
וואָלט ניט זײַן אַ גרויסער העלד,
וועלכער האָט געקעמפֿט פֿאַר יידן
מיט זײַן חכמה און זײַן שווערד.

Yiddish poem: Dovid Edelshtadt Music: Ben Yomen

Lift up the *matseh* on your table, each take a piece and say with us:

We celebrate the work and the dignity of the worker that brings to our table the bounty of the earth. But we remember the bread of affliction that our ancestors ate in Egypt.

This is the bread of affliction which our ancestors ate in Egypt.

Let all who are hungry come and eat.

Let all who are in need come share our Passover

Now enslaved

Next year - liberated.

Dos iz dos oreime broyt

Vos undzere eltern hobn gegesn

In land mitsrayim.

Ver es iz hungerik, zol kumen un esn.

Ver es neytikt zikh –

Zol haltn mit undz Peysakh.

Hayntiks yor knekht,

Dos kumendike yor – fraye mentshn!

דאָס איז דאָס אָרעמע ברויט וואָס אונדזערע עלטערן

האַבן געגעסן אין לאַנד מצרים.

ווער עס איז הונגעריק זאָל קומען עסן.

ווער עס נייטיקט זיך –

זאָל האַלטן מיט אונדז פסח.

היינטיקס יאָר קנעכט, דאָס קומענדיקע יאָר –

פֿרייע מענטשן!

HIDING THE AFIKOMEN

Select the middle matseh from the stack on your table, break it in half, and hide the half, the afikomen (so that a child can demand its ransom at the end of the meal).

A commentary tells us that the Hebrew slaves, making their way to freedom, couldn't know when their next meal would come, so they would eat a small amount and save the rest for a moment of need. In hiding the *afikomen*, we are mindful of the hunger and insecurity of our ancestors, of the hunger and poverty in our world today.

We Are Activists for Education

'Camus said, "Poverty is imprisonment without a drawbridge." In my mind that drawbridge is education. Feeding without education will ensure starvation later.'

– Bernard Rapoport

Bernard and his wife Audre are visionary social justice philanthropists through their Rapoport Foundation and other projects they seed the world over. Rooted in the passionate Jewish socialism that built his parents' David and Riva's Workmen's Circle and in his own progressive Zionism, Bernard's is the story of the activist turning stellar business success to the cause of social justice – from his support for the South Texas Border Initiative lifting thousands of Mexican Americans into higher education opportunities and increasing the availability of healthcare and education to underserved border residents, to his and Audre's ground-floor championing of The Jerusalem Foundation, seeding the modernization of Jerusalem after the Six-Day War – community centers, parks, hospitals, libraries and schools (including their special investment in the progressive Givat Gonen School, the Sheikh Jarrakh Eye Clinic and The Riva Rapoport Day Care Center) to educate, heal and nurture the city's people, Arab and Jew alike.

SECOND CUP OF WINE

Lift your wine glass and say:

To the joys of activism in defiance of convention and convenience

In the tradition of our ancestors we say:

Baruch ata adonay eloheyinu melech haolam borey pri hagafen.

ברוך אתה יי, אלהנו מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן.

In Yiddish:

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מיר פרייען זיך מיט אונדזער ירושה וואָס גיט אונדז די טראַדיציע פֿון אַ פוסע פֿול מיט פֿרייד.

Ritual Evolution/Revolution: A cup of wine/A cup of water

A cup of wine is placed on the seder table, in hopeful reminder of the tradition that says the prophet Elijah will usher in a perfected world.

Many families now also place a cup of water on the table as well, in tribute to Miriam, Moses's sister, whose activism is little acknowledged in a traditional seder. The cup of water has come to honor the role of women in the story of Exodus: Miriam, who arranges for the survival of her brother Moses and ultimately, the liberation of the Jewish people, and the midwives Shifra and Puah, who courageously save countless Jewish male babies slated for death by the Egyptian Pharaoh's edict. In the legend of the Exodus, Miriam's well accompanies the Jewish people throughout their wandering in the desert, providing clear spring water for them to drink. Miriam's cup has also become a symbol of the need to work to save our environment.



ASKING, ANSWERING, AND ACTIVISM

The Four Questions – Why is this night different?

Why is this night different from all other nights of the year?

1. On all other nights we eat bread or matseh, but on this night, only matseh
2. On all other nights we eat various herbs, but on this night bitter herbs
3. On all other nights we do not dip even once, but on this night –twice
4. On all other nights we eat either sitting upright or reclining, but on this night we all recline.



*Ma nishtano halaylo haze mikol haleyloys
Far vos iz di doziker nakht fun seder
Andersh fun ale nekht fun a gants yor?*

מה נשתנה הלילה הזה מכל הלילות?
פֿאַר וואָס איז די דאָזיקער נאַכט פֿון סדר
אַנדערש פֿון אַלע נעכט פֿון אַ גאַנץ יאָר

1. *Shebkkhol haleyloys
Ale nekht megn mir esn
Say khometz say matseh
Ober halaylo haze
In der doziker nakht, nor matseh?*

שבכל הלילות
אַלע נעכט מעגן מיר עסן
סי חמץ סי מצה
אַבער הלילה הזה
אין דער דאָזיקער נאַכט, נאָר מצה?

2. *Shebkkhol haleyloys
Ale nekht esn mir kolerley grinsn
Ober halaylo haze
In der doziker nakht
Morer, bloyz bitere kraytekher?*

שבכל הלילות
אַלע נעכט עסן מיר פלערליי גרינסן
אַבער הלילה הזה
אין דער דאָזיקער נאַכט
מרור, בלויז ביטערע קרייטעכער?

3. *Shebkkhol haleyloys
Ale nekht darfn mir ayntunken
Afile eyn mol oykh nit
Ober halaylo haze
In der doziker nakht
Tunken mir ayn tsvey mol?*

שבכל הלילות
אַלע נעכט דאַרפֿן מיר ניט איינטונקען
אַפֿילו איין מאָל אויך ניט
אַבער הלילה הזה
אין דער דאָזיקער נאַכט
טונקען מיר איין צוויי מאָל?

4. *Shebkkhol haleyloys
Ale nekht kenen mir esn
Say zitsndik glaykh say ongelent
Ober halaylo haze
In der doziker peysakh nakht
Esn mir ale ongelent?*

שבכל הלילות
אַלע נעכט קענען מיר עסן
סי זיצנדיק סי אָנגעלענט
אַבער הלילה הזה
אין דער דאָזיקער פסח-נאַכט
עסן מיר אַלע אָנגעלענט?

What questions need asking today?
What questions need answering today?
What questions need action today?

Vos entfernen mir undzere kinder af di alte un naye kashes?

וואָס ענטפֿערן מיר אונדזערע קינדער אויף די אַלטע און נייַע קשיאות?

We Are Activists for the Environment

“My late wife Iris and I set up our company for the express purpose of using science and technology to solve serious societal problems. Anybody who says you can’t change the world is wrong. We all have the responsibility for putting our ideals into activities that build the new and more beautiful world. It is a struggle, but nothing changes without it so let us all roll up our sleeves and address the problems that we face by our active participation in the solutions, and indeed there are solutions.”

– Stan Ovshinsky

Stanford Ovshinsky is the visionary inventor of the nickel metal hydride battery that enabled the electric and hybrid vehicle industry, flexible thin-film photovoltaic panels and many basic information devices from cell phones to rewritable CDs. Stan’s photovoltaic panels have contributed to the capacity for poor populations in remote locations to benefit from solar generated electricity, truly changing their quality of life.

We were slaves/Avodim hayinu

We were slaves, now we are free people

Avodim hayinu, hayinu

Mir zaynen fraye yidn

Gevorn haynt.

Avodim hayinu

Mir zaynen fray,

mir zaynen fray gevorn haynt.

Avodim hayinu

Mir zaynen, zaynen, zaynen fray

Gevorn haynt.

עבדים היינו, היינו

מיר זינען פרייע יידן

געוואָרן היינט.

עבדים היינו

מיר זינען פֿריי, מיר זינען פֿריי געוואָרן היינט.

עבדים היינו

מיר זינען, זינען, זינען פֿריי

געוואָרן היינט.

We Are Activists for Women's Health

“What began as a promise to my dying sister has evolved into the world’s largest grassroots network of breast cancer survivors and activists fighting to save lives, empower people, ensure quality care for all. We don’t simply dump funds and run. We create activists – one person, one community, one state, one nation at a time.”

– Nancy G. Brinker

Brinker is founder of Susan G. Komen for the Cure®, now led by 100,000 survivors and activists, who define themselves as a progressive grassroots network fighting to end breast cancer through mobilizing one million participants in Komen Race for the Cure events, through advocacy, and through support for global initiatives in 200 countries to overcome social, cultural and economic barriers to breast health and treatment.

On the Nile/Oyf nil

A basket floats on the Nile

Serene, smooth, still

And the waves waft gently

As if to protect the child.

And the waves, unlike cruel Pharoah

Buoy up the child who will be

The salvation of a slave people.

Protecting the future promise in that child

The promise of liberation yet to come.

Shvimt dos kestr afn taykh,

Afn groysn nil.

Shvimt dos kestr ruik, glaykh,

Shvimt dos kestr shtil.

Un di khvalyes geyen shtil,

Geyen tsart un lind;

Vi zey voltn hitn zikh

Ton a leyd dem kind.

Shvimt dos kestr afn taykh ...

O, di khvalyes zaynen dokh

Nit vi pare shlekht.

Nit dertrinken veln zey

Meshiekhn fun knekht.

Shvimt dos kestr afn taykh,

Afn groysn nil.

Shvimt dos kestr ruik, glaykh,

Shvimt dos kestr shtil.

שווימט דאָס קעסטל אויפֿן טייך,

אויפֿן גרויסן ניל.

שווימט דאָס קעסטל רוֹיק, גלייך,

שווימט דאָס קעסטל שטיל.

און די כּוואַליעס גייען שטיל,

גייען צאָרט און לינד;

ווי זיי וואָלטן היטן זיך

טאָן אַ לייד דעם קינד.

שווימט דאָס קעסטל אויפֿן טייך ...

אָ, די כּוואַליעס זינען דאָך

ניט ווי פּרעה שלעכט.

ניט דערטרינקען וועלן זיי

משיחן פֿון קנעכט.

שווימט דאָס קעסטל אויפֿן טייך,

אויפֿן גרויסן ניל.

שווימט דאָס קעסטל רוֹיק, גלייך,

שווימט דאָס קעסטל שטיל.

THE FOUR KINDS OF CHILDREN

The hagodeh tells us there are four kinds of children: wise, wicked, simple and those who don't know enough to ask – but they can be seen in different ways – eager, hostile, passive, bewildered; aware, alienated, direct, silent; confident, challenging, lost, and needing stimulation. Whatever we call them, we have been like all of these children at some point in our lives.

*Ot zaynen di arbo bonim fun der Hagodeh,
Fir kinder fun yidishn shtam.*

*Ikh bin der khokhem!
Vos iz dos far a seyder,
Vos kumt fun yor tsu yor?
Vos meynt der yontef peysakh,
Vos geyt fun dor tsu dor?*

*Ikh bin der roshe!
Vos pravet ir dem yontef peysakh
Umetum un iberalt?
Ikh bin fun dem poter,
Ikh zog zikh op fun klal,
Vayl afile in mitsrayim
Bin ikh tsum mitsri glaykh,
Dem shklafn-yokh tsebrekhn?
Nit far mir! Dos iz far aykh!*

*Un ikh bin der tam!
Ikh bet aykh, zogt, vos meynt dos alts?
Matses, morer, wayn un shmalts?
Me redt fun mitsrayim, fun shpaltn a yam –
Vos is dos alts? Ikh bin nor a tam!*

*Un tsu dem sheynoy yoydea lishoyl,
Vos veys afile nit vos tsu fregn,
Dertseyl du im fun groysn vunder,
Kum im mit alts antkegn.*

אַט זײַנען די ארבעה בנים פֿון דער הגדה,
פֿיר קינדער פֿון ייִדישן שטאַם.

איך בין דער חכם!
וואָס איז דאָס פֿאַר אַ סדר
וואָס קומט פֿון יאָר צו יאָר?
וואָס מײַנט דער יום-טובֿ פסח,
וואָס גײט פֿון דור צו דור?

איך בין דער רשע!
וואָס פראַוועט איר דעם יום-טובֿ פסח
אומעטום און איבעראַל?
איך בין פֿון דעם פטור,
איך זאָג זיך אָפּ פֿון כלל,
ווייל אַפֿילו אין מצרים
בין איך צום מיצרי גלייך.
דעם שקלאַפֿן-יאָך צעבראַכן?
ניט פֿאַר מיר, דאָס איז פֿאַר איך!

און איך בין דער תם!
איך בעט איך, זאָגט, וואָס מײַנט דאָס אַלץ?
מצות, מרור, וויין און שמאַלץ?
מע רעדט פֿון מצרים, פֿון שפּאַלטן אַ ים –
וואָס איז דאָס אַלץ? איך בין נאָר אַ תם!

און צו דעם שאינו-יודע-לשאול,
וואָס ווייסט אַפֿילו ניט וואָס צו פֿרעגן,
דערצייל דו אים פֿון גרויסן ווונדער,
קום אים מיט אַלץ אַנטקעגן.

Moses' childhood is recalled many times during the seder, with the aim of keeping children engaged throughout the rituals - we teach them, tell them the story of oppression and liberation, answer their questions, comfort them in the face of the burdens of history, and equip them to emulate Moses, the activist.

The confident child questions
Why do we make this seder
Year after year and again?
What does this Passover holiday say
To generations of women and men?

The challenging child doubts and mocks
What is all the fuss about
Why waste my precious time?
I couldn't care less about any of this
Break the chains of slavery?
Don't think I'm so inclined.

The simple child is lost in all this
Can someone tell me what time it is?
What's up with this morer, matseh, and wine?
You talk about Egypt, about parting a sea
What does that mean to a kid like me?

And the ones who don't know even how to ask
Where to begin with them?
Tell them the story from start to end
And if they need it, tell them again.

THE TEN PLAGUES

It is traditional to remove a drop from your full glass of wine for each of the 10 ancient plagues, to show how our bounty is diminished by the suffering of others.

Please remove a drop from the fullness of your cup as we name ten plagues of our world today:

- Our cup is diminished when our addiction to oil destroys our environment and depletes our economy.
- Our cup is diminished when our fears of difference blind us to the common humanity of all.
- Our cup is diminished where the ills that afflict women command lesser attention and resources.
- Our cup is diminished when children are abandoned in failing schools.
- Our cup is diminished when war is not the last resort of our governments.
- Our cup is diminished by economic and trade systems that privilege corporate welfare above the wellbeing of all our citizens.
- Our cup is diminished by the erosion of labor standards and human rights around the world.
- Our cup is diminished when lesbians, gay men, bi-sexual and transgender people are written out of the community of full equality.
- Our cup is diminished when the international plague of AIDS continues to be met with ignorance and neglect, at the cost of millions of lives and futures.
- Our cup is diminished when fear of today's immigrants violates the humanity of our neighbors and dishonors our own struggles for acceptance when we were immigrants.

FOR KIDS:



The Frog Song

One morning when Pharaoh
awoke in his bed
There were frogs in his bed
and frogs on his head
Frogs in his nose and
frogs on his toes
Frogs here, frogs there
Frogs were jumping everywhere.

Oh Listen King Pharaoh

Oh listen, oh listen
Oh listen King Pharaoh
Oh listen, Oh listen,
please let my people go
They want to go away
They work so hard all day
King Pharaoh, King Pharaoh
What do you say?

No, no, no
I will not let them go
No, no, no
I will not let them go!

Kids' songs words and music: Shirley Cohen

Go Down Moses

When Israel was in Egypt's land
 Let my people go.
 Oppressed so hard they could not stand
 Let my people go.

Go down Moses
 Way down in Egypt land
 Tell old Pharaoh
 Let my people go.

No more shall they in bondage toil
 Let my people go
 Let them come out with Egypt's spoil
 Let my people go.

Go down Moses
 Way down in Egypt land
 Tell old Pharaoh
 Let my people go.

Zog maran/Tell Me Marrano

Tell me, my Marrano brother,
 Where your seder will be?

-Deep in a cave so no one will see.
 And where will you get *matseh*?

-My wife has all prepared
 And where is your hagodeh?

-In that cave wall, I hid it long ago
 And what will you do if the enemy hears?

-I will raise my voice in song
 And die with that song in their ears.

We Are Activists for Change

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time.
 Today we begin in earnest the work of making sure that the world we leave
 our children is just a little bit better than the one we inhabit today.”

– President Barack Obama

*Zog maran du bruder mayner
 Vu iz greyt der seyder dayner?
 -In tifer heyl, in a kheyder
 Dort hob ikh gegreyt mayn seyder.*

*Zog maran mir, vu bay vemen
 Vestu wayse matses nemen?
 -In der heyl af gots barotn
 Hot mayn vayb dem teyg geknotn*

*Zog maran vi vest zikh klign
 A Hagodeh vu tsu krign?
 -In der heyl, in tife shpaltn
 Hob ikh zi shoybn lang babaltn*

*Zog maran vi vest zikh vern
 Ven men vet dayn kol derhern?
 -Ven der soyne vet mikh fangen
 Vel ikh shtarbn mit gezangen.*

זאָג מאַראַן דו ברודער מינער
 וווּ איז גרייט דער סדר דינער?
 - אין טיפער הייל, אין א חדר
 דאָרט האָב איך געגרייט דעם סדר.

זאָג מאַראַן מיר, וווּ ביי וועמען
 וועסטו ווייסע מצה נעמען?
 - אין דער הייל אויף גאָטס באַראַטן
 האָט מיין ווייב דעם טייג געקנאָטן.

זאָג מאַראַן ווי וועסט זיך קליגן
 אַ הגדה וווּ צו קריגן?
 - אין דער הייל, אין טיפער שפּאַלטן
 האָב איך זי שוין לאַנג באַהאַלטן.

זאָג מאַראַן ווי וועסט זיך ווערן
 ווען מען וועט דיין קול דערהערן?
 - ווען דער שונא וועט מיך פאַנגען
 וועל איך שטאַרבן מיט געזאַנגען.

We remember the times in Jewish history when violence closed all paths to liberation. On April 19, 1943 in the Warsaw Ghetto, instead of recalling the exodus from Egypt at seder tables, Jews rose up against the Nazi army. For these Jews, armed resistance was the path to an internal liberation. For others, during the Holocaust, cultural vitality was resistance - hiding a book, writing a song, keeping a diary, teaching a child, participating in a Seder.



IN THE WARSAW GHETTO/ IN VARSHEVER GETO

In the Warsaw ghetto it's Pesakh again
Though the wine's made of water, the *matseh* from bran
And we repeat the stories of the old miracles
That worked for us once in Egypt's land.

But the story is so old by now
And behind the barricaded doors
The seder goes on, mixing fact and myth
Any truth these days is so hard to know.

And the words echo in the terrible night
Let all who are hungry - at blind windows and doors
Let all who are hungry - our children starve
Let all who are hungry - rattling in our empty pots
And cry out in our voices - young and old.

We Are Community Activists

“The challenge of social justice is to evoke a sense of community that we need to make our nation a better place. If you don't like the way the world is, you change it. You have an obligation to change it. You just do it one step at a time. When I fight about what is going on in the neighborhood, or when I fight about what is happening to other people's children, I'm doing that because I want to leave a community and a world that is better than the one I found.”

– Marian Wright Edelman

Marian Wright Edelman is the founder and President of the Children's Defense Fund (CDF), the nation's strongest voice for children and families, a MacArthur Foundation Prize Fellow, and a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. She is author of Families in Peril: An Agenda for Social Change and I Can Make a Difference: A Treasury to Inspire Our Children.

*In varshever geto iz itst khoydesh nishn.
Oyf koyses fun borshtsh un oyf matses fun klayen
Dertseylt men oyf s'nay di amolike nisim,
Vi s'yidische folk iz aroys fun mitsrayim!*

*Vi alt iz di mayse, vi alt iz der nign!
Nor itst, bay farhangene fentster, der seyder
Geyt on un tsemisht vert der emes un lign,
Az shver iz zey beydn funandertsusheydn.*

*Kol dikhfin – bay fentster farsheltte un tirn,
Kol dikhfin – un s'shrayen fun hunger di kinder.
Kol dikhfin – bay leydike peysakh-makhshirim.
Kol dikhfin – un s'kblipen di zkeynim di blinde.*

אין וואַרשעווער געטאָ איז איצט חודש ניסן.
אויף כוסות פֿון באַרשטש און אויף מצות צו קליינען
דערציילט מען אויף ס'נײַ די אַמאָליקע נסים,
ווי ס'ידישע פֿאָלק איז ארויס פֿון מצרים!

ווי אַלט איז די מעשה, ווי אַלט איז דער ניגון!
נאָר איצט, בײַ פֿאַרהאַנגענע פֿענצטער, דער סדר
גייט אָן, און צעמישט ווערט דער אמת און ליגן,
אַז שווער איז זײַ בײַדן פֿונאַנדערצושיידן.

כל-דכּפּין – בײַ פֿענצטער פֿאַרשטעלטע און טירן.
כל-דכּפּין – און ס'שריינען פֿון הונגער די קינדער.
כל-דכּפּין – בײַ לײַדיקע פּסח-מחשרים,
כל-דכּפּין – און ס'כליפּען די זקנים די בלינדע.

Partisan Hymn/Partizaner Hymn

Never say this is the final road for you,
Though leaden skies may cover over days of blue.
The hour we fought and we longed for is so near,
Our step beats out our lasting promise: We are here!

From lands so green with palms to lands all white with snow.
We will be coming with our pain and with our woe,
And where a spurt of our life's blood fell on the earth,
There our courage and our spirit have rebirth!

The early morning sun will brighten up our day,
Yesterday's struggle with our foes will fade away,
But if the sun delays and darkness covers all
This song a message to the future: Heed our call.

This song was written with our blood and not with lead
It's not a little tune that birds sing overhead
This song we sang amidst a world of falling walls
Guns in our hands, we answered freedom's call

So never say the road to life it ends for you,
Though leaden skies may cover over days of blue.
The hour we longed for and we fought for is so near,
Our step beats out the lasting promise: We are here!

*Zog nit keynmol az du geyst dem letstn veg,
Khotsh himlen blayene farshteln bloye teg.
Kumen vet nokh undzer oysgebenkte sho;
S'vet a poyk ton undzer trot: Mir zaynen do!*

*Fun grinem palmenland biz vaysn land fun shney,
Mir zaynen do mit undzer payn, mit undzer vey
Un vu gefaln s'iz a shprits fun undzer blut
Shprotsn vet dort undzer govre, undzer mut.*

*S'vet di morgn zun bagildn undz dem haynt,
Un der nekhtn vet farsbvindn mitn faynt.
Nor oyb farzamen vet di zun in dem kayor
Vi a parol zol geyn dos lid fun dor tsu dor.*

*Geshribn iz dos lid mit blut un nit mit blay,
S'iz nit keyn lidl fun a foygl oyf der fray.
Dos hot a folk tsvishn falndike vent
Dos lid gezungen mit naganes in di hent.*

*To zog nit keynmol as du geyst dem letstn veg,
Khotsh himlen blayene farshteln bloye teg.
Kumen vet nokh undzer oysgebenkte sho;
S'vet a poyk ton undzer trot: Mir zaynen do!*

זאָג ניט קיין מאָל אַז דו גייסט דעם לעצטן וועג,
כאָטש הימלען בליענע פאַרשטעלן בלויע טעג
קומען וועט נאָך אונדזער אויסגעבענקטע שעה;
ס'וועט אַ פּויק טאָן אונדזער טראַט: מיר זיינען דאָ!

פֿון גרינעם פאַלמענלאַנד ביז ווייסן לאַנד פֿון שניי,
מיר זיינען דאָ מיט אונדזער פּיין, מיט אונדזער וויי
און וווּ געפֿאלן ס'איז אַ שפּריץ פֿון אונדזער בלוט
שפּראַצן וועט דאָרט אונדזער גבורה, אונדזער מוט.

ס'וועט די מאָרגן זון באַגילדן אונדז דעם היינט,
און דער נעכטן וועט פאַרשווינדן מיטן פֿיינט.
נאָר אויב פאַרזאַמען וועט די זון אין דעם קאַיאָר
ווי אַ פאַראַל זאָל גיין דאָס ליד פֿון דור צו דור.

געשריבן איז דאָס ליד מיט בלוט און ניט מיט בליי,
ס'איז ניט קיין לידל פֿון אַ פּויגל אויף דער פּריי.
דאָס האָט אַ פֿאַלק צווישן פֿאַלנדיקע ווענט
דאָס ליד געשריבן מיט נאַגאַנעס אין די הענט.

טאָ זאָג ניט קיין מאָל אַז דו גייסט דעם לעצטן וועג,
כאָטש הימלען בליענע פאַרשטעלן בלויע טעג
קומען וועט נאָך אונדזער אויסגעבענקטע שעה;
ס'וועט אַ פּויק טאָן אונדזער טראַט: מיר זיינען דאָ!

Tayere Malke/Dear Malke

*Tayere malke,
Gezunt zolstu zayn
Gis on in bekher,
Dem bekher mit vayn — Bim, bom...*

טייערע מלכה, געזונט זאלסטו זיין!
גיס אן דעם בעכער, דעם בעכער מיט וויין.
בים-באָם ...

*Fun dem dozikn bekher
Er glantst azoy sheyn
Hot getrunken mayn zeyde
Mayn zeyde aley — Bim, bom...*

פֿון דעם דאָזיקן בעכער, ער גלאַנצט אזוי שיין —
האַט געטרונקען מיין זיידע, מיין זיידע אליין.
בים-באָם ...

*Geven shlekhte tsaytn
Vi es makht zikh amol
Nor dem bekher hob ikh gehalten
Ayzn un shtol — Bim, bom...*

געווען שלעכטע צייטן, ווי עס מאַכט זיך אַ מאָל,
נאָר דעם בעכער האָב איך געהאַלטן איז און שטאַל.
בים-באָם ...

*Tayere malke
Gezunt zolstu zayn!
Far vemen zol ikh trinken
Dem dozikn vayn? — Bim, bom...*

טייערע מלכה, געזונט זאלסטו זיין!
פֿאַר וועמען זאָל איך טרינקען דעם דאָזיקן וויין?
בים-באָם ...

*Kh'trink far mayne sonim
Nor zog zey nisht oys
Kuk, trern, zey shprintsn
Fun bekher aroys. — Bim, bom...*

כ'טרינק פֿאַר מיינע שונאים, נאָר זאָג זיי ניט אויס,
קוק, טרערן, זיי שפּריצן פֿון בעכער אַרויס.
בים-באָם ...

Oh, darling Malke
Good friend of mine
Fill up my *bekher*
With sweet peysakh wine
Bim bam...

Look at my bekher
So old and so fine
It was my dear Zeyde's
And now it is mine
Bim bam...

Hard days we've had
Tho' times may have changed
But no matter what
My bekher remains
Bim bam...

Yiddish poem: Mark Warshavsky
singable English: Sarah Gordon

We Are Activists for Labor

Two groups not covered in contemporary labor law are those whose tasks derive from slavery: farm workers and domestic workers. In New York State, 200,000 domestic workers – housekeepers, companions, and nannies – are not legally afforded basic workers' rights: the right to organize, receive a standard wage, take medical, sick or personal days, and receive termination and/or severance pay. Employers are bound to no legal standards or guidelines. Domestic Workers United (DWU), www.domesticworkersunited.org, organizes for respect and fair labor standards.

THIRD CUP OF WINE

Lift your wine glass and say:

This glass is for courage to meet the challenges of activism.

In the tradition of our ancestors we say:

Baruch ata adonay elohaynu melech haolam borey pri hagafen.

ברוך אתה יי, אלהנו מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן.

In Yiddish:

Mir freyen zikh mit undzer yerushe vos git undz di traditsye fun a koyse ful mit freyd.

מיר פֿרײען זיך מיט אונדזער ירושה וואָס גיט אונדז די טראַדיציע פֿון אַ פֿוסע פֿול מיט פֿרײד.

TELL A STORY OF ACTIVISM / *MAGID*

At this point in a traditional seder the story of the liberation from slavery in Egypt is told in detail. The tradition says: The more you tell it, the better it is. Stories of activism energize us, teach strategies, embolden. At your seder table, please share a story of activism – it can be your own story or a story you’ve heard, but the more you tell it, the better it is.



ELIJAH'S PROMISE, Miriam's Activism and Staying Engaged

Because our world is not yet free of violence, the hagodeh reminds us of Elijah, the biblical prophet of peace. In the folk myth, Elijah promises messianic redemption, and we are told to wait for it. Though we activists cherish the promise of a perfectible world, we stay engaged in the struggle to make it real.



All sing:

*Eliyohu ha-novi, Eliyohu ha-tishbi,
Eliyohu, Eloyohu, Eliyohu ha-giladi.*

אליהו הנביא, אליהו התשבי,
אליהו, אליהו, אליהו הגלעדי.

*Ale vartn, yung un alt,
Brengt derleyzung, kum zhe bald,
Mit meshiekh ben Dovid, mit meshiekh ben Dovid.*

אלע וואָרטן, יונג און אַלט,
ברענג דערלייזונג, קום זשע באַלד,
מיט משיח בן דוד, מיט משיח בן דוד.

Though the Bible refers to Moses' sister Miriam as a prophet, she is left out of the traditional seder narrative. Miriam's action (strategically placing her baby brother in a basket where he could be discovered by Pharaoh's daughter and saved) created the possibility for Moses to become a liberator. This adaptation of Elijah's song gives Miriam her due.



All sing:

*Miriam haneviya
Oz vezimrat beyada
Miriam tirkod itanu
Letaken et haolam
Miriam tirkod itanu
Letaken et haolam*

מרים הנביאה
עוז וזמרת בידה
מרים תרקוד אתנו
לתקן את העולם
מרים תרקוד אתנו
לתקן את העולם.

Miriam brave and strong
Prophet Miriam of light
and song
Miriam will dance with us
To heal the world and right
its wrongs.

*Bimhera veyameynu
Hi tevi'enu
Al mei hayeshu'a (2x)*

במהרה בימנו
היא תביאנו
על מי הישועה

Miriam Haneviya Hebrew words: Leila Gal Berner

“Our ancestors were shepherds, free to wander in open spaces. When they went down to Egypt, they descended into “a narrow place.” Their freedoms were taken away. Their world contracted. Their dreams became nightmares.

We, who have so many freedoms, how are we enslaved? What are the narrow places we construct for ourselves? When do we relinquish our freedom and the freedom of others?

The richest society in human history, we tolerate desperation among our citizens for access to healthcare. We accept a racially disproportionate imposition of the death penalty. We try to rid our society of social problems by building prison cells instead of rebuilding lives.

And our shame is our sense that these problems are too big and too complicated. Maybe our enslavement today is our inability to dream, to imagine.”

– Rabbi Marc Margolius

We Are Activists for Equal Rights for All

Rabbi Marc Margolius directs the Legacy Heritage Innovation Project, a national program supporting change through family-based Jewish education. Rabbi Margolius is Jewishly committed to (but not legally married to) Rabbi Ayelet Cohen, the (straight) Associate Rabbi of New York's Beit Simchat Torah (the gay shul). While New York's top court ruled a year ago against same-sex marriages, Judaism's Conservative movement has voted to allow the ordination of gay rabbis and the celebration of same-sex commitment ceremonies. So Cohen and Margolius had a Conservative Jewish ceremony but did not get a state marriage license. Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum, Cohen's boss, officiated, and hearing there's a state law prohibiting clergy from performing a religious wedding ceremony without the legal component, said: "I'd be delighted if Robert Morgenthau (NY District Attorney) decided to arrest me."

SONGS OF PEACE



And everyone 'neath their vine and fig tree/Lo yisa goy

And everyone 'neath their vine and fig tree
Shall live in peace and unafraid
And into ploughshares beat their swords
Nation shall learn war no more

Lo yisa goy el goy kherev (3x)
Lo yilmedu od milkhama

לא ישא גוי אל גוי חרב לא ילמדו עוד מלחמה

Un zey veln shmidn zeyere
shverdn af akerayzns,
Un zeyere shpizn af tsvaygmesers;
A folk kegn a folk vet nit heybn a shverd,
Un me vet nit mer lernen milkhome.

און זיי וועלן שמידן זייערע שווערדן אויף אַקעראַיזנס,
און זייערע שפיזן אויף צווייגמעסערס;
אַ פֿאָלק קעגן אַ פֿאָלק וועט ניט הייבן אַ שווערד,
און מע וועט ניט מער לערנען מלחמה.



Peace song/Sholem lid

Sholem, sholem
Sholem, sholem, sholem
Zol zayn yidn sholem
Sholem zol zayn (2x)
Sholem af der gantser welt.

שלום, שלום, שלום,
זאָל זײַן ייִדן שלום
שלום זאָל זײַן
שלום אויף דער גאַנצער וועלט!

We Are Activists for Peace

“Israel is no longer a people that dwells alone. We now must join the global journey toward peace, reconciliation and international cooperation. We must think differently, look at things in a different way. Peace requires a world of new concepts, new definitions.”

– Yitzhak Rabin (1922 – 1995)

Rabin was the fifth Prime Minister of Israel, serving two terms in the 70's and the 90's. In 1994, Rabin won the Nobel Peace Prize together with Shimon Peres and Yasser Arafat. He was assassinated by a right-wing Israeli radical, opposed to Rabin's signing of the Oslo Accords.



SONGS OF PEACE



Last Night I Had The Strangest Dream

Last night I had the strangest dream
I'd ever dreamed before
I dreamed the world had all agreed
To put an end to war

I dreamed I saw a mighty room
Filled with women and men
And the paper they were signing said
They'd never fight again

And when the paper was all signed
And a million copies made
They all joined hands and bowed their heads
And grateful pray'rs were prayed

And the people in the streets below
Were dancing 'round and 'round
While swords and guns and uniforms
Were scattered on the ground

Last night I had the strangest dream
I'd never dreamed before
I dreamed the world had all agreed
To put an end to war.

words and music by Ed McCurdy
©Almanac Music, Inc.



Peace in the Streets/*Volt ikh gehat koyekh*

If my voice were louder
If my body stronger
I would tear through the streets
Shouting Peace, peace, peace!

Volt ikh gehat koyekh
Volt ikh gelofn in di gasn
Volt ikh geshrign sholem
Sholem, sholem, sholem!

וואָלט איך געהאַט פּוּחַ,
וואָלט איך געלאָפֿן אין די גאַסן,
וואָלט איך געשריגן שלום,
שלום, שלום, שלום.

Khasidic song adapted by Adrienne Cooper English verse: Sarah Mina Gordon

FOURTH CUP OF WINE

Lift your wine glass and say:

To the good fight for a *shenere un besere velt far ale*, to bread and roses, a better, more beautiful world for all.

In the tradition of our ancestors we say:

Baruch ata adonay eloheynu melech haolam borey pri hagafen.

ברוך אתה יי, אלהנו מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן.

In Yiddish:

Mir freyen zikh mit undzer yerushe vos git undz di traditsye fun a koyse ful mit freyd.

מיר פֿרייען זיך מיט אונדזער ירושה וואָס גיט אונדז די טראַדיציע פֿון אַ פֿוסע פֿול מיט פֿרייד.

We delight in the tradition of a cup filled with joy!



The ancient promise of Israel held out the dream of a light to the nations and a path to peace. Today, let us strengthen one another to do the difficult and patient work of peacemaking—for our own country, for our families in Israel, for those who endure the terrors, enduring wounds, and irreplaceable losses of war each day.

An Arab Shepherd Is Searching For His Goat On Mount Zion

An Arab shepherd is searching for his goat on Mount Zion
And on the opposite hill I am searching for my little boy.
An Arab shepherd and a Jewish father
Both in their temporary failure.
Our two voices met above
The Sultan's Pool in the valley between us.
Neither of us wants the boy or the goat
To get caught in the wheels
Of the "Had Gadya" machine.
Afterward we found them among the bushes,
And our voices came back inside us
Laughing and crying.
Searching for a goat or for a child has always been
The beginning of a new religion in these mountains.

Yehudah Amichai (1924-2000)

Considered by many as Israel's greatest modern poet, Yehuda Amichai emigrated to Mandate Palestine from Germany in 1935 at age 12. His poetry has been translated in 40 languages and he was the recipient of countless honors for his work, including being nominated several times for the Nobel Prize.

In "An Arab Shepherd is Searching...", the image of the 'Had Gadya' machine refers to the cycle of violence and death in the traditional seder song – where a small goat is eaten by a cat, who is bitten by a dog, who is in turn hit by a stick, which is burned by fire, quenched by water, that is drunk by an ox, who is slaughtered by a butcher, who is killed by the Angel of Death, who is in turn snuffed out by God.

HAVE A DREAM!

“We still have a long, long way to go before we reach the promised land of freedom. Yes, we have left the dusty soils of Egypt, and we have crossed a Red Sea that had for years been hardened by a long and piercing winter of massive resistance, but before we reach the majestic shores of the promised land, there will still be gigantic mountains of opposition ahead and prodigious hilltops of injustice...

Let us be dissatisfied until the tragic walls that separate the outer city of wealth and comfort from the inner city of poverty and despair shall be crushed by the battering rams of the forces of justice.

Let us be dissatisfied until the dark yesterdays of segregated schools will be transformed into bright tomorrows of quality integrated education.

Let us be dissatisfied until integration is not seen as a problem but as an opportunity to participate in the beauty of diversity.

Let us be dissatisfied until men and women...will be judged on the basis of the content of their character, not on the basis of the color of their skin.

Let us be dissatisfied until from every city hall, justice will roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream.”

— Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929 – 1968)

Martin Luther King, Jr, clergyman, activist leader in the non-violent civil disobedience-based African-American civil rights movement, secured enormous progress on civil rights in the United States. King's efforts led to the 1963 March on Washington, where he delivered his “I Have a Dream” speech, raising public consciousness of the civil rights movement. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (January 15) was established as a U.S. national holiday in 1986.



Yiddish: I. Lukowsky Music: Traditional

Enough!/ Dayenu

If we had only been liberated from Egypt, it would have been enough
If only the sea had split, it would have been enough
If we had only passed through to dry land, it would have been enough
...but in the process of liberation, we became a people as well, and it is enough.

*Voltn mir nokh fun mitsrayim
Gliklekh oysgeleyzt gevorn,
Nor der yam zikh nit geshpoltn –
Dayeynu.*

וואָלטן מיר נאָר פֿון מצרים
גליקלעך אויסגעלייזט געוואָרן,
נאָר דער ים זיך ניט געשפּאַלטן –
דייַנו —

*Volt der yam zikh shoyrn geshpoltn
Nor im durkhgeyn in der trukn,
Volt undz demolt nisht gegoltn –
Dayeynu.*

וואָלט דער ים זיך שוין געשפּאַלטן,
נאָר אים דורכגיין אין דער טרוקן
וואָלט אונדז דעמאָלט נישט געגאָלטן –
דייַנו —

*Voltn mir im shoyrn ariber
Nisht gekent nor iberkumen,
Fertsik yor in groysn midber –
Dayeynu.*

וואָלטן מיר אים שוין אַריבער,
נישט געקענט נאָר איבערקומען
פֿערציק יאָר אין גרויסן מדבר –
דייַנו —

*Voltn mir di fertsik yor shoyrn
In dem midber durkhgekumen
Un keyn mon dort nisht gefunen –
Dayeynu.*

וואָלטן מיר די פֿערציק יאָר שוין
אין דעם מדבר דורכגעקומען
און קיין מן דאָרט נישט געפֿונען –
דייַנו —

*Voltn mir dort mon gefunen,
Nor dem shabes nisht bakumen,
Un tsum sinay nisht gekumen –
Dayenu.*

וואָלטן מיר דאָרט מן געפֿונען,
נאָר דעם שבת נישט באַקומען,
אין צום סיני נישט געקומען –
דייַנו —

*Voltn mir tsum sinay kumen,
Nor di toyre nisht bakumen,
S'folk fun toyre nisht gevorn –
Dayeynu.*

וואָלטן מיר צום סיני קומען,
נאָר די תורה נישט באַקומען,
ס'פֿאָלק פֿון תורה נישט געוואָרן –
דייַנו —

Who knows one?/Mu Asapru

*Mu asapru, mu adabru –
Oy, oy yam tada di dum
Ver ken redn, ver ken zogn,
Vos di eyns badayt? Vos di eyns badayt?
Eyner iz got, un got iz eyner,
Un vayter keyner.*

*Mu asapru, mu adabru – Oy, oy yam tada...
Ver ken redn, ver ken zogn,
Vos di tsvey badayt? Vos di tsvey badayt?
Tsvey zaynen di lukhes, un eyner iz dokh got,
Un got iz eyner, un vayter keyner.*

*Mu asapru, mu adabru – Oy, oy ...
Ver ken redn, ver ken zogn,
Vos di dray badayt? Vos di dray badayt?
Dray zaynen di oves,
Un tsvey zaynen di lukhes,
Un eyner iz dokh got,
Un got iz eyner, un vayter keyner.*

*Mu asapru, mu adabru – Oy, oy ...
Ver ken redn, ver ken zogn,
Vos di fir badayt? Vos di fir badayt?
Fir zaynen di imes.
Dray zaynen di oves,
Tsvey zaynen di lukhes,
Un eyner iz dokh got,
Un got iz eyner, un vayter keyner.*

מה אספרה, מה אדברה –
אוי, אוי ...
ווער קען רעדן, ווער קען זאָגן,
וואָס די איינס באדייט? וואָס די איינס באדייט?
איינער איז גאָט, און גאָט איז איינער,
און ווייטער קיינער.

מה אספרה, מה אדברה –
אוי, אוי ...
ווער קען רעדן, ווער קען זאָגן,
וואָס די צוויי באדייט? וואָס די צוויי באדייט?
צוויי זיינען די לוחות, און איינער איז דאָך גאָט,
און גאָט איז איינער, און ווייטער קיינער.

מה אספרה, מה אדברה –
אוי, אוי ...
ווער קען רעדן, ווער קען זאָגן,
וואָס די דריי באדייט? וואָס די דריי באדייט?
דריי זיינען די אַבֹות.
צוויי זיינען די לוחות,
און איינער איז דאָך גאָט,
און גאָט איז איינער, און ווייטער קיינער.

מה אספרה, מה אדברה –
אוי, אוי ...
ווער קען רעדן, ווער קען זאָגן,
וואָס די פֿיר באדייט? וואָס די פֿיר באדייט?
פֿיר זיינען די אימהות.
דריי זיינען די אַבֹות.
צוויי זיינען די לוחות,
און איינער איז דאָך גאָט,
און גאָט איז איינער, און ווייטער קיינער.

*Mu asapru, mu adabru – Oy, oy ...
Ver ken redn, ver ken zogn,
Vos di finf badayt? Vos di finf badayt?
Finf zaynen di khumeyschim.
Fir zaynen di imes,
Dray zaynen di oves,
Tsvey zaynen di lukhes,
Un eyner iz dokh got,
Un got iz eyner, un vayter keyner...*

*Zeks zaynen di Mishnayas
Zibn iz dokh Shabes
Akht zaynen di teg fun bris-mile
Nayn zaynen di khadoshim
Tsen zaynen aseyres hadibres
Elf zaynen di shtern
Tsvef zaynen di shvotim*

מה אספרה, מה אדברה –
אוי, אוי ...
ווער קען רעדן, ווער קען זאָגן,
וואָס די פֿינף באדייט? וואָס די פֿינף באדייט?
פֿינף זיינען די חומשים.
פֿיר זיינען די אימהות.
דריי זיינען די אַבֹות.
צוויי זיינען די לוחות,
און איינער איז דאָך גאָט,
און גאָט איז איינער, און ווייטער קיינער.

זעקס זיינען די משניות
זיבן איז דאָך שבת
אַכט זיינען די טעג פֿון ברית-מילה
ניין זיינען די חדושים
צען זיינען די עשרת-הדיברות
עלף זיינען די שטערן
צוועלף זיינען די שבטים.

Who Knows One? is a counting game song that has been translated/adapted in a variety of Jewish languages. In Hebrew the song is *Echad Mi Yodeah*, in Yiddish *Mu Asapru* (Yiddish song with Aramaic title), and in Ladino (the Spanish-based Jewish language) it is *Quien Supiense*. Enjoy them all!

*Who knows one? I know one. One is the unity of heaven and earth. Who know two? I know two. Two are the tablets that Moshe brought down, and one is the unity of heaven and earth. Who knows three? Three are the fathers, four are the mothers, five are the books of the bible, six are the books of mishnah, seven are the days of the week, eight are the days 'til the bris, nine are the months until a baby's born, ten are the commandments, eleven are the stars in Joseph's dream, twelve are tribes of Israel.
The Ladino version adds one more verse, to total thirteen: at 13 one can be part of a minyan.*

Quien Supiense*(Ladino Echad Mi Yodeah from the Altabet family tradition)*

*Quien supiense i entendiense,
Alavar al Dyo criense,
Qualo es el uno, qualo es el uno?
Uno es el Creador, uno es el Creador,
Uno es el Creador, baruch Hu uvaruch sh'mo*

*Qualo son los siete, qualo son los siete?
– Siete dias de la semana,*

*Quien supiense i entendiense,
Alavar al Dyo criense,
Qualo son los dos, qualo son los dos?
Dos Moshe i Aaron, uno es el Creador,
Uno es el Creador, baruch Hu uvaruch sh'mo*

*Qualo son los ocho, qualo son los ocho?
– Ocho dias de brit mila,*

*Quien supiense i entendiense,
Alavar al Dyo criense,
Qualo son los tres?
Tres nuestros padres son
Avraham, Isaac i Yacov*

*Qualo son los nueve, qualo son los nueve?
– Nueve mezes de la prenyada,*

*Quien supiense i entendiense,
Alavar al Dyo criense,
Qualo son los cuatro, qualo son los cuatro?
Cuatro madres de Yisrael,
Sarah, Rivkah, Leah, Rachel,*

*Qualo son los diez, qualo son los diez?
– Diez mandamientos de la lei, Uno es el
Creador, baruch Hu uvaruch sh'mo*

*Qualo son los cinco, qualo son los cinco?
Cinco libros de la lei,*

*Qualo son los once, qualo son los once?
– Once estrellas de sueno de Yossef,*

*Qualo son los sesesh, qualo son los sesesh?
– Sesesh sedres de la Mishna,*

*Qualo son los doce, qualo son los doce?
– Doce trivos de Yisrael,*

*Qualo son los trece, qualo son los trece?
– Trece anyos de complas minyan...*

Ale brider/We Are All One

Everyone is someone's brother
Oy, oy someone's brother
No one is just like the other
Oy, oy, oy.

And we all stand here together
Oy, oy stand here together
Nothing else could be much better
Oy, oy, oy.

Everyone is someone's sister
Oy, oy someone's sister
Just like Rachel, Ruth, and Esther.
Oy, oy, oy.

*Un mir zaynen ale brider,
Oy, oy ale brider,
Un mir zingen freylekhe lider
Oy, oy, oy.
Un mir halten zikh in eynem,
Oy, oy zikh in eynem,
Azelkhes iz nito bay keynem
Oy, oy, oy.*

*Un mir zaynen ale eynik,
Oy, oy ale eynik,
Tsi mir zaynen fil tsi veynik
Oy, oy, oy.
Un mir libn zikh dokh ale,
Oy, oy zikh dokh ale,
Vi a khosn mit a kale
Oy, oy, oy.*

*Un mir zaynen ale shvester,
Oy, oy ale shvester,
Azoy vi Rokhl, Rus, un Ester
Oy, oy, oy
Un mir zaynen freylekh munter,
Oy, oy freylekh munter,
Zingen lider, tantsn unter
Oy, oy, oy.*

*Frum un link fareynikt ale,
Oy, oy, fareynikt ale,
Vi der khosn mit der kale,
Oy, oy, oy.
Vi der khumesh mitn rashe,
Oy, oy mitn rashe,
Vi der kugl mit der kashe
Oy, oy, oy.*

און מיר זינגען אַלע ברידער,
אוי, אוי אַלע ברידער,
און מיר זינגען פֿריילעכע לידער
אוי, אוי, אוי.
און מיר האַלטן זיך אין איינעם,
אוי, אוי זיך אין איינעם,
אַזעלכעס איז ניטאָ בני קיינעם
אוי, אוי, אוי.

און מיר זינגען אַלע אייניק,
אוי, אוי אַלע אייניק,
צי מיר זינגען פֿיל צי ווייניק
אוי, אוי, אוי.
און מיר ליבן זיך דאָך אַלע,
אוי, אוי, זיך דאָך אַלע,
ווי א חתן מיט א פֿלה,
אוי, אוי, אוי.

און מיר זינגען אַלע שוועסטער,
אוי, אוי אַלע שוועסטער,
אזוי ווי רחל, רות און אסתר
אוי, אוי, אוי.
און מיר זינגען פֿריילעך מונטער,
אוי, אוי פֿריילעך מונטער,
זינגען לידער, טאַנצן אונטער
אוי, אוי, אוי.

פֿרום און פֿרײַ פֿאַראייניקט אַלע,
אוי, אוי פֿאַראייניקט אַלע,
ווי דער חתן מיט דער פֿלה,
אוי, אוי, אוי.
ווי דער חומש מיט די רש"י,
אוי, אוי מיט די רש"י,
ווי דער קוגל מיט דער קאַשע
אוי, אוי, אוי.

Yiddish: M. Winchevsky
Singable English: Sarah Mina Gordon

Had Gadyo (One little goat), a metaphorical songs about the cycle of oppression, violence and liberation, was originally written in Aramaic. Here is the Yiddish version.



Had Gadyo/One Little Goat/Kh'hob far aykh a maysele

*Kh'hob far aykh a maysele,
A maysele gor sheyn,
Der tate hot a tsigele
Gekoyft far tsvey gildeyn.*

*A tsigele a vaysinke,
A sheyninke vi gold
Un tsvey gildeyn mezumene
Hot er far ir batsolt.
Khad gadyo, khad gadyo.*

*Iz dokh in hoyf a kats geven,
A mazik, vi bavust;
Hot ketslen zikh fartsukn gor
Dos tsigele farglust.*

*Derzen hot es hintele,
Fardrist es im gants shtark,
Er varft zikh af der beyzer kats
Un bayst ir ayn in kark.
Khad gadyo, khad gadyo.*

*Kumt shtekele in kas arayn
Un trakht gor nit keyn sakh,
Un shpalt dos kepl hintelen
– Du, hunt, s'iz nit dayn zakh!*

כ'האָב פֿאַר אייך אַ מעשה־לע,
אַ מעשה־לע גאָר שיין,
דער טאַטע האָט אַ ציגעלע
געקויפֿט פֿאַר צוויי גילדיין.

אַ ציגעלע אַ ווייסינקע
אַ שיינינקע ווי גאָלד
און צוויי גילדיין מזמנע
האָט ער פֿאַר איר באַצאָלט.
חד גדיא, חד גדיא.

איז דאָך אין הויף אַ קאַץ געווען,
אַ מזיק, ווי באַוויסט;
האָט קעצלען זיך פֿאַרצוקן גאָר
דאָס ציגעלע פֿאַרגלוסט.

דערזען האָט עס הינטעלע,
פֿאַרדריסט עס אים גאַנץ שטאַרק,
ער וואָרפֿט זיך אויף דער בייזער קאַץ
און בייסט איר אַינן אין קאַרק.
חד גדיא, חד גדיא!

קומט שטעקעלע אין פעס אַרײַן
און טראַכט גאָר ניט קיין סך,
און שפּאַלט דאָס קעפל הינטעלען
דו, הונט, ס'איז ניט דיין זאַך!

*Tseflakert hot zikh fayerl
Far kas tsunter royt:
Du shtekele, du flekele,
Ikh makh dir bald a toyt.
Khad gadyo, khad gadyo.*

צעפֿלאַקערט האָט זיך פֿײַערל
פֿאַר פעס צונטער רױט:
דו שטעקעלע, דו פֿלעקעלע,
איך מאַך דיר באַלד אַ טױט!
חד גדיא, חד גדיא.

*Beneath the outward trappings of a secular ballad intended to amuse children and keep them awake until the conclusion of the Seder, **Had Gadya** contains an historical allegory of retributive justice, in which the “one little goat that father bought for two zuzim” may represent the Jewish people, presented with the two tablets of the law by Moses and Aaron. The remaining figures in the story personify nations that successively oppressed Israel, each overthrown by a new tyranny: Assyria/Babylonia (the cat) fell to Persia (the dog), which succumbed to Greece (the stick), swallowed up in the Roman Empire (the fire); Rome fell to the Barbarians (the water), vanquished by the armies of Islam (the ox), which yielded to the Crusaders (the slaughterer). Finally, the Angel of Death, is the last persecutor whom, it is hoped, history will bring to account.*

THE WORKMEN'S CIRCLE HYMN

SONG 

*Mir hobn di heymishe flamen
Shoyn tsendliker yorn gebit,
Zey hobn oykh hinter di yamen
Far undz azoy lib nokh geglit.
Zey hobn undz glutik tsuzamen
In ring fun an ordn geshmidt.*

*Un ale far eynem,
Un eyner far al -
Baloykhtn in eynem
Fun eyn ideal.
Dem groysn, dem sheynem -
Fun arbeter-klal!*

Mid the blaze of a world in struggle
The light of freedom we sought
At home and far over the ocean
To a vision of justice we brought
The fire of our love and devotion
And a circle of friendship we wrought

A timeless bond unites us
A ring of tempered steel
One radiant beacon lights us
To peace and commonweal
All for one and one for all
The Arbeter Ring ideal.

מיר האָבן די היימישע פֿלאַמען
שוין צענדליקע יאָרן געהיט,
זיי האָבן אויך הינטער די ימען
פֿאַר אונדז אזוי ליב נאָך געגליט.
זיי האָבן אונדז גלוטיק צוזאַמען
אין רינג פֿון אַן אָרדן געשמידט.

און אלע פֿאַר איינעם,
און איינער פֿאַר אַל -
באַלויכטן אין איינעם
פֿון איין אידעאַל.
דעם גרויסן, דעם שיינעם -
פֿון אַרבעטער כלל!

Yiddish poem: Avrom Liessin



Jewish Musicians for Haiti Benefit Concert, Jan 28, 2010, Photo: Donna AcetoImmigrant's Rights and Anti-profiling Rally, NYC



A Besere Velt (A Better World) Yiddish Community Chorus, Boston



West Side Shule families in AIDS Walk, NYC



The Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring

Building energetic, engaged, educated Jewish learning communities
with a passion to improve the world through activism.

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Seder for a Better World: An Activist's Hagodeh

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