

The Join-In, Participate, Sing-Along Hagadah

הַגְדָּה שֶׁל פֶּסַח

SPS Draft

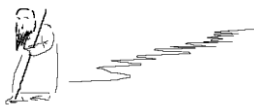
The Join-In, Participate, Sing-Along Hagadah

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A Hagadah for Irreverent People
at Different Levels of Hebrew Literacy

by

Irrev. Dr. Joe Lewis



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Copyright and Acknowledgements

Cover art by Howard Fridson

Digitized by Steve Klaper

Additional art by Aaron Lewis

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Seventh Edition ISBN

978-1-8888822-60-1

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*No part of this book may be copied in any form without our express written permission,
but you may read and sing it to your heart's content!*

In loving memory of
Betty Lewis and Minnie Naidoff

Would that they had seen our children grow!

תם ולא נשלם

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Preface

Preface to the Seventh Edition

Corrected a formatting error.

Preface to the Sixth Edition

Restored missing songs.

Preface to the Fifth Edition

We reset the type to make it easier to read and to show when text comes from Torah or Tanach, and we reconsidered some translations, but basically this is still the same jolly guide to a Seder that everyone can enjoy. However, some page numbers differ from previous editions.

Preface to the Third and Fourth Editions

A few minor changes in punctuation, a few typos corrected, a blessing restored to its rightful place on page 65 ... these editions retain the page numbers of the second edition, so the two editions will be compatible at the same Seder table. Thanks to the Hagadah-buying public for buying up the second and third editions!

Preface to the Second Edition

Who could have predicted that the first edition would be a wild success, with hundreds of copies snapped up by eager buyers? And could I ever have anticipated the warm satisfaction—it courses

through my veins even now like a revivifying distillation—of the need for a second edition?

As I prepared this edition for the printer, I found that little needed to be changed. A careful eye corrected typos and made the text more egalitarian and less sexist than before. Where notes and references were missing, they were added.

And so, this book is a completely different size and shape than the previous edition. The book is now in an entirely new format, which I hope will be convenient for all readers. The three-column format allows for more expansive notes and commentary but results in a sleeker, though slightly wider book, in shape closer than ever to a piece of matzah.

Joking aside, the one thing that’s missing is hearty thanks to all who have encouraged these efforts over the past few years. You are too many to name, and that’s not just marketing hype.

I believe that Jewish people yearn to participate in Jewish tradition, to feel that they’re doing the right thing to reflect their rich heritage. They face barriers of unfamiliar language (in both English and Hebrew) and complicated rituals. If I can lower those barriers, making the quest easier and its fulfillment more enjoyable, I am grateful for the opportunity.

Three Columns for Easy Participation

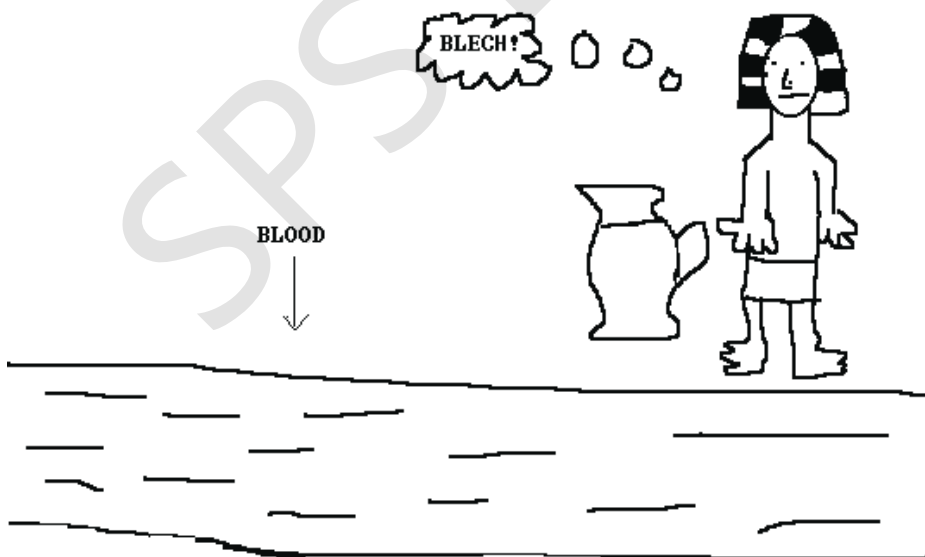
English translations are in bold when in “Singlish”—singable English that fits the tune for the Hebrew.	Hebrew is clear and set in logical phrases.	Transliteration lines up with Hebrew, so everyone keeps the same place on the page.
Had <i>God</i> saved us, saved us, saved us, Saved us from the nasty ‘Gyptians Without giving them conniptions, <i>Dayenu</i>	אלו הוציאנו ממצרים ולא עשה בהם שפטים דינו	Illu hotzi’anu miMitzrayim Velo asah vahem shefatim (2) Dayenu

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The Plague of Blood



Why this Hagadah is Different

This Hagadah is designed so that nobody needs to be left out. Like most families, our extended family includes people with varying levels of ability in Hebrew. For years, we used transliterated song-sheets; then we began to add English renderings that would fit the tune we use. Finally, we decided to go all the way and finish up the rest of the Hagadah, with Hebrew, English, and a transliteration.

An edition of Hagadot from around the world, used by Allen Wolf and Mandy Garver, also prompted this book. Some of these were reproductions of handwritten texts. If the ancients could copy their own, why (I wondered) can't we? This thought was hard for me to discard, because I come from a background that respects the amateur; and I sense a danger for our religion if we leave it up to the experts—following the texts they have edited, the interpretations they have developed, the ideas they have promulgated—instead of ourselves facing up to the challenge of our obligations as Jews. This is a homemade Hagadah; and perhaps you'll make your own, too.

How to Use This Book

If you don't read Hebrew, read the transliteration—or you can read the translation. Many of the songs are rendered into Singlish™—English that you can sing to the same tune as the Hebrew; the Singlish parts are usually in bold type.

Tunes

The tunes we sing are mostly those from Hillel Day School of Metropolitan Detroit, with other melodies from British tradition. If you can't imagine what tunes we're singing, and you can't figure out how to fit the English to the tune, send for our recording: you can find us at www.singlishps.com.

Translation into English and Singlish

If you're not familiar with Singlish, take a look at *Dayenu* (*Enough, already!*), page 31, or the begin-

ning and ending songs of *Grace After Meals* (pages 48 and 58). They are good examples of the method—fairly close translations in rhyme, which will fit the popular tune used for the Hebrew.

The English translation is deliberately colloquial; the words are generally as plain as I could make them. Lofty as are its themes, the story is told in plain words—ordinary people speaking in simple terms to ordinary people. Even the words of God are not beyond the comprehension of a simple mortal. What is surprising, and humbling to find, is that some of the Hebrew portions are so familiar—yet their meaning is still hard to grasp.

Year after year, I have not questioned my understanding of the Seder service, but the process of translating the text has increased my awareness both of its meaning, and of my shortcomings as a translator.

I am no great scholar of Hebrew, so what value (apart from a few rhymes) can this translation have? I leave that question for you, dear reader, to answer. But if this book can in any way enhance your Seder gathering, it will have served its purpose.

Even Less Sexist

The translation does not assume that all children are sons, or that all parents are fathers, or that God is male. Don't most of us think that God transcends human ideas of male and female? Hebrew makes everything—trees, tires and treats—either masculine or feminine; English has a third option, the neuter "it." As a result, calling God "he" in Hebrew does not mean the same as in English. In fact, it could be misleading. As far as possible, then, we avoid referring to God with masculine pronouns. The result will no doubt go too far for some and not far enough for others, leaving many to take offense, but perhaps it will prod us to ponder questions of sexism in religion, in family, and in authority.

Accordingly, God is never translated “Lord,” even though that word is far easier to rhyme than “God.” To convey God’s mastery, we use terms like “Sovereign,” “Ruler,” and sometimes even “Boss.”

Does this sound too colloquial? Perhaps, but it seems right for our society. Today, few people live where a king or queen can upset their lives. The figure who has great and immediate powers is that awesome personage, The Boss. We live in a democratic society where we can vote for our leaders, but the most powerful figure in most lives is beyond the vote; who gets to choose the Boss? That’s why I think it’s a good word to convey to modern minds the idea of sovereignty.

Consistency in the Transliteration

This is no doubt lacking. An English “e” has many sounds; I didn’t use it for the same Hebrew sound in every case. Instead, I tried to make the transliterated “word” in English characters lead the reader to pronounce the Hebrew word properly.

Sources

At our Seders, for many years we used Nahum Glatzer’s edition of the Hagadah for our family and guests, so I’m deeply indebted to that version. I also owe much to the copious notes and lucid translation of the ArtScroll version by Rabbi Joseph Elias. These and other helpful books mentioned in this volume are listed on page 98. Remember to praise these teachers when you enjoy this version, but

*When you think I go astray,
On me alone let the blame lay!*

While I wish to give credit to my sources, I would not imply that this book is sanctioned by any authority, religious or otherwise.

Hebrew Text

The Hebrew text follows Glatzer’s except for a few minor deviations, most of them noted in the comments. This version, however, omits the He-

brew “metheg,” the accent mark which indicates when the stress in a word is not on the last syllable.

An Acknowledgement

Acknowledgements are due to all those friends who enriched our Seders by teaching us new tunes, and to those whose encouragement has made my labors a delight.

Phrasing

The phrasing of the Hebrew and the transliteration should match. For singing parts, both of these should match the English. Where a song involves repeated phrases (sometimes several times), on occasion the repetition appears in the English and in the transliteration, but not in the Hebrew. If you know the Hebrew (I thought) you would probably know the song without much prompting, you can sing it with a child on your knee who is ill-temperedly trying to shove his head into your line of sight, and you hardly need to consult the Hebrew text.

Typographic Conventions

The Hagadah has two types of special passages. First, there are the several quoted voices—one of our sages, or a passage of Tanach. For quotations from Tanach, we use a distinct Hebrew font and list the source in the English.

Next, there are the Shabbat insertions and other conditional parts. For these, the text is *shaded* text.

In the transliteration, I capitalized proper names. In the translation, I did not capitalize pronouns which refer to God; I followed the advice of the *Chicago Manual of Style*, which I consider authoritative. Nor did I omit the “o” in “God.”

Direct references to God in Hebrew—Hashem—use the double ׀, without vowels. In Tanach quotations, God’s name is usually the Tetragrammaton.

Translations in bold text, like **this**, are Singlish—singable translations that fit the Hebrew

tune—so you can sing the English as well as the Hebrew. Many of our psalms and other prayers are acrostics; they follow each letter of the Hebrew aleph-bet or spell a Hebrew word or name. The acrostic letters are **bold**.

Italics in the translation are for words added to explain the literal meaning of the Hebrew. We avoid gender-specific pronouns for God—we don’t want to imply that God is either male or female, so we use italics (*God*) where the Hebrew uses a pronoun.

Our prayers often quote sources in the Torah or other parts of our scripture. This book marks the sources with a distinct Hebrew font, and the curious can easily chase the allusions to their source. Torah quotations include the “trop,” the cantillation marks. Words added to honor the Matriarchs as well as the Patriarchs are also in a distinct typeface so that those who wish may add the words, while others can easily skip them.

Prayer	ויקדש אתו
Scripture	ויקדש אתו
Torah	ויקדש אתו
Matriarchs	ויקדש אתו

Shaded words show variations in the text, either for Shabbat or for different versions of prayers.

Tools

For the first edition, the text was prepared using Ventura Publisher 3.0, a Hewlett-Packard Laserjet printer, and the Hebrew fonts from DigiFonts; for illustrations, we used the Windows 3.0 version of PaintBrush. For later editions, we used ScanFont to make Hebrew TrueType fonts and MS Word to

prepare the text. In these editions, I typed all the Hebrew backwards. For this edition, we used standard Unicode fonts, so typing Hebrew is a little easier, and we have our choice of Hebrew fonts.

Last Thoughts

As you read this little book, you may think, “Gosh, those Lewises must have so much fun at their Seders. Why can’t it be like that for us?” Well, don’t be fooled. We have the same troubles as everyone else: uncooperative kids who hum and haw and giggle and squirm when it’s their turn to start Mah Nishtanah, until the parents lose patience. Kids who already know about “matzah and all that stuff”—they heard it all in school—so they’d rather be watching TV than hiding the Afikomen. And adults (family and guests excepted—so whom can I possibly mean?) who sit through the proceedings grimly, silently praying “How long, O Lord, how long?” This book, like every Hagadah (I suppose) represents a kind of idealized Seder. Reality is more lively and less cooperative.

Nobody publishes a work of this sort without giving thought to those who will not seek, in this little volume, that which is useful, beautiful, and appropriate to the joyous spirit of the festival, but who will instead carp and cavil at every turn. To such critics and to their hate mail, I say: You waste your stamp, O Nabob of Negativism. To you, I put my thumbs in my ears, flap my fingers, and say “Nyaah, nyaah!”

Chag Same’ach, y’all.

Structure of the Hagadah

What are the elements of the Seder evening, with its symbols, stories, and feasting, and how do they fit together?

Like many people, I am puzzled by this question, but here's my attempt to understand it.

The meal is central to the obligations of Pesach. The Pesach sacrifice was a meal, and it was to be eaten in a certain way. What's more, the particular observances of Pesach are food-oriented, based on avoiding leaven.

Take the meal as the heart of the evening: it's natural to begin with Kiddush and end it with Bircat Hamazon. Now, it's reasonable to say that the honor due this occasion merits the recitation of Hallel. And songs to end a meal—why, there's nothing to question in that. Tell the story? Sure, that's a good idea ...

And so, the whole order makes sense in its broad outlines.

But we still choke on the way the story is told. Why do we dwell to such a degree on the Midrashic interpretation of the story, the number of plagues with which the Egyptians met, instead of telling more of the story—baby Moses, the plagues, and so on? Why don't we read a few passages from Exodus—where the events actually happened—rather than from Deuteronomy, where it's more of a memory?

Why do we dwell on the way people react to Pesach—the rabbis who told the story, the Four

Children, our obligation to discuss the meaning of the symbols?

A Tentative Answer

Well, here's my answer, and I advance it only tentatively. The Seder service reminds us not merely to tell the story of what happened to our ancestors, but to relive it ourselves, and to share the experience of our ancestors' salvation willingly and wittingly. The telling of the story is designed to stimulate certain actions and confirm our beliefs.

That's why the reaction of different people is so important: it helps us to guide our own reaction.

The story from Deuteronomy is not simply the second telling of the story: it's part of a repeated ceremony. There, the story has been put to use as the driving force or justification for a ritual which signals possession of the land. The context of the story in Deuteronomy suggests that the story is a cause for specific action; the Seder ceremony is itself such an action. The story is not just a good story, it challenges us to decide what we should do in response.

As we meet the personalities in the Hagadah—the questioning child who asks the Four Questions; the parent and the Four Children; the Rabbin; the Jewish landowner who repeats the ancient story formula—perhaps they probe and teach us to re-experience the material and spiritual salvation which are retold in the Hagadah.

Dayenu, enough already. I could go on ... but that's the kernel of my answer.

Preparing for Pesach

Food at Pesach

At Pesach, even as we celebrate our freedom, we accept the strictest of constraints upon our daily lives. For, as we all know, we Jews avoid eating or even possessing leavened foods during the festival. What this means in practice is something you should explore in detail with the rabbi of your choice. All I can offer are some notes and advice—a strictly personal and unauthorized view.

People who explain Jewish customs often present the most stringent views. While this inspires some people to reach laudable levels of piety, it puts Jewish observance beyond the practical reach of many others and discourages them from following any of our customs. Those who are uncertain about proper practice will not challenge extra requirements. A person who questions some widely accepted customs will draw criticism. Well, folks, take your critical aim at me. From the flotsam and jetsam of my snippets of knowledge, without the years of systematic study which bring authority, I hereby ask: How difficult, and how expensive, does Pesach really have to be?

What Is Chametz?

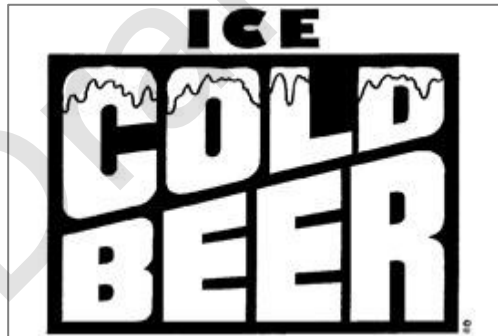
At Pesach, we clear chametz from our domains—the house and other areas (such as office space) which are under our control.

Chametz is “leaven,” leavened food made from any of these five grains: wheat, barley, rye, oats, and spelt. Once water hits flour, we believe leavening starts in as little as eighteen minutes.¹

¹ It’s “the time it takes to walk from Tiberias to Migdal Nunia” (BT Pesachim 46b), a halachic “mil” (about a kilometer, but ancient measurements leave room for dispute). Today, we accept the minimum as eighteen minutes.

That’s why a mixture of flour and water left for 18 minutes is chametz, and why matzah dough is baked within eighteen minutes of being mixed.

If left untended, any flour could become leavened by the humidity and the unbridled yeasties in the air, so flour used for Pesach is stored with special care. Any item which contains any of the five grains is normally considered chametz unless it was specifically prepared under supervision for Pesach.



Nice—but not for Pesach!

Legumes

Ashkenazi Jews, those of us from Eastern Europe and various other regions, also prohibit rice, beans and other legumes, known as *kitniyot*. The theory behind this may be that such foods were often ground into meal. When you went to scoop up some bean meal, you might (by mistake) dip your scoop into the next barrel, full of coarse wheat flour. To prevent such mistakes, Ashkenazi Jews decided to avoid all those ground foods during Pesach. Fortunately, though, potatoes are not prohibited, so we can use potato flour.

Corn—what Europeans call maize—is widely prohibited on the same basis, and the prohibition often extends to corn oil, corn sweeteners, and so

on. However, the basis for banning a “grain” unknown in ancient Israel is disputable.

Some say the restriction on kitniyot is a community custom in which rabbis have no say; as a result, if your observant grandmother used corn oil, you can too, even though today’s kashrut agencies won’t certify it for Passover. If quinoa was unknown to your grandmother, there’s no reason why you should add it to your list of kitniyot.

Ashkenazi Jews don’t eat kitniyot, but we can own these legumes and feed them to our pets.

Meanwhile, your Sephardi friends can feast on beans and rice all week long, with salsa and corn tortillas and matzah tacos and a mariachi band, while you look on longingly and say to yourself, “It’s kosher for them, but not for me.”

Dirt—Is It Chametz?

Chametz includes a lot of products, but of course it applies only to food; dirt is not chametz. In theory, you can clear out your chametz without actually cleaning your house.

But where do you draw the line between dirt and chametz? If you use flour and water to make a paste for hanging wallpaper, and there’s a big lump of flour stuck on your wall under the wallpaper, is that chametz? Again, if there’s a dusty crust of bread under the cabinets, but it’s so dried up that your pet poodle disdains even to give it an inquiring sniff, is that chametz? These are some of the fascinating questions which can absorb you.

You may think I’m jesting with the whole subject; let me assure you that I think these are serious questions, though I also think there’s no point viewing them through spectacles of sanctimonious gloom. You have to decide just how thoroughly you’re going to clear—and clean—the house. Will you wash all the children’s toys in case Baby slobbered cereal on the Duplos a few months ago? Will you clean out the books—or not use them during Pesach—because crumbs might have crept

in when you were reading them at the table the rest of the year? Or will you say, on the other hand, that nothing but food—something edible, not rotten—is chametz? You have to make your own decision about these issues, in consultation with your own rabbi; but above all be prepared to respect those whose decision differs from yours.

Historically, we Jews have been tirelessly diligent in rooting out our chametz. Meticulous stringency has been the norm, relaxed only for dire emergency. In 1941, the Parisian Rabbinate had moved to Nice—southern France was still “free”; they ruled that people could use beans and grains in that desperate time when the Nazi gas ovens smoked with the bodies of our people. Nonetheless, the Rabbinate poignantly added, “We hereby proclaim that this applies only: to him who cannot get along without it, and only in this year, a year of war” (Yerushalmi, Plate 161).¹

Or take another example. One year, I was standing at the display of Pesach milk, about to reach for a quart. An elderly lady came up to me, full of criticism for today’s kashrut. “When I was a child, all our milk came from our cow. Three weeks before Pesach, we stopped giving her wheat. Three weeks. Let her eat something else—no chametz. That’s how we kept Pesach, not like this ...”

If you take the spiritual view of chametz, such measures will not seem excessive. For chametz can be seen as that which inclines us toward evil: leaven puffs up the dough, and if left too long will bring about its collapse; so does chametz puff up our proud hearts, fueling our evil inclination?² Accordingly, you may determine to purge every cranny of the house just as thoroughly as you search your own heart to drive out the evil inclination.

¹ References are on page 95.

² BT Berachot 17a is the source for this idea.

(Hmm ... if chametz symbolizes the evil inclination, why do we eat it the rest of the year?)

“But Joe,” you may say, “this is nothing but benighted superstition.” Then I must answer: do not hastily dismiss such piety. For the very nature of Pesach is allegorical. Our task is to relive the experience of our ancestors when God took them—and us—from slavery to freedom. How can we do this unless we reinterpret the redemption in our own terms? Do we not all taste the bread of affliction from time to time? A difficult boss, a testy child, a nagging spouse, an unreasonable client, an unsympathetic judge; times when business is bad or when the spirit is oppressed; all these and more afflictions can crowd upon us daily to frustrate our wishes and dim our hopes. Then do not scorn those who seek an inward freedom, who try to rid themselves of evil and of unfulfilled desire not by grasping for more, but by wanting less.

Again, you may say: “If the true experience of Pesach is spiritual, why do we need to observe its practical rituals at all? Surely, we can feed our soul the matzah of the spirit while we chew on a crust of bread.” Then I must ask: Are your body and soul so distinct? Has the experiential-physical-social-practical realm no effect whatsoever on your state of mind? Answer honestly, now. And I think you’ll agree that the taste of matzah affects your state of mind in ways that you can barely sense.

However you interpret our obligation to remove chametz, I hope this section will give you some sympathy for those whose method differs from your own.

A Note on Supervision

As you know, certified kosher and Pesach goods are all prepared under supervision. You can imagine some rabbi of profound learning meticulously inspecting each jar before the jelly enters it, each carton before the juice is poured into it, each box before the matzah meal fills it. You can imagine

carloads of Talmud scholars racing down the freeway to reach the food factories in time for the shift change.

Actually, however, supervision is not always performed in this manner. I know, because I did it when I was a schoolboy. As a teenager, I supervised production of the Passover milk for my home town of Bournemouth, England.

As I reflect upon those happy spring mornings when I went to the milk plant before school, I have to wonder why the procedures we followed then no longer seem good enough. Why do people speak of soaking glassware for 72 hours? I used to watch the bottles proceed through a monstrous autoclave where water from a naturally hot geyser washed and steamed them clean; so what’s wrong with boiling glassware? Why do so few people boil their pots for Pesach, I wonder? And why do some people rely without question on the remotest hechsher, when behind it could be a 17-year-old boy, who rose early so that the Rabbi could practice his yoga undisturbed?

Sometimes, your own eyes (as you scoop up spices from the bulk foods bin) may be as reliable as a printed hechsher.

Locking up / Selling Chametz

Once you gather your chametz, you will destroy much of it. What you don’t destroy—the unopened packages of cereal, for example—you can store away in a designated area such as a closed cabinet. Then you can sell it for the duration of Pesach to a non-Jew. The sale is normally handled through your own shul, but these days (of course) you can handle the sale through websites. Once you sell it, you’re no longer responsible for it. Naturally, the sale is arranged so that the items are re-purchased a couple of hours after Pesach.

The formula for the sale often includes selling the chametz which sticks to your pots and pans. This seems to render moot the question whether

dirt, even crud, is chametz. For some, it will even call into question the cleaning of the house!

A Word About Shopping

During Pesach, we may not acquire anything with any trace of chametz. However, some point out that items of food owned before Pesach fall under different rules. These items are not considered chametz unless chametz constitutes at least one sixtieth part of their total volume. With this ruling—don't take it from me, consult your rabbi—you can keep your honey, coffee, sugar, and jam (some would avoid corn sweeteners in jam); you can buy milk and tuna before Pesach and keep using them; and so on.

You'll find some information on this in Klein, p. 115 and in Ginzfried, 117:1 and 112:5.

We keep a shopping list from one year to the next, so we know what to buy.

It helps to know that a ten-pound jar of gefilte fish has twenty-four pieces. Don't blame me if your jar has a different number, though.

A Note On Pets

We're not allowed to own chametz, even in pet food. Some pet food uses legumes such as corn instead of chametz grains such as wheat, and you can own this and feed your pet. If you buy the food before Passover, you have the extra protection of the one-sixtieth rule. Some would point out that packaged pet food is nutritionally far inferior to table scraps, and maybe we should feed our pets from the table for a week.

Changing Over from Chametz to Pesach

Have you ever wondered how some people manage to start cooking for Pesach long before you do? How some people get their kitchens all changed over a week before the Seder? Me too. How they do it is a mystery, but here's how normal people can conduct the changeover.

Four weeks before Pesach is Purim, and this is the time to begin cleaning the house. You have

three or four weekends to clean each room for chametz, so work your way down to the kitchen. Start using up the staples you have in the house—those cans of beans and boxes of pancake mix. Since you're supposed to get tipsy on Purim, it's a fine opportunity to clear out your grain-based booze. (But don't drive!)

If you have children, you'll have to expose all their secret stashes of candy. Be sure to go through their drawers, all those spaces under the bed, their coat pockets, and their school bags. (But be sure to respect their privacy, little darlings.)

Get the bedrooms done, and then do the bathrooms. This is a good time to pitch outdated drugs. You may want to throw out pills that contain chametz, and you may have plans to replace the regular toothpaste and soap with Passover varieties. Of course, if you don't consider these items food (do you eat soap?), you may not need to change them over at Pesach.

Do the basement, too, if anybody could have brought chametz there.

Once you have cleaned each room and searched it for chametz, don't let anyone bring any food into it.

Wash the car(s) and vacuum the insides. If you have kids, check all the cupholders and other compartments carefully. You never know where a patch of chewing gum may be waiting for its master. (Is dry chewing gum edible? Is it chametz?)

About two weeks before Pesach, start your shopping. Any earlier, and the stores won't have the items. Any later, and they'll run out. Your goal is to shop on Apricot Jam Day—the one day after it comes in and before it's all bought out.

Now you're left with the kitchen, the dining room, the breakfast nook, and the normal food storage areas. Limit eating to either the dining room or the breakfast nook. Then you can clean the tables and chairs in the other area.

Kitchen

Finally, you're ready for the kitchen. Work from the top down, but do the stove and the fridge first.

1. Stove and Fridge

Some scholars will point out that a vessel becomes milchig, fleishig or chametzdik only when you cook food in it, so it makes sense to kasher your pots, but not to worry about countertops.¹ This is a controversial area of Jewish law, so you may wish to consult someone you trust.

The fridge has four sections: the door, the gasket(s), the freezer section, and the regular refrigerator section. A nailbrush helps clear out the creases in the gasket, but otherwise you need warm water and lots of rags. You'll normally remove the shelves before cleaning them (use a laundry marker or something to mark the position of the shelf so you can get it back where you want it).

Take the opportunity to clean the coils—once a year is not too often.

Now for the stove, or rather, the oven(s) and range.

For a microwave oven, typically you clean it as well as you can, and then use it to boil some water and steam it clean (one can reasonably question whether “cooking” as Jewish law understands it can occur in a microwave oven, since it doesn't use heat to cook).

For your oven(s), clean the door first; you may want a blade scraper to clean the glass. Then use the self-clean cycle if you have one. Otherwise,

you normally heat the oven to the highest heat for an hour or so, until all the dirt becomes ash. Years ago, people would use glowing coals to heat the oven. I once tried to imitate this by putting barbecue coals in the oven; they didn't get red, but they did give off lots of smoke, to the consternation of our considerate apartment neighbors.

For the stove top or range, clean it as best you can; then you normally turn the burners to maximum heat for about fifteen minutes. We have a gas range, and I like to put the burners in the oven during the self-clean cycle.

You can normally remove the stove top and clean underneath it; with a screwdriver you'd be surprised at how far you can dismantle the thing, and what crumbs and crud you can uncover. Of course, this is probably dirt and not food.

For glass cooktops, including induction cooktops, I think you remove any spilled food, but no doubt some people recommend a 72-hour regimen of soaking and boiling.

2. Cabinets and shelves

To prepare food and utensil storage areas for Passover, a typical method is to clear them out, vacuum, wipe them with a damp cloth, and line them with paper or plastic. Do they really need to be lined? After all, if you've washed them, why aren't they clean? If anything is left, is it chametz or just dirt?

If you have enough cabinet space in your kitchen, you will probably move all your chametz—leftover full packages of food, as well as your non-Pesach dishes—into one or more of the cabinets. You'll designate these as the areas to be sold during Pesach.

Some acquaintances used to keep their Passover dishes in a six-foot steel cabinet in the garage. Come the holiday, all they had to do was wheel in the cabinet, close up the regular drawers and cabinets, and presto!

¹ BT Shabbat 40b: כלי שני אינו מבשל / kli sheni eino mevashel / a secondary vessel does not cook. I.e., cooking (and absorption of flavor) occurs only in a primary vessel (directly on the heat source to cook the food) and not in a vessel into which you put the cooked food, like a tureen—and certainly not in a sink or on a countertop.

3. Dishwasher

Don't forget the dishwasher if you have one. Since different washers heat to different temperatures, you may want to check with your rabbi how to clean it for Pesach, whether it needs to be kashered, and whether it can be kashered. A typical method is to clean what you can, then run the dishwasher empty, with soap. Any food residue would not be edible. (Some would say one doesn't cook food in one's dishwasher and the soap makes any food residue inedible, so you don't need to kasher it).

4. Counter tops and appliances

Working down—you still haven't done the floor—you can clean your counter tops. Some people clean and then pour hot water on them; some also cover the counter tops with aluminum foil or plastic. Some say they're not a primary vessel, so they don't need any special attention.

If you didn't already do so, this is the time to store away the toaster and some of your appliances. Can you kasher the appliances for Pesach? The coffeemaker is used only for coffee all year, and coffee normally contains no chametz, so you can probably clean out the coffeemaker and use it for Pesach.

What about the food processor? (Could it have absorbed any flavor of chametz?) If you can get a replacement bowl and knives, you should be able to clean the base. As for the bowl and knives, are they chametz—did you use them to mix hot food with breadcrumbs or flour or cereal or other processed foods? If so, you can't easily kasher them, because the bowl is plastic and the knives are usually a metal blade attached to a plastic housing. But if you used the processor strictly for chopping vegetables all year, you can probably feel comfortable if you wash and use it.

Can you use your hand mixer? This sounds like a stupid question, because you can get a new one for \$10 or so. But not everyone has \$10, and some

would rather give to the poor if they have it. Also, Passover is a time when you whip a lot of egg whites, so an electric mixer is a real timesaver. So: can you kasher your mixer? We did, one year when funds were low. We had used it for flour and other chametz during the year, but the ingredients were cold. So we boiled the mixer blades, cleaned the outside of the housing, and then opened the housing to vacuum out flour residue around the motor. The next year we bought a mixer for Pesach.

5. Cookbooks and Recipe Files

You probably need to store these away since they get flour on them when you have them open to follow a recipe. But you need some of the books for Pesach, so work carefully through the pages and brush off flour that you find.

6. Pots and Pans

It's common to have special pots and pans for Pesach. However, this is a luxury beyond the reach of some people—poor married couples starting out in life, for example. You can avoid the huge one-time expense and kasher metal if you wish.

A typical method is to clean the pot (clean all the crud off), dismantle it (unscrew the plastic handles, etc) and then apply heat, as much heat as the pot receives during cooking.

Typically, this would mean boiling it—putting it into a larger pot, or boiling it in the sink (see below, on the sink). But if the pot is used for broiling, you need to get it hotter; many people would say you'll have to make it glow red. Maybe it would survive the oven's self-clean cycle. You could fill it with red-hot coals or use a blowtorch to make it glow red, though this might well ruin the pot.

7. Dishes

It's common to have separate plates and silverware for Pesach, but again this is an expense which makes observing the festival very difficult for

some people. So you can kasher most dishes. Since these dishes are not used for cooking—they are at most a “keli sheni” (a “secondary” vessel, not a vessel in which food is cooked)—you may not need to kasher them. However, most people boil dishes that will be used for Passover.

(Some would point out that only a “keli rishon” in which food is cooked requires kashering. The fridge shelves, counter tops, sink and dishwasher rarely serve as a griddle or a stewpot.)

A practical way to boil dishes? Put them in a big pot. Or you can fill the sink with the hottest water you can find, pile in some dishes, and then add a hot brick which will make the water seethe and hiss most impressively. How do you heat the brick? On the stove; you can wrap it with a handle of thick wire. Instead of a brick, you can use a lump of metal such as an axe head.

We have a couple of gas-hole covers which once belonged to the Philadelphia Gas Company. Our first year of marriage, we needed a brick and had nothing. “God will provide,” I thought, and went for a walk. What should I find as I passed a trash dump but a pair of five-inch-square metal covers, nice chunks of metal; and we have used them ever since.

8. The Sink(s)

We also use them to boil the sink ; even though we know it’s probably not necessary, it’s a family tradition. We fill the sink with hot water and add a lump of hot metal. We used to boil all our dishes and flatware by this method, but now we have special Pesach things for most of our needs.

Some people line the sink with aluminum foil or adhesive plastic. I suppose they are concerned that the Pesach sink racks and washing-up bowls will become chametzdik through contact with the sink.

9. The floor

The difficult part about the floor is moving the refrigerator and stove out so that you can vacuum and clean behind them; if you can, you can, and if not, don’t go nuts. You might want to scrub the floor to get an extra clean Passover feeling. Once I’ve done this each year, I feel really ready.

You want the kitchen finished by Hafsakah—that time on the day before the Seder when we stop eating chametz. Normally, though, you’ll have it done the evening before that, so that you’re ready for the Search for Chametz.



The Search For Chametz

When night falls on the evening before Pesach, you search the house for chametz. (If Pesach begins on Saturday night, search on Thursday.) Take a candle, a feather and a wooden spoon (or your smartphone with flashlight app and a handheld vacuum cleaner), search any part of the house where chametz might have been during the year and sweep up any crumbs you find. Some families hide a few items of chametz around the house to ensure there's something to find. Before the search, say this blessing:

We bless you, Sovereign God	ברוך אתה יי	Baruch ata Adonai
Who rules both earth and heaven;	אלהינו מלך העולם	Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
You made us holy with your rules	אשר קדשנו במצותיו	asher kidshanu bemitzvotav
And told us, "Burn that leaven!"	וצונו על בעור חמץ	vetzivanu al bi'ur chametz.

After the search, gather up any chametz you have found and place it on the table where you're still eating.

Then say this Aramaic formula.

All chametz and all leaven	כל חמירא וחמיץא	Kol chamira vachamiya
Remaining in my trust,	דאכא ברשותי	de'ika virshuti,
neither singed nor burned nor seared—	דלא חמיתה ודלא בעריתה	dela chamitei udela vi'artei,
I didn't know that it was here—	ודלא ידענא ליה	udela yada'na lei,
It's now as if it never was:	לבטל ולהוי הפקר	livtel velehevei hefker,
It's ownerless, like dust.	כעפרא דארעא	ke'afrah de'ar'ah.

Hafsakah

About an hour before noon—check your Jewish calendar for the correct time—you should stop eating chametz. You should also stay away from matzah, so in the evening you'll eat your matzah with relish (har, har). At this time, you take all the leftover chametz and burn it (except on Shabbat); some say you can flush it down the toilet instead. Then you say this Aramaic formula to declare that any remaining leaven doesn't count as yours.

All chametz and all leaven	כל חמירא וחמיץא	Kol chamira vachamiya
Remaining in my trust	דאכא ברשותי	de'ika virshuti,
Whether I noticed it or not,	דחזיתה ודלא חזיתה	dachazitei udela chazitei,
Whether I blackened it or not,	דחמיתה ודלא חמיתה	dachamitei udla chamitei,
Whether I burned it up or not,	דבעריתה ודלא בעריתה	devi'artei udela vi'artei,
It's now as if it never was:	לבטל ולהוי הפקר	livtel velehevei hefker,
It's ownerless, like dust.	כעפרא דארעא	ke'afrah de'ar'ah.

Note: If Pesach begins on Saturday night, you balance three needs: three Shabbat meals (with bread), no matzah before the Seder, and no chametz in the house. One solution is to use egg matzah for Shabbat meals.

Egg matzah counts as "bread" for Shabbat meals but does not count as matzah for the Seder.

Pesach Cooking

Why bother? Plain matzah is delicious with butter, with cream cheese, with jam; herring and gefilte fish; fruit and vegetables; cheese; egg salad, chicken salad, tuna salad, and so on. But if you're going to cook, you'll find matzah as versatile in its own way as flour.

Matzah Soaked

If you soak matzah and add some egg, it glops together very nicely. You can fry or bake the mixture. This technique is the basis for a Matzah Brei:

- 1 tbs. oil
- 3 boards¹ of matzah
- 3 eggs
- pinch salt
- ½ cup milk

Clean the floor. Heat oil in skillet on low heat. Break matzah into quarters and place in a large bowl; cover with water, then drain. The matzah should be slightly wet, but not soggy. Smash matzah into uneven bits about one inch square. Add eggs, salt, and milk; mix well. Add to skillet, using a spoon to flatten. Cook until brown on one side, shaking occasionally to be sure it doesn't stick; add more oil if necessary.

Time to toss the matzah brei! Take the skillet off the heat and gently shake the matzah brei away from you, up the lip; dip down, and smoothly swing up, so the brei comes neatly down on its undone side. In case you miss, you just cleaned the floor, so you know what to do.

Cook until brown on the other side. Serve with butter and sugar, or just with jam. Some use honey, but warm honey is too runny.

You can make the same basic mixture, add apples, raisins, and cinnamon—and a little sugar—and bake it for a relatively delicious kugel.

¹ Why is a piece of matzah called a “board”? Eat, and you will understand.

Add Egg Whites

To make a matzah mixture rise, you can use egg whites. For cakes, you use matzah flour or potato flour, and you need to beat rather a large number of egg whites.

As a stove-top treat, you can make a Boobelah—a sort of pancake:

- 2 eggs
- pinch salt
- 2 tbs. matzah meal

Heat oil in skillet on low heat. Separate eggs. Beat whites until stiff. Stir in yolks, matzah meal, and salt. Pour mixture into skillet, or drop spoonfuls on to hot griddle. Turn when brown on one side. Serve with sugar or jam. Tastes traditional and—well—interesting.

Matzah Meal

For matzah balls, the best recipe is often the one on the side of the box. You've already seen how you can use matzah meal like breadcrumbs to make a Boobelah. You can use it for a batter to coat something to be fried. Use it for piecrusts and quiche crusts, or—if you enjoy vegetarian cooking—instead of breadcrumbs to make Wheat Loaf (after Pesach!). You'll even find lasagna recipes using softened matzah instead of lasagna noodles: and why not? Both noodles and matzah are flour and moisture.

An interesting technique results in matzah rolls—sweet rolls that you can fill, so eating them is a bit like eating a sandwich roll. The technique is basically the same as making choux pastry for cream puffs:

- ¾ cup water
- ¼ cup oil
- 2 tbs. sugar
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 cup matzah meal
- 3 eggs

Boil water, oil, sugar, and salt. Add matzah meal, stir, and boil one minute. Remove from heat and add eggs one at a time, stirring after each addition. Wet hands with cold water. Roll into balls. Bake on greased cookie sheet 45 min. at 400 degrees.

Other Notes

Doing without flour-based products at Pesach isn't much of a restriction on your cooking unless you

love baking. You can cook slabs of protein and mounds of fruits and vegetables without changing your recipes. Pesach cooking will be a chore if you start making candy, cookies, and cakes when you wouldn't make them the rest of the year. If you keep it simple, simple it will be.

But then, nobody will admire your industry and ask for your recipes.

Preparing the Seder Table

You need a lot of stuff on the Seder table, in addition to dishes, etc.

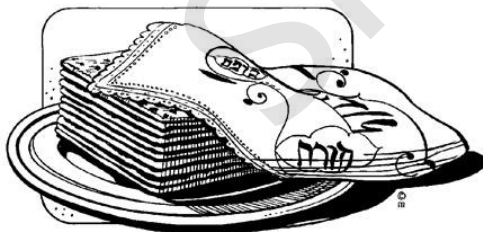
Candles

The table will have two candles (some people light more), just as for Shabbat and other festivals.

Three Matzot

You need a plate with three matzot, covered with a napkin or something. The three matzot are often referred to as Kohen, Levi, and Yisra'el, representing the three classes of Jews.

For years we used one of those special matzah cloths with three compartments; some people use a stand with three shelves. Since we have to hold all three matzot together, I find it easier to put the three matzot on a plate, covered with a napkin.



Many people prefer shemurah matzah to matzah from the regular box. For shemurah matzah, the grain is supervised from the time it's reaped rather than from the time it's milled. This reduces the likelihood that any moisture could have come into contact with the grain. In addition, it's pre-

pared specifically for the mitzvah of eating matzah, so many people prefer it for fulfilling our obligation to eat matzah.

Others point out that ordinary matzah is certified as kosher for Passover, so why pay more for shemurah matzah?

You can choose shemurah to enhance your Seder, or choose regular and have more to give to the poor.

Wine

You need enough for four cups for each person. Each cup should hold four ounces, and you should drink more than half of each cup, so you need about 10 ounces for each person. If you use grape juice for kids, remember it's hard for them to resist the juice, so stock up.

Set a cup for Elijah. Many people fill this cup just before Spill Your Anger, page 59.

Elijah's Cup

Perhaps we should drink five cups of wine instead of four: we drink four cups because of the four expressions of redemption in Exodus 6:6-7, but some sharp students see another expression of redemption in the next verse. So: four or five? One day (we like to say) Elijah will come as herald of the Messiah and answer all such disputes in Jewish law. So the fifth cup, which we may or may not need, is named for Elijah. Some fill this cup at the beginning of the Seder, others fill it with the drops

they remove when reciting the Ten Plagues, because we want Elijah to answer another tough question: why did Egyptians have to suffer so that Jews could be free?

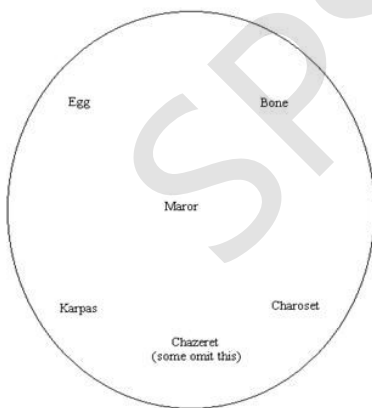
Miriam's Cup

For those who feel the evening is all about Moses (though he's not mentioned in the Hagadah) and neglects the sassy sister who saved his life, we can add a Miriam's cup, filled with water. There's a tradition—the kind of tradition some people reject as silly—that a rock associated with Miriam accompanied the Children of Israel through the wilderness and served as the well that provided their water; some believe this rock is now in Westminster Abbey.

Salt Water

Finally, you need salt water for dipping karpas. It's generally said to represent the tears shed by the Hebrews in Egypt.

That's what you need on your Seder table—oh, and a *Join-In, Participate, Sing-Along Hagadah* for everyone!



Seder Plate

The plate contains five symbolic items. Many Hagadot add a sixth item, chazeret, and many families add some extra items, too. Arrange the

items so the first used is closest to the leader, and he or she won't have to reach across one of them in order to make use of another.

Zero'ah: Top Right.

Zero'ah is a roasted bone—many say it should be a shoulder bone—with some meat on it. For many people, a chicken or turkey wing is the most likely shoulder bone. My father was a vegetarian, so he used a mushroom.

The bone represents the Pesach sacrifice; of course, without the Temple standing, we can't have a real sacrifice, so we try to remember that this is a symbol and not the real thing.

I don't know anyone who eats the zero'ah.

Egg: Top Left

The egg is usually roasted—stick it in the oven for a while. Don't roast it on the flame of the gas burner, or you'll have a sticky eggspllosion.

The egg represents the regular holiday sacrifice. Of course, eggs convey a host of other springtime meanings. The egg is an easily accessible sign of rebirth, a theme appropriate for spring. Its round and perfect shape suggests completion, and perhaps that is why it's a sign of mourning, and hence rebirth into a happier state. The sunny yolk that emerges from the white suggests the sunny days that follow the snow-covered days of winter. The hard outer shell suggests the soul's initial resistance to the experience of redemption, which then easily invades the soft white and lodges firmly in the rich yolk.

You can add many, many more of your own interpretations to the egg. Don't forget to muse on the yolk of slavery.

I don't know anyone who eats this egg, but many people have eggs dipped in salt water, or in their soup, as part of the meal.

Maror: Center

For maror, the bitter herb, many people use horseradish. Others use romaine lettuce or even Belgian

endive. Romaine is said to be difficult to clean of tiny infestations of bugs—in fact, some people avoid most lettuce altogether for that reason—so some recommend using only the white ribs. I’ve hardly ever seen a bug in Romaine lettuce, so we sometimes use it.

But for true bitterness, horseradish is the only thing.

Most people use the stuff from the bottle. If you use the red stuff, it’s mixed with beets or beet juice and vinegar; the white stuff has only vinegar. Is it OK to have the bitter herb mixed? Some say No, you should use the pure root and grate it. However, when we eat maror, we dip it in charoset; charoset usually includes red wine, so what can be wrong in adding a red color or tart flavor to the bitter herb?

If you want the taste of true bitterness, get some horseradish root. It looks unquestionably like a fertility symbol, warts and all. My grandmother used to have a piece she’d use every year and then put back in our garden to keep growing. (Actually, we probably used it only one year, but it’s a childhood memory and colored by sentiment.) You can grate it or use slices, and you’ll taste a bitterness you never imagined. If you grate it before the Seder, keep it tightly covered, lest it lose its pungency.

Maror represents the bitter life that the Hebrew people suffered while in Egypt. If you eat enough, the sharpness takes you by surprise every time. And that, I suppose, is one of the features of slavery. When you are at the disposal of your master, you can’t rely on anything; you try to learn how to get your work done without getting into trouble, but people are so unpredictable that you can never rest easy. The whip—figurative or real—could snap you on the shoulders at any time.

When you eat maror, the correct amount is the size of an olive. Nowadays, some scholars (perhaps relying on earlier European scholars who probably never saw an olive) say this is a fluid

ounce. With romaine lettuce, this is no problem, but with grated horseradish I question whether it’s possible. I eat about half a teaspoon, and my spastic reactions provide several minutes of entertainment for my family and guests. Perhaps other people don’t react quite as strongly.

Of course, maror could also be the perfect relish for a freshly cooked Pesach sacrifice.

Charoset: Lower Right

Charoset is usually a mixture of apples, nuts, and wine. The Kitzur Shulchan Aruch (Ganzfried, 118:4) suggests using fruits mentioned in the Song of Songs, an appealing idea because this exhilarating love poem is read on Pesach (it’s taken as an allegory of God’s love for the Jewish people). The fruits are figs, nuts, dates, pomegranates, and apples. In addition, the Kitzur recommends spices that can’t be completely ground up but retain shreds, like cinnamon and straw. Today’s commercial grinders, however, can reduce these spices to powder. The Kitzur adds wine and vinegar.

In our house, we use recipes for thick charoset pastes made of dried fruit, nuts, and so on. Sometimes we form balls and roll them in nuts, but this may be misguided practice; charoset should probably be rather soupy. We dip maror in it (page 44), one of the two dippings mentioned in the Four Questions (page 7). If your maror is hard, like a chunk of horseradish root or a rib of lettuce, you can easily dip it into a soupy charoset and stir it around. On the other hand, if your maror is grated horseradish or the stuff from the bottle, it’s not dippable. In that case, a firm charoset mixture can serve as a base for the horseradish.

Maybe we could make charoset balls and fill them with maror or romaine lettuce wraps filled with charoset.

Charoset is generally held to represent the mortar that the Hebrews used when building cities for Pharaoh. That’s why some recommend using

stringy spices like cinnamon and ginger, to represent the straw.

What straw? Well, they made bricks, presumably by baking the Nile mud in the sun. Mixing in chopped straw would strengthen the bricks. We know they used straw for the bricks because Pharaoh cut off the straw supply for brick making and added, “they can go and get their own straw” (Ex. 5:7). But did they use straw in the mortar as well as in the bricks ... or maybe charoset represents bricks as well as mortar.

The Marrano Hagadah of 1854 (Yerushalmi, plate 58) recommended adding a little brick dust to charoset. Yecch.

Karpas: Lower Left

Karpas is a green vegetable. Parsley is common, but it’s hard to serve, so in our house we find celery most convenient. Some use potatoes; even I know potatoes are not a green vegetable, but some people use them for karpas anyway. Leave them long enough and they’ll be green.

Chazeret: Lower Middle

Many Seder plates (The Precious Legacy Seder plate is an example) have six compartments around the edge, but many hagadot only mention five items for the plate. The sixth is (or can be) chazeret, a vegetable that the Talmud says can be used for maror. It may refer to romaine lettuce, or Belgian endives, or even to the leafy part of the horseradish plant.

We eat maror twice, once after the blessing and again in the Hillel Sandwich; we can use horseradish from the maror compartment for one maror and Romaine lettuce from the chazeret compartment for the other. This sounds practical but doesn’t really make sense, because you wind up using romaine lettuce for maror and horseradish spread on matzo for the Hillel Sandwich; thus, you

only get your true maror kick from the Hillel Sandwich.

Many hagadot say nothing about chazeret. My advice is to get a Seder plate with five compartments, or use the sixth for salt water in which to dip karpas.

The Orange of Inclusiveness

Some place an orange on the Seder plate, too, to remind us that our community includes all those whom sanctimonious fundamentalists wish to exclude. Susannah Heschel is said to have initiated this custom, inspired by a story she saw in a college hagadah:

A teenage woman goes to the rabbi to ask a question on the eve of Pesach. The rabbi anticipates with pleasure the opportunity to resolve a point of Jewish law. But her question is this: “Rabbi, what place is there in the Jewish community for a lesbian?” Shocked and indignant, the rabbi retorts angrily, “Gays don’t belong in Judaism any more than a crust of bread belongs on a seder plate.” And so, some people started using a crust of bread to symbolize inclusiveness.

Susannah Heschel suggested an orange instead, because its sections can so easily represent segmentation in the community. She wanted to symbolize the inclusion of people who feel they are barely accepted in our community—LGBT, unmarried, divorced, and more.

And that’s why many people add an orange to the symbolic items on their Seder plate.

In The Mishnah

The Mishnah (Pesachim 10) describes the Seder meal in Temple times. It seems each person had a plate with all the foods. As for the wine, it was mixed with water, as (it seems) was the practice of the Greeks and Romans.

How Long Will It Take?

Normally, you can reckon an hour or 75 minutes before the meal and about the same time after it. (Of course, you can shorten the time by having one person read the whole thing one oafter.)

While you are waiting, here's a good suggestion from Ron Wolfson: hand round carrot sticks and olives, etc. for the hungry to munch on. Once you've said the blessing for vegetables (Karpas, page 5) you can serve a whole course of salads while you discuss the story.

But if you're afraid your family will walk out before the last song, here are some suggestions for items that you don't want to cut.

The Seder is a meal with two discussion topics: What does it mean to be Jewish? and What does it

mean to be free? These are the key points of the text, and the rest is mostly optional.

Once the candles are lit, say Kiddush (page 2) and tell the story. You can discuss Deuteronomy 26:5-8 as part of telling the story—skip the traditional commentary and discuss it among yourselves. Say the first half of Hallel (page 39), then the Blessings to Begin the Meal (page 43). After the meal, say Grace After Meals (page 48) and finish Hallel (page 59). On the second night, count the Omer (page 87).

That cuts out a lot of time and a lot of fun and a lot of folklore, but as a great rabbi should once have said, "You do what you can."

Additions

While we're on the subject of the meaning and flow of the text, here's an opinionated word about additions.

Many of us like to add "relevant" passages—a memorial prayer for the Six Million, or an extra matzah of hope for the liberation of oppressed Jews.

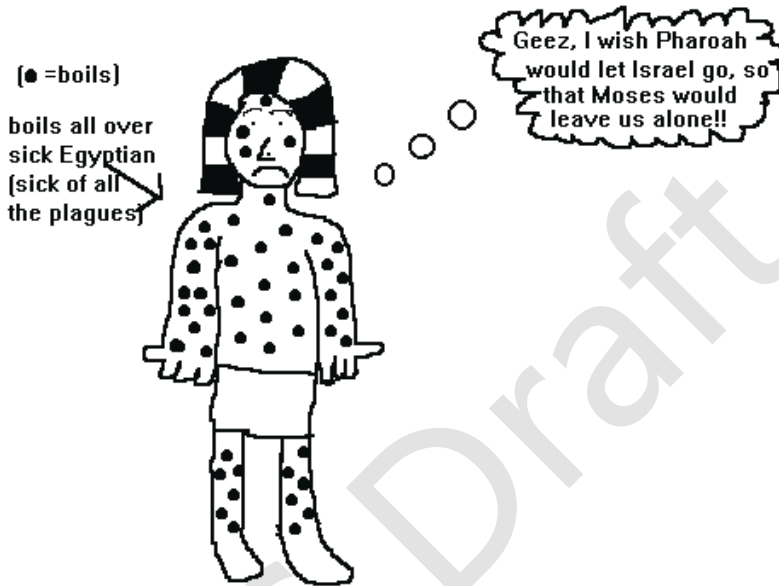
While I think these are noble gestures, I also think each one quickly becomes out of date. What is more, our suffering under the Egyptians implies the oppressions that we suffered later—from Romans, from Crusaders, even from Nazis. Some would say the Nazis were a special case, that neither before nor since could there be an oppressor so scientific in brutality. But this is hard to prove,

and the more we know of the world, the more commonplace—sadly—such oppression seems. And so there is no need to add relevance to the Hagadah; the Egyptian oppression continues to be relevant.

In addition, it's worth looking at all that the Hagadah omits—and wondering why. Why does it not include the charming and exciting story of Moses? Was this an oversight; did the compilers of the Hagadah assume that we'd tell the story as well as recite the Hagadah; or is there some point to leaving out the most obvious parts of the Exodus story?

That's for you to decide.

The Plague of Boils



Before You Begin

Light the candles before you sit down for the Seder. Add the shaded words on Friday night.

Light the Candles

We bless you, Sovereign God;
You rule both day and night.
You made us holy with your rules
To kindle **Shabbat** and festive light.¹

ברוך אתה יי
אלהינו מלך העולם
אשר קדשנו במצותיו
וצונו להדליק נר
של שבת ויום טוב

Baruch ata Adonai
Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
Asher kidshanu bemitzvotav
vetzivanu lehadlik ner
shel Shabbat veYomtov.

Sit Down and Begin

The Order of the Seder²

Say Kiddush, wash hands;
Eat karpas, break the middle matzah.
Tell the story, wash hands;
Say Hamotzi, eat matzah...
...And maror; combine them.
Eat the meal,
Eat the Afikomen, say Birkat Hamazon;
Say Hallel, finish the Seder.

קדש ורחץ
כרפס יחץ
מגיד רחצה
מוציא מצה
מרור כורך
שולחן עורך
צפון ברך
הלל נרצה

Kadesh, Urchatz;
Karpas, Yachatz.
Maggid, Rachtzah;
Motzi, Matzah.
Maror, Korech;
Shulchan Orech.
Tzafun, Barech;
Hallel, Nirtzah.

¹ “Blessed are you, Boss, our God, ruler of the universe, who made us holy with *God’s* commandments and instructed us to kindle light for Shabbat and for the festival.”

² This little ditty covers the order of the Seder meal, from start to finish. Kiddush is the blessing over wine. Karpas: greens. Hamotzi: the blessing over bread (tonight it’s matzah). Maror: bitter herbs. Combine them: Hillel Sandwich. Afikomen: matzah to end the meal. Birkat Hamazon: Grace After Meals. Hallel: the psalms of praise. Glatzer (p. 10) notes that this rhyme doesn’t mention the four cups of wine; perhaps they are so familiar they need no mention. Elias (liii) notes that this rhyme lists fifteen stages for the Seder service; since the Levites ascended fifteen steps in the Temple, Elias suggests that this rhyme connects our Seder service to the service in the Temple; hence, our progress through the stages of the Seder could be like progress in approaching the service of God. In addition, fifteen is the numerical value of one of God’s names—י is 10 and ה is 5.

Cup 1: Kiddush¹

.....To begin, fill each other's cups.

On Friday night, add the **shaded** words.

This section recalls how God finished the work of creation and instituted the first Shabbat.

Most people say the first two lines silently and begin chanting with line three.

Gen 1:31 It was evening, then morning, day six.	וַיְהִי עֶרֶב וַיְהִי בֹקֶר יוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי	Vayehi erev, vayehi voker, yom hashishi
Gen 2:1-3 Now they were completed— sky and land and all their hosts <i>of creatures</i> . God finished on day seven the work of creation and rested on day seven from all the work of creation. God blessed day seven and made it holy, for then <i>God</i> rested from the whole project which <i>God</i> had created to work on.	וַיִּכְלֹו הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ וְכָל-צִבְּאָם וַיְכַל אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיִּשְׁבֹּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִכָּל-מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת-יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדֵּשׁ אֹתוֹ כִּי בּוֹ שָׁבַת מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר-בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת	Vayechulu hashamayim vecha'aretz vechol tzeva'am. vayechal Elohim bayom hashvi'i melachto asher asah, vayishbot bayom hashvi'i mikol melachto asher asah. Vayevarech Elohim et yom hashvi'i vayekadesh oto, ki vo shavat mikol melachto asher barah Elohim la'asot.

We bless you, Sovereign God, who rules
Eternal space and time,
Creator of the grapevine's fruit,
From which we make this wine.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
בוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן
Baruch ata Adonai
Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
Boreh peri hagafen.

¹ Kiddush uses the first of the four cups to be drunk at the Seder. We associate each cup with one of the four expressions of redemption in Exodus 6:6-7: "I will take you out from under the burdens of Egypt, and I will save you from the slavery, and I will redeem you...and I will take you to me for a people..." Because of an opinion that there should also be a fifth cup, we have "Elijah's cup" on the table. Kasher, p. 333, gives details of the basis for the fifth cup.

We bless you, Sovereign God,
 Who rules eternal time and space
 From all the nations of the world
 It's us you did select;
 You raised us over those who speak
 With foreign dialect.
 The duties that you gave us
 Do our holiness project.¹
 And you gave us, *Sovereign* God,
 with love Sabbaths for rest and
 festivals for rejoicing
 feasts and times for joy,
 this day—this Sabbath day and ...
 this festival of matzah,
 time of our freedom ...
 lovingly, a holy assembly,²
 recalling our Exodus from Egypt.
 Because from all the peoples
 You chose us your holy nation
 And made our heritage these times
 Of joy and celebration,
 (Shabbat trims this special night,
 A cherished time of pure delight)
 We bless you, God, for hallowing
 Shabbat, our feast and nation.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי
 אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
 אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל-עַם
 וְרוֹמַמְנוּ מִכָּל-לָשׁוֹן
 וְקִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו

Baruch ata Adonai
 Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
 asher bachar banu mikol am
 verom'manu mikol lashon
 vekidshanu bemitzvotav.

וַתִּתֵּן לָנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 בְּאַהֲבָה שַׁבָּתוֹת לְמִנוּחָה וּ
 מוֹעֲדִים לְשִׂמְחָה
 חַגִּים וְזִמְנִים לְשִׂשׁוֹן
 אֶת-יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה וְאֶת-יוֹם
 חַג הַמַּצּוֹת הַזֶּה
 זְמַן חֵירוּתֵנוּ
 בְּאַהֲבָה מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ
 זֶכֶר לִיצִיַּאת מִצְרַיִם
 כִּי בָנוּ בְּחִרְתָּ
 וְאוֹתָנוּ קִדַּשְׁתָּ מִכָּל-הָעַמִּים
 וְשַׁבָּת וּמוֹעֲדֵי קִדְּשְׁךָ
 בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצוֹן
 בְּשִׂמְחָה וּבְשִׂשׁוֹן הִנְחַלְתָּנוּ
 בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי
 מְקַדֵּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת
 וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְהַזְּמָנִים

Vatiten lanu, Adonai Eloheinu
 be'ahavah shabbatot limnucha u
 mo'adim lesimchah,
 chagim uzemanim lesason,
 et yom haShabbat hazeh, ve'et yom
 chag hamatzot hazeh,
 zeman cherutenu
 be'ahavah mikra kodesh
 zecher litzziyat Mitzrayim.
 Ki vanu vacharta
 ve'otanu kidashta mikol ha'amim,
 veShabbat umo'adei kodshecha,
 be'ahava uv'ratzon,
 besimchah uv'sason hinchaltanu.
 Baruch ata Adonai,
 mekadesh haShabbat
 veYisra'el vehazmanim.

¹ “Blessed are you, Adonai, our God, ruler of the world, who chose us from every people and raised us above every tongue and made us holy with *God's* rules.”

² מִקְרָא is a convocation, a calling together, an assembly, from the root קרא, to call.

Havdalah

..... On Saturday Night, add Havdalah. Otherwise, skip to Shehecheyanu, below.

We bless you, Sovereign God,	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי	Baruch ata Adonai
Who rules the universe entire;	אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
You are creator of this flickering light,	בּוֹרֵא מְאוֹרֵי הָאֵשׁ	borei me'orei ha'esh.
The light of fire.		
We bless you, Sovereign God,	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי	Baruch ata Adonai
Ruler of the universe,	אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
who distinguishes holy from secular,	הַמְבַדִּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל	hamavdil bein kodesh lechol,
darkness from light,	בֵּין אֹר לְחֹשֶׁךְ	bein or lechoshech,
Israel from other peoples,	בֵּין יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַמִּים	bein Yisra'el la'amim,
the seventh day	בֵּין יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי	bein yom hashvi'i
from the six days of creative activity.	לְשֵׁשֶׁת יְמֵי הַמַּעֲשֶׂה	lesheshet yemei hama'aseh.
You distinguished Shabbat's holiness	בֵּין קִדְּשַׁת שַׁבָּת	Bein kedushat Shabbat
from the holiness of the festival,	לְקִדְּשַׁת יוֹם טוֹב הַבְּדִלָּה	likdushat yom tov hivdalta
and you made Shabbat more holy	וְאֶת-יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי	ve'et yom hashvi'i
than the six days of creative activity.	מִשֵּׁשֶׁת יְמֵי-הַמַּעֲשֶׂה קִדְּשַׁת	misheshet yemei hama'aseh kidashta.
You distinguished and hallowed	הַבְּדִלָּה וְקִדְּשַׁת	Hivdalta vekidashta
your people Israel through your holiness.	אֶת-עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִדְּשַׁתְּךָ	et amcha Yisra'el bikdushatecha.
Blessed are you, God,	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי	Baruch ata Adonai
who distinguishes types of holiness. ¹	הַמְבַדִּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְקֹדֶשׁ	hamavdil bein kodesh lekodesh.

..... Include this for both Seder nights. Lean to the left, and drink more than half of your first cup
 You'll refill the cup before The Four Questions.

We bless you, Sovereign God,	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי	Baruch ata Adonai
Who rules eternal time and space;	אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
You raised us and sustained us,	שֶׁהַחַיָּנוּ וְקִיְּמָנוּ	Shehecheyanu vekimanu
And you brought us to this place. ²	וְהִגִּיעֵנוּ לַזְמַן הַזֶּה	Vehigi'anu lazman hazeh.

¹ “Who makes a distinction between *one type of holiness* and *another type of holiness*”

² “Place” is literally “time”; but are not time and space a continuum?

Urchatz וְרַחֵץ

.....Wash hands without making a blessing.

Karpas כַּרְפָּס

.....Everyone gets a piece of the greens, dipped in salt water
 This is one of the two dippings mentioned in The Four Questions (page 7).

We bless you, Sovereign God
 Who rules the infinite surround;
 You are creator of the fruit
 Which grows up from the ground.

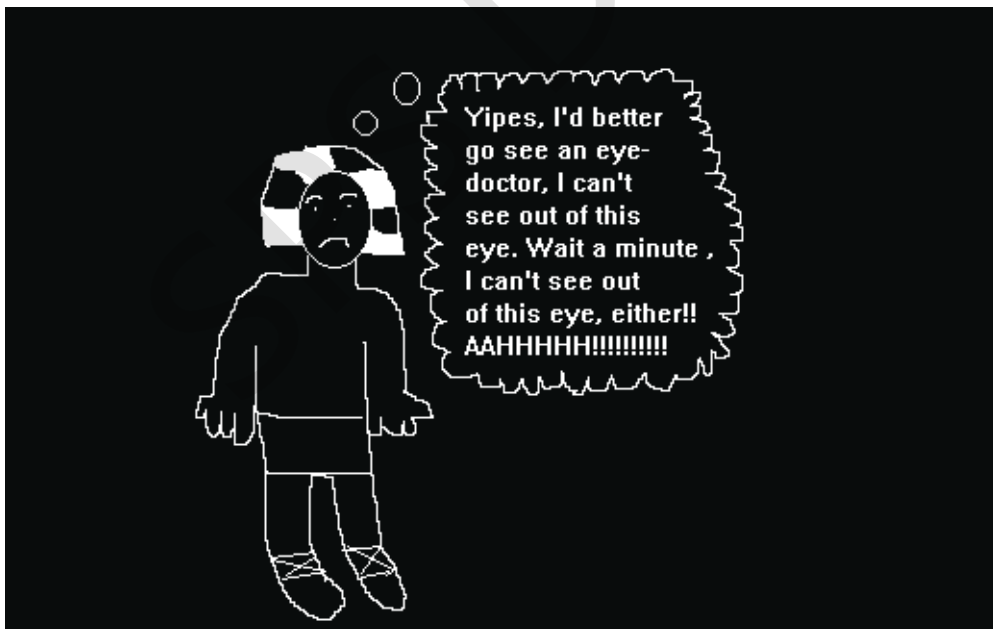
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי Baruch ata Adonai
 אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
 בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה borei peri ha'adamah.

Yachatz יַחַץ

.....Break the middle matzah in two.....

Set aside the larger piece, and put the rest back between the two other matzot.
 You'll use the large piece after the meal as the Afikomen.

The Plague of Darkness



Maggid: Tell the Story מגיד*Uncover the matzot, hold up the Seder plate, and sing.***The Bread of Affliction¹ הא לחמא**

This is the dough,	הא לחמא	Ha lachmah,
This is the dough of woe,	עניא	Ha lachmah anya
Which they ate,	די-אָכּלוּ	Di achalu,
Our parents ate so long ago	אַבְהָתְנָא	Achalu avahatana
Back in Egypt, back in Egypt,	בְּאַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם	Be'arah, be'arah deMitzrayim.(2)
back in Egypt land (2)		
Let the hungry come and eat with us;	כָּל-דִּכְפִּין יֵיתִי וַיֵּכּוֹל	Kol dichfin yetei veyechol
Let the needy feast (no need to fuss).	כָּל-דִּיצְרִיךְ יֵיתִי וַיִּפְסַח	Kol ditzrich yetei veyifsach.
We are here	הַשְׁתָּא הָכָא	Hashatah hachah,
For this year;	לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה	Leshanah haba'ah
Next year we	בְּאַרְעָא דְּיִשְׂרָאֵל	Be'arah deYisra'el.
All want to be		
In the land of Israel;		
Slavery	הַשְׁתָּא עַבְדֵּי	Hashatah avdei,
Is now our lot	לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה	Leshanah haba'ah
Next year we	בְּנֵי חוֹרִין	Benei chorin.
Sure hope that it will not,		
And we'll all be free—		
Mom and Dad as well!		

¹ Was matzah really the bread of affliction, the slave's daily bread? Or was it something unusual, which they baked only in their haste to leave Egypt? If a stranger walked in, would we be happy? Should we take care of the homeless and be sure every Jew can celebrate the Seder before we begin our own? Are we slaves, living in a spiritual Egypt, or are we on the way to freedom?

Cup 2: The Four Questions מה נשתנה

..... The youngest person present usually sings The Four Questions—or at least starts the singing

I have to sing: this evening	מה נשתנה הלילה הזה	Mah nishtana halaylah hazeh
Is not like others I've known	מכל-הלילות	mikol halaylot?
(not like others I've known).	שבכל-הלילות	Shebechol halaylot
On all other nights	אנו אוכלין	anu ochlin
We're happy to chew	חמץ ומצה	chametz umatzah.
Both matzah and yeasty roll,	הלילה הזה	Halaylah hazeh, halaylah hazeh
But tonight, tonight	כלו מצה	kulo matzah.
(Tell me, am I not right?)		
It's matzah or nothing at all. ¹		
On all other nights	שבכל-הלילות	Shebechol halaylot
We eat all kinds of veg	אנו אוכלין	anu ochlin
From asparagus to zucchini, (2)	שאר ירקות	she'ar yerakot.
But tonight, tonight	הלילה הזה	Halaylah hazeh, halaylah hazeh
(Tell me, am I not right?)	מרור	Maror, maror. (2)
It's maror—and that's a real meanie! (2) ²		
On all other nights	שבכל-הלילות	Shebechol halaylot
We don't need to dip	אין אנו מטבילין	ein anu matbilin
Our veg in water with salt, (2)	אפילו פעם אחת	afilu pa'am echat. (2)
But tonight, tonight	הלילה הזה	Halaylah hazeh, halaylah hazeh
(Tell me, am I not right?)	שתי פעמים	sh'tey fe'amim. (2)
We dip twice, or else we're at fault. (2) ³		

¹ What a sharp kid! An Einstein! We didn't yet eat either bread or matzah, and already s/he knows there won't be any bread. But wait... maybe these are not real questions, but merely a way to set up the rest of the service... or maybe the order of the service has changed (Glatzer, 22).

² Give the kid another piece of Karpas; obviously s/he tried to get away without eating greens. Okay, kid, we eat maror because our taskmasters made our lives bitter.

³ How do you know we won't dip three or four times? Anyway, kid, we dip twice because...er...because it makes the meal more festive.

On all other nights	שֶׁבְּכָל-הַלַּיְלוֹת	Shebechol halaylot
If we slouch, Mom will scold:	אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין	anu ochlin
“Don’t slouch! It’s bad for your spine.” (2)	בֵּין יוֹשְׁבִין	Bein yoshvin
But tonight, tonight	וּבֵין מְסֻבִּין	uvein mesubin. (2)
(Tell me, am I not right?)	הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה	Halaylah hazeh
We slouch, we loaf, we recline. (2) ¹	כָּלָנוּ מְסֻבִּין	kulanu mesubin. (2)

עבדים היינו The Reply

These two lines are a popular song added to the traditional text.

We were bound in slavery, in slavery;	עבדים היינו	Avadim hayinu, hayinu
But now we are free, we are free.	עתה בְּנֵי חוֹרִין	Ata b’nei chorin, b’nei chorin.

This isn’t a direct answer to the Four Questions, but it gets to the heart of the matter.

Notice that Moses gets none of the credit; God alone is mentioned.

Deut 6:21 We were Pharaoh’s slaves in Egypt	עבדים היינו לַפַּרְעֹה בְּמִצְרַיִם	Avadim hayinu leFaro beMitzrayim,
and the Ruler our God led us from there	וַיֹּצִיאֵנוּ יְהוָה מִשָּׁם	vayotzi’enu Adonai Elohenu misham
Deut 26:8 with a strong hand and outstretched arm,	בְּיָד חֲזָקָה וּבְזֵרַע נְטוּיָה	Vayotzi’enu Adonai miMitzrayim
And if the Holy One	וְאֵלֹהֵינוּ הוֹצִיא	Ve’ilu lo hotzi
(whom we bless) had not led	הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא	haKadosh baruch hu
our ancestors out of Egypt,	אֶת-אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם	et avoteinu ve’ imoteinu miMitzrayim
see, we, our children, and their children	הֲרֵי אָנוּ וּבְנֵינוּ וּבְנֵי בְנֵינוּ	harei anu uvanenu uvnei vaneinu
would still be in slavery	מִשְׁעֲבָדִים הָיִינוּ	meshubadim hayinu
to Pharaoh in Egypt.	לַפַּרְעֹה בְּמִצְרַיִם	leFaro beMitzrayim.
And however educated we are,	וְאִפְּלוּ כָלָנוּ חֲכָמִים	Va’afilu kulanu chachamim,
or intelligent, or experienced,	כָּלָנוּ נְבוֹנִים כָּלָנוּ זָקֵנִים	kulanu nevonim, kulanu zekenim,
or well versed in Torah,	כָּלָנוּ יוֹדְעִים אֶת-הַתּוֹרָה	kulanu yodim et haTorah,
it’s still our duty	מִצְוָה עָלֵינוּ	mitzva alenu
to tell the story of our leaving Egypt.	לְסַפֵּר בִּיצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם	lesaper bitziyat Mitzrayim.
And anyone who adds details	וְכָל-הַמְרַבֵּה	Vechol hamarbeh
when telling the story of our leaving Egypt	לְסַפֵּר בִּיצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם	lesaper bitziyat Mitzrayim,
wins our respect.	הֲרֵי-זֶה מִשְׁבַּח	harei ze meshubach.

Tell the story in your own way, your own language; make it clear to your children; add what you feel is relevant.

¹ We sit on pillows and recline to symbolize our freedom. Roman banqueters used to recline on couches.

The Rabbis Who Discussed the Story All Night

For telling the story in more and more detail, these rabbis set the example. Some commentators suggest¹ their discussion was an allegory—they were plotting a rebellion to overthrow the Romans, using the Exodus story as a cover for their discussion. Were the students impressed at seeing their teachers absorbed in the discussion, or were they impatient, telling the Rabbis: “Enough of all this talk; now it’s daylight, time for action!”

There’s a story about some great Rabbis
who were loafing around (har har) on
Pesach night in B’nei V’rak: Rabbi
Eliezer, and Rabbi Yehoshua, and Rabbi
Elazar ben Azaryah, and Rabbi Akivah,
and Rabbi Tarfon.

And they spent that whole night telling
the story of our leaving Egypt,

until their students came along
and told them,

“Rabbis, it’s already time to say the
morning Shema!”²

Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah said,
“Look, I’m as wise as a 70-year-old,³
but I could never convince anyone that
we’re supposed to talk about leaving
Egypt at night-time, until Ben Zoma
explained what *the Torah* says:

מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר

וְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ

וְרַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן-עֲזַרְיָה

וְרַבִּי עֲקִיבָא וְרַבִּי טַרְפוֹן

שֶׁהָיוּ מְסֻבִּין בְּבֵית בֶּרֶק

Ma’ase beRabi Eliezer

veRabi Yehoshua

veRabi Elazar Ben Azarya

veRabi Akiva veRabi Tarfon

shehayu mesubin biVnei Verak.

וְהָיוּ מְסַפְּרִים

בִּיצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם

כָּל-אוֹתוֹ הַלַּיְלָה

עַד-שֶׁבָּאוּ תַלְמִידֵיהֶם

וְאָמְרוּ לָהֶם

רַבּוֹתֵינוּ הִגִּיעַ זְמַן

קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע שֶׁל-שַׁחֲרִית

אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן-עֲזַרְיָה

הָרִי אָנִי כְּבֶן-שֶׁבַעִים שָׁנָה

וְלֹא זָכִיתִי שֶׁתֹּאמֶר

יֵצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם בַּלַּיְלוֹת

עַד שֶׁדִּרְשָׁה בֶּן-זוֹמָא

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר

Vehayu mesaprim

bitziyat Mitzrayim

kol oto halayla,

ad sheba’u talmidehem

ve’amru lahem,

“Raboteinu, higiya z’man

keri’at shema shel shacharit.”

Amar Rabi Elazar ben Azarya,

“Harei ani keven shiv’im shana,

velo zachiti shete’amer

yetziat Mitzrayim balelot,

ad shedrasha Ben Zoma,

shene’emar:

¹ See Glatzer, p. 24.

² After dawn is the time to recite the morning Shema. Some say the meal should be done by midnight. Discussion, however, can continue to the wee hours; and perhaps our talk hastens the dawn of redemption.

³ Rabbi Elazar was recognized for his wisdom and chosen for a responsible position at a young age; his hair turned white overnight, so he was “like a 70-year-old” in appearance as in maturity.

Deut 16:3 So that you'll remember

the day you came out of

the land of Egypt

all the days of your life.

“The days of your life” means the days;

“All the days of your life” means the nights.¹

And the sages say,

“The days of your life” means this world;

“All the days of your life” means

we'll tell *this story even* in Messianic times!²

לִמְעַן תִּזְכֹּר

אֶת־יוֹם צֵאתְךָ

מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם

כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ

יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ הַיָּמִים

כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ הַלַּיְלוֹת

וְחֻכְמִים אֲוִמְרִים

יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה

כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ

לְהַבִּיא לִימֹת הַמָּשִׁיחַ

Lema'an tizkor

et yom tzet'cha

me'eret Mitzrayim

kol yemei chayecha.

Yemei chayecha hayamim;

kol yemei chayecha halelot.”

Vachachamim omrim,

yemei chayecha ha'olam hazeh;

kol yemei chayecha

lehavi limot haMashi'ach.

*We can view each part of the story, and of the stories surrounding it,
from this Messianic perspective.*

Blessed Be the Everpresent ברוך המקום

Is this a part of the story, part of the telling? Or is it a reaction to the story so far, an outburst of praise in response to the idea that we should “bring the story into the days of the Messiah”?

Blessed be our God,

Who's everywhere,

Blessed be the one

Who gave the Torah,

Who gave the Torah

To God's people Israel,

Blessed be our God,

Who's everywhere.

ברוך המקום ברוך הוא

ברוך שנתן תורה

לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל

ברוך הוא

Baruch hamakom, baruch hu,

Baruch shenatan, natan Torah

Shenatan Torah le'amo Yisra'el,

Baruch hamakom, baruch hu.

¹ Our evening prayers include the third paragraph of Shema, which mentions the Exodus. Some of our sages thought this was not

² “To bring *it* to the days of the Messiah”; this contradicts Jeremiah (23:7-8), who suggests that in Messianic times we'll forget the Exodus and praise God for more recent miracles instead.

The Four Children אַרְבֵּעַה בְּנֵי

*Sing this to "O, Susannah."*¹

The Torah speaks of children four:	That wicked child has questioned	"Because of what God did for me
One smarter than the rest,	The root of our belief;	"When I from Egypt came,
A second child is naughty,	So answer him with anger:	"Because of this Jews everywhere
And the third is all perplexed.	Don't hold back your grief.	"This night will feast the same."
The fourth so young and nervous,	"Because of what God did for me,	Perhaps you want another verse
Full of wonder and delight:	"To me God was so kind.	To fill the symmetry:
That child can't form a question	"And had you been there, wicked child,	But if you need it, can you say
To ask about this night.	"You'd have been left behind." ⁴	That you are really free?
<i>Oh, Jews an' a</i>	<i>O, Jews ran a</i>	<i>Oh the cantor</i>
<i>Mixed variety:</i> ²	<i>Mile or two in glee,</i>	<i>Sings a joyous song:</i>
<i>We're coming out of Egypt</i>	<i>For God brought us from Egypt,</i>	<i>We're coming out of Egypt, where</i>
<i>For God has set us free.</i>	<i>From the house of slavery.</i>	<i>We worked and slaved too long!</i>

The smart one asks, "What are the laws	The simple one asks, "What is this?"	Here are some spare choruses, in
That God did you command?"	You answer, "With great might,	case you need them:
"Carousing ³ after dinner's done	God rescued us from Egypt,	
On Pesach night is banned."	From slavery this night."	<i>Oh, Jews an' a</i>
The bad one barely hides a sneer:	The one who cannot even ask,	<i>Multitude of folk;</i>
"What does this mean to you?"	Why—don't you hem and haw:	<i>We're coming out of Egypt,</i>
To you and not to him:	It is your duty to explain,	<i>And we're free of slavery's yoke.</i>
He doesn't want to be a Jew!	It's written in our law.	
<i>O, Jews an' a</i>	<i>O, our banner</i>	<i>O, chew manna,</i>
<i>Mingled multitude:</i>	<i>Is riding proud and high,</i>	<i>Guaranteed to please:</i>
<i>We're coming out of Egypt,</i>	<i>God leads us with fire and cloud,</i>	<i>It comes down overnight, and then</i>
<i>And God will give us food.</i>	<i>Reaching to the sky!</i> ⁵	<i>You pick it off the trees.</i>

¹ There are several choruses; mix and match, choosing your personal favorites, to make the song fit your fancy. The Four Children are usually translated as sons. But we know better, don't we?

² The "mixed variety" and the "mingled multitude" refer to the many hangers-on who came out of Egypt with the Jews (Exodus 12:38).

³ "Carousing" assumes that afikomen refers to after-dinner revelry; if you prefer the alternative—sweetmeats for dessert—you can substitute "Noshing" for "Carousing."

⁴ If course, you wouldn't actually say anything of the sort to your distanced child! All love and welcome!

The Torah speaks of four children: ¹	כנגד ארבעה בנים דברה תורה	Keneged arba'ah vanim dibra Torah:
a wise one,	אחד חכם ואחד רשע	Echad chacham, ve'echad rasha,
a simple one,	ואחד תם	ve'echad tam,
and one who doesn't know how to	ואחד שאינו יודע לשאול	ve'echad she'eno yode'ah lish'ol.
ask about Pesach.		
What does the wise one say?	חכם מה הוא אומר	Chacham ma hu omer?
Deut 6:20 “What are the testimonies, statutes,	מה העדות והחקים	“Ma ha'edot vehachukim
and judgements	והמשפטים	vehamishpatim
which the Ruler our God has laid	אשר צוה יהוה אלהינו	asher tzivah Adonai Eloheinu
on you?”	אחכם	et'chem.”
So you tell him	ואף אתה אמור לו	Ve'af ata emor lo
about the ways of Pesach:	כהלכות הפסח	kehilchat haPesach,
“You don't have dessert after eating the	אין מפטירין	“Ein maftirin
Pesach sacrifice.”	אחר הפסח אפיקומן	achar haPesach afikoman.”

⁵ The “fire and cloud/Reaching to the sky” are the pillars of fire and cloud (Exodus 13:21).

¹ What four children? Does the Torah say anything like this? Well, sort of. In four separate places, the Torah has parents and children talking about Pesach. The wise child's question appears in Deut. 6:20-24. The parent's answer stresses God's role in the story. The “wicked” son's question is in Exodus 12:26, though there it comes from “your children.” The answer stresses the deliverance of the Israelites and the destruction of the Egyptians (don't take my opinion: look it up). “What is this?” comes from Exodus 13:14. The parent explains why we “redeem” the first-born. The fourth child's question—well, there is no question, so it's the fourth child's answer—is from Exodus 13:8.

In the Torah, the children aren't judged either on intellect or virtue. Why do we feel such a strong impulse to judge children on this night? The bad child's question seems hardly more offensive than the wise child's, yet the bad child unleashes a storm of rage. Why? Both ask challenging questions. The wise child's is, basically, “What proof (testimonies) do you have for this ritual?” The answer, about afikoman, seems to avoid the question. One wonders why the answer involves a point of law instead of telling about the many witnesses to the miracles. The bad child's question seems personal but reasonable: “What does this (the slavery, or the Seder ritual—*avodah* could mean either or both) mean to you personally?” Like the wise child, this one asks about things which apply to “you.”

Perhaps the question reflects rather than reveals the questioner's nature: since the parents have decided he is bad, they can't stand to hear him. Or perhaps it's too personal a question for the parents to cope with, especially when we are stressing community experience. Or perhaps the child withdraws from shared experience, and this upsets some of us.

What does **the bad one** say?

Ex 12:26 “What does this slavery mean to you?”

To you, and not to him.

And since he has taken himself

out of the community,

he has denied the root *of our faith*.

So you throw it back in his teeth¹

and tell him,

Ex 13:8 “Because of what God did for me

when I went out from Egypt.”

Me and not *him*,

because if he had been there,

he wouldn’t have been rescued.

What does **the simple one** say?

Ex 13:14 “What is this?”

And you tell him,

Ex 13:14 “By the strength of *God’s* hand,²

God led us out of Egypt,

from the house of slaves.”

And the one who doesn’t know how to ask,

you start for him.

As the Torah says,

Ex 13:8 And you shall tell your child

on that day, saying,

“It’s because of what God did for me

when I went out from Egypt.”³

רָשָׁע מָה הוּא אוֹמֵר

מָה הָעֲבֹדָה הַזֹּאת לָכֶם

לָכֶם וְלֹא לוֹ

וּלְפִי שֶׁהוֹצִיא אֶת-עַצְמוֹ

מִן-הַכָּלָל

וְכִפֵּר בְּעֶקֶר

אֶף אֶתָּה הִקְהָה אֶת-שִׁנּוֹי

וְאָמַר לוֹ

בְּעֵבֶר זֶה עָשָׂה יְהוָה לִי

בְּצֹאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם

לִי וְלֹא לוֹ

אֵלּוּ הָיָה שָׁם

לֹא הָיָה נִגָּאֵל

תָּם מָה הוּא אוֹמֵר

מָה-זֹּאת

וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו

בְּחֹזֶק יָד

הוֹצִיאָנוּ יְהוָה מִמִּצְרַיִם

מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים

וְשִׁאֲנוּ יוֹדַע לְשֹׂאֵל

אֶת פֶּתַח לוֹ

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר

וְהִגַּדְתָּ לְבִנְךָ

בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר

בְּעֵבֶר זֶה עָשָׂה יְהוָה לִי

בְּצֹאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם

Rasha ma hu omer?

“Ma ha’avoda hazot lachem?”

Lachem velo lo.

Ul’fi shehotzi et atzmo

min haklal

vechafar ba’ikar,

af ata hakheh et shinav

ve’emor lo,

“Ba’avur ze asa Adonai li

betzeti miMitzrayim.”

Li velo lo;

ilu haya sham,

lo haya nig’al.

Tam ma hu omer:

“Ma zot?”

Ve’amarta elav,

“Bechozek yad

hotzi’anu Adonai miMitzrayim

mibet avadim.”

Veshe’eno yode’a lish’ol,

at p’tach lo,

shene’emar:

“Vehigadta levincha

bayom hahu lemor,

‘Ba’avur ze asa Adonai li

betzeti miMitzrayim.”

¹ Or, “blunt his teeth.”

² Perhaps this anthropomorphism stresses God’s personal involvement in this historical event.

³ For the simple child, it’s “us”—“God led us.” But for the last child, it’s “me”—“God did for me,” using the same words as those thrown at the bad child. Why do the different children earn reactions which seem similar?

When To Tell

Are we telling the story yet? We have read about the obligation to tell, the Five Rabbis, the Four Children; now we are reading about the proper conditions for telling. Does the Hagadah ever get around to telling the story of the Exodus? And if not, why not?

You might think you can fulfill your

obligation to tell the story any time after

the beginning of the month of Nisan. But

the Teaching¹ says, *Ex 13:8* “on that day.”

And you might think “on that day” means

you could do it in the daytime.

But the Teaching says, *Ex 13:8* “Because of this.”

I wouldn’t say “because of this”

except when matzah and maror are

right in front of you.

יכול מראש חדש

תלמוד לומר ביום ההוא

אי ביום ההוא

יכול מבעוד יום

Yachol merosh chodesh.

Talmud lomar “bayom hahu.”

Ee “vayom hahu”

yachol mib’od yom.

תלמוד לומר בעבור זה

בעבור זה לא אמרתי

אלא בשעה שיש מצה ומרור

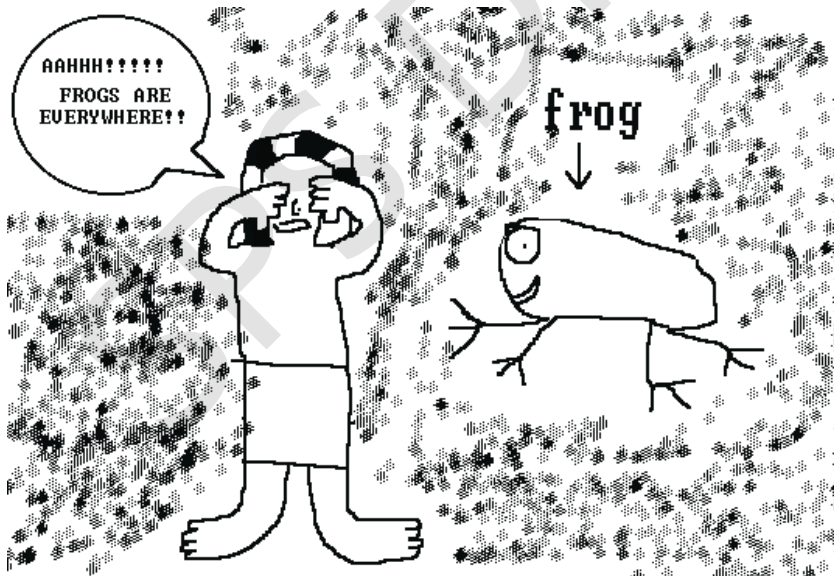
מנחים לפניך

Talmud lomar “ba’avur zeh.”

“Ba’avur zeh” lo amarti

ela besha’a sheyesh matzah umaror

munachim lefanecha.



¹ From the Hebrew root for “teach” or “learn.”

From Idols To God עֲבוּדֵי זָרָה

From the beginning, our ancestors
worshipped idols.

And now, God who is everywhere
has brought us to God's service.

As our scripture says:

Josh 24:2-4 And Joshua said in his

farewell address to all the people,

“The Ruler, God of Israel, says,

‘Across the river is where your
ancestors lived, way back then—

Terach the father of Abraham

and the father of Nachor—

and they served other gods.

And I took your father Abraham

across the river,

led him into all the land of Canaan

and made sure he had many descendants,

and I gave him Isaac;

and I gave Isaac

both Jacob and Esau;

and I gave Mount Se'ir to Esau,

to own it,

and Jacob and his children went down to Egypt.”

מִתְחִלָּה עֲבוּדֵי זָרָה

הָיוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ

וְעַכְשָׁיו קִרְבָּנוּ הַמָּקוֹם

לְעַבֹּדָתוֹ

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ

אֶל-כָּל-הָעָם

כֹּה-אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

בְּעֶבֶר הַנָּהָר

יָשְׁבוּ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם מֵעוֹלָם

תֵּרַח אָבִי אַבְרָהָם

וְאָבִי נָחוֹר

וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים

וַיֹּאקֶחַ אֶת-אֲבִיכֶם אֶת-אַבְרָהָם

מֵעֶבֶר הַנָּהָר

וְאֹלֶךְ אוֹתוֹ בְּכָל-אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן

וַיַּרְבֶּה אֶת-זֶרְעוֹ

וַיֵּאָתֶן לוֹ אֶת-יִצְחָק

וַיֵּאָתֶן לְיִצְחָק

אֶת-יַעֲקֹב וְאֶת-עֵשָׂו

וַיֵּאָתֶן לְעֵשָׂו אֶת-הָרַ שֵׁעִיר

לְרֶשֶׁת אוֹתוֹ

וַיַּעֲקֹב וּבְנָיו יָרְדוּ מִצְרָיִם

Mit'chila ovdei avoda zara

hayu avoteinu.

Ve'achshav kervanu haMakom

la'avodato.

Shene'emar:

Vayomer Yehoshu'a

el kol ha'am,

“Ko amar Adonai Elohei Yisra'el,

‘Be’ever hanahar

yashvu avoteichem me’olam,

Terach avi Avraham

va’avi Nachor,

vaya’avdu elohim acherim.

Va’ekach et avichem et Avraham

me’ever hanahar,

va’olech oto bechol eretz Kena’an,

va’arbeh et zar’o,

va’eten lo et Yitzchak.

Va’eten leYitzchak

et Ya’akov ve’et Esav.

Va’eten le’Esav et har Se’ir

lareshet oto,

veYa’akov uvanav yardu Mitzrayim.”

¹ Here is another way of telling what God did for us, bringing us from idolatry to true religion. As Abraham crossed the river, so did his descendants cross the Red Sea (and, some would add, so did his later descendants cross the Atlantic). The Hagadah reaches back into history to add meaning to its own central story, and then reaches forward, far later than the Exodus, to show the enduring importance of retelling the experience of passage.

Introduction to the Commentary on Deut. 26:5-8

We are preparing to read commentary on a passage from the end of Deuteronomy, one of Moses' final addresses to the people. To prepare for this, we stress that God planned and foretold our suffering in Egypt. God revealed this plan to Abram in the Treaty (or Covenant) Between the Sections:

Blessed is the One	בָּרוּךְ	Baruch
who keeps God's promise to Israel,	שׁוֹמֵר הַבְּטָחָתוֹ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל	shomer havtachato leYisra'el,
blessed is God!	בָּרוּךְ הוּא	baruch hu;
For the Holy One whom we bless	שֶׁהַקְּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא	shehaKadosh baruch hu
planned the end of our slavery	חֹשֵׁב אֶת-הַקֶּץ	chishev et haketz
and fulfilled the promise made	לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּמָה שֶׁאָמַר	la'asot kema she'amar
to our ancestor Abraham	לְאַבְרָהָם אֲבִינוּ	le'Avraham avinu
in the Treaty Between the Sections. ¹	בְּבְרִית בֵּין הַבְּתָרִים	biv'rit bein hab'tarim.
As the Torah says,	שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר	Shene'emar:
Gen 15:13-14 God told Abram: "Be sure of this:	וַיֹּאמֶר לְאַבְרָם יְדַע תְּדַע	Vayomer le'Avram: "Yado'a teda
Your descendants will be foreigners	כִּי גֵר יִהְיֶה זֶרְעֶךָ	ki ger yih'ye zar'acha
in a land that isn't theirs.	בְּאֶרֶץ לֹא לָהֶם	be'erezt lo lahem,
Your descendants will be slaves	וְעַבְדִּים	va'avadum,
and their owners will treat them harshly	וְעֲנֵוּ אֹתָם	ve'inu otam
for 400 years. ²	אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה	arba me'ot shana.
But the people whom they serve—	וְגַם אֶת-הַגֵּרִי אֲשֶׁר יַעֲבֹדוּ	Vegam et hagoi asher ya'avodu
I'll judge them;	דָּן אֲנֹכִי	dan anochi.
and after that, your descendants	וְאַחֲרֵי-כֵן	ve'acharei chen
will come out with great wealth."	יֵצְאוּ בִּרְכֻשׁ גָּדוֹל	yetz'u birchush gadol."

¹ Abram had to take three animals and two birds and split the animals in half. God put him into a trance and revealed the plan (Genesis 15:13-14).

² Actually, the people were slaves only 210 years, but foreigners in Egypt for an additional 190. Lehmann, pp. 59-60, has a full account of the discrepancy and how to resolve it.

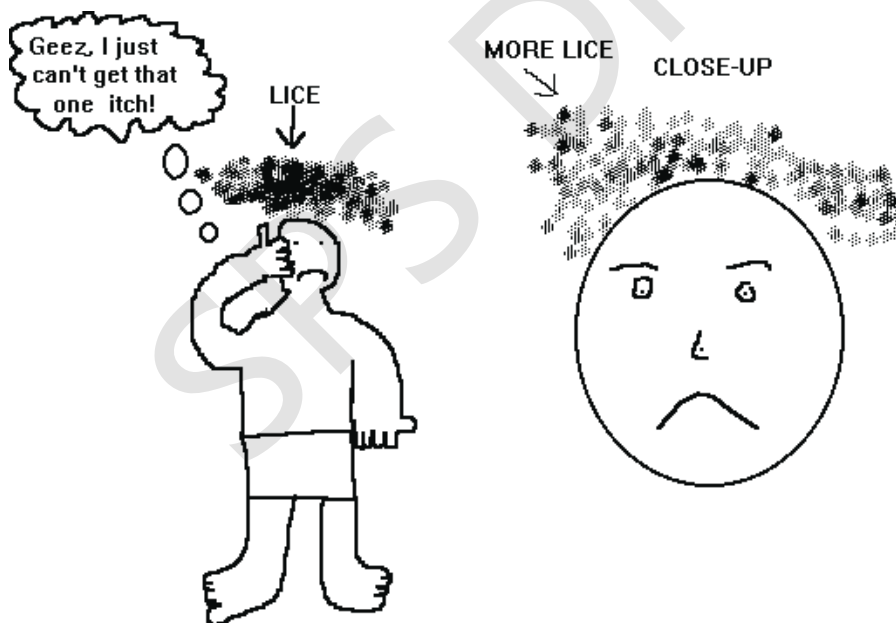
..... Cover the matzot and lift up the cups

God's foretelling and assurance have been our comfort in every generation.

And God's commitment, God's commitment,	וְהִיא שְׁעֻמָּדָה	Vehi she'amdah,
Stood by us and our parents, (2)	לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ וְלָנוּ	la'avoteinu velanu (2)
When one foe after another	שֶׁלֹא אֶחָד בְּלִבָּד	Shelo echad bilvad
Sought liquidation for our whole nation. (2)	עָמַד עָלֵינוּ לְכַלּוֹתֵנוּ	amad alenu lechalotenu (2)
Not just once but in every age	אֶלָּא שְׁבַע־דּוֹר וָדוֹר	Elah shebechol dor vador
They seek liquidation for our nation, (2)	עוֹמְדִים עָלֵינוּ לְכַלּוֹתֵנוּ	omdim alenu lechalotenu (2)
And the Holy, blessed One—	וְהַקְדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא	Vehakadosh baruch hu
God snatches us from their hands. (2)	מִצִּילֵנוּ מִיָּאֵדָם	matzilenu miyadam. (2)

..... Put down the cups and uncover the matzot

The Plague of Lice



We now begin discussing the heart of the Exodus story by examining four verses from Torah, Deuteronomy 26:5-8, with commentary on each verse. The passage from Deuteronomy—a formula which the people were to recite after they fully possessed the land—is expounded phrase by phrase, by reference to other passages.

Having reached our Promised Land and built our Temple, we celebrated our agricultural abundance and looked back on our humble beginnings and our history of suffering. What does it mean to be free? What does it mean to be Jewish? These four verses (pages 18, 21, 22 and 24) invite our own discussion and commentary!

Deuteronomy 26:5

Go and find out	צא ולמד	Tzeh ul'mad
what Laban ¹ the Aramean tried	מה-בִּקֵּשׁ לָבָן הָאֲרָמִי	ma bikesh Lavan ha'Arami
to do to Ya'akov our father.	לַעֲשׂוֹת לַיַּעֲקֹב אָבִינוּ	la'asot leYa'akov avinu;
Pharaoh banned only the boys,	שִׁפְרָעָה לֹא גָזַר אֶלָּא עַל-הַזָּכָרִים	sheParo lo gazar ela al haz'charim,.
but Laban tried to destroy all <i>the children</i> . ²	וְלָבָן בִּקֵּשׁ לַעְקֹר אֶת-הַכֹּל	veLavan bikesh la'akor et hakol
As the Torah says,	שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר	Shene'amar:
<i>Deut 26:5</i> An Aramean tried to destroy my father, ³	אֲרָמִי אֶבֶר אָבִי	Arami oved avi
so he went down to Egypt	וַיֵּרֶד מִצְרָיִמָּה	vayered Mitzraymah,
and stayed there with his small family;	וַיָּגֵר שָׁם בְּמִתֵּי מֵעֵט	vayagar sham bim'tei me'at.
there he became	וַיְהִי-שָׁם	Vaychi sham
a great people, strong and numerous.	לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל עָצוּם וָרֶב	legoi gadol, atzum varav.

¹ It seems surprising that Laban is held up as an example of perfidy worse than Pharaoh's, but maybe it's a warning that trouble can come from unexpected quarters. Laban was a close family member of the Patriarchs and didn't get along with Jacob. Whatever he did that was so bad is in Genesis 31; read it and judge for yourself. If you don't like him there, maybe your low opinion will carry back to Genesis 28 and 24. Laban's name means "white" (Aha, see how evil and deceptive he is, with his greedy nature!); he is called "the Aramean" in Gen. 25:19 and 31:20; he lived in a place called Padan-Aram and spoke Aramaic words in Gen. 31:47. He was the grandson of Abraham's brother Nachor, brother-in-law to Isaac and father-in-law to Jacob (see Gen. 28:2).

² Pharaoh ordered the boy babies thrown into the river; Laban delayed Jacob's marriage to the wife he wanted, so there might have been no Children of Israel, neither boys nor girls!

³ The words could mean "My father was a lost/wandering/homeless Aramean," referring to Jacob's years in Aram, working for his uncle Laban. But if you take this interpretation, you lose the chance to blame Laban for trying to destroy us.

And he went down to Egypt:

Compelled by a divine decree.¹

And he stayed there:

Teaches that *Jacob* didn't go down
intending to settle in Egypt,
but just to stay a while.

As the *Torah* says,

Gen 47:4 And they told Pharaoh,

“We have come to stay in the land,

because there's no grazing for

your servant's flocks, because

the famine is severe in the land of Canaan,

so now please let your servants stay

in the land of Goshen.”

With his small family:

As the *Torah* says,

Deut 10:22 With seventy souls

your ancestors went down to Egypt,

and now the Ruler your God has made you

as numerous as the stars in the sky.

And there he became a nation:

Teaches that the Jews

were a distinct group there.

וַיֵּרֶד מִצְרַיִמָּה

אָנוּס עַל-פִּי הַדְּבָר

וַיָּגֶר שָׁם

מִלְמַד שְׁלֹא יָרַד

לְהִשְׁתַּקֵּעַ בְּמִצְרַיִם

אֶלָּא לָגוּר שָׁם

שְׁנֵאֵמַר

וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל-פַּרְעֹה

לָגוּר בְּאֶרֶץ בְּאֵנוּ

כִּי-אֵין מְרֻעָה לַצֹּאֵן

אֲשֶׁר לַעֲבָדֶיךָ

כִּי-כָבֵד הָרָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן

וְעַתָּה יֵשְׁבוּ-נָא עִבְדֶּיךָ

בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן

Vayered Mitzrayma:

Anus al pi hadibur.

Vayagar sham:

Melamed shelo yarad

lehishtake'a beMitzrayim

ela lagur sham.

Shene'emar,

Vayomru el Paro,

“Lagur ba'aretz banu

ki ein mir'eh latzon

asher la'avadecha

ki chaved hara'av be'eretz Kena'an

ve'ata yeshvu na avadecha

be'eretz Goshen.”

בִּמְתֵי מַעַט

כְּמַה שְׁנֵאֵמַר

בְּשִׁבְעִים נֶפֶשׁ

יָרְדוּ אֲבֹתֶיךָ מִצְרַיִמָּה

וְעַתָּה שָׁמָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ

כְּכֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם לָרֹב

Bimtei me'at:

Kema shene'emar,

Beshiv'im nefesh

yardu avotecha Mitzrayma

ve'ata sam'cha Adonai Elohecha

kechoch'vei hashamayim larov.

וַיְהִי-שָׁם לְגוֹי

מִלְמַד שֶׁהָיוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל

מְצֻיָּנִים שָׁם

Vayehi sham legoy:

Melamed shehayu Yisra'el

metzuyanim sham.

¹ What right had Jacob to go to Egypt? God told him to go!

Great, mighty:

As the Torah says,

Exod. 1:7 The children of Israel bred like insects,¹ וַיִּבְנוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּדָבָר וַיִּרְבוּ וַיַּעֲצֻמוּ
became *teeming* hordes, overwhelming,
more and more:
the land was full of them!² וַתִּמָּלֵא הָאֶרֶץ אֹתָם

גָּדוֹל עֲצוּם

Gadol, atzum:

כְּמַה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר

Kema shene'emar:

וַיִּבְנוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּדָבָר וַיִּרְבוּ וַיַּעֲצֻמוּ

Uvnei Yisra'el paru vayishretzu

וַיִּרְבוּ וַיַּעֲצֻמוּ

vayirbu vaya'atzmu

בְּמֵאֲדָה מְאֹד

bim'od me'od

וַתִּמָּלֵא הָאֶרֶץ אֹתָם

vatimaleh ha'aretz otam.

And numerous:

As the Book of Ezekiel says,

Ezek 16:7 Innumerable, like grass in the meadow

I set you;

you increased and grew up;

you got fine jewelry;³

your breasts were firm

and your hair was long;⁴

still, you were stripped naked.

Ezek 16:6 I passed over you and saw you

trampled in your blood,

and I said to you,

"Through your blood you shall live."⁵

And I said to you,

"Through your blood you shall live."⁶

וָרַב

Varav:

כְּמַה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר

Kema shene'emar:

רֶבְבָה כְּצִמְחַת הַשָּׂדֶה

Revavah katzemach hasadeh

נִתְּתִיךְ

netatich

וַתִּרְבִּי וַתִּגְדְּלִי

vatirbi vatigdeli

וַתִּבְאֵי בְעָרֵי עֲדָיִים

vatavoi ba'adi adayim.

שָׁדַיִם נִכְנֹוּ

Shadayim nachonu

וַשְׁעָרֶיךָ צִמְחֹוּ

use'arech tzime'ach,

וְאֶת עֶרֶם וְעֶרְיָהּ

ve'at erom ve'eryah.

וְאֶעֱבֹר עָלֶיךָ וְאֶרְעֶה

Va'e'evor alayich va'erech

מִתְבֹּסֶסֶת בְּדָמֶיךָ

mitboseset bedamayich,

וְאָמַר לָךְ

va'omar lach,

בְּדָמֶיךָ חַיִּי

"Bedamayich chayi,"

וְאָמַר לָךְ

va'omar lach,

בְּדָמֶיךָ חַיִּי

"Bedamayich chayi."

¹ "Were fruitful and swarmed/crept"; the root שרץ is used for teeming swarms of frogs, the second plague.

² This sounds like racist paranoia, presumably the Egyptians' point of view. One can translate, "The children of Israel were fruitful and swarmed, they increased in number and became strong, more and more, and the earth was filled with them." Does the Torah mean that they had fulfilled God's command to Adam to "fill the earth"?

³ Or, "You became a real stunner."

⁴ The gist of this, presumably, is that Israel had bloomed as a nation and was ripe for a leader. "Your hair was long" could be translated, "Your pubic hair had grown in." In our first edition, this was in parentheses in the translation. Curiously, as people would read around the table, this passage always seemed to fall to Grandpa, with embarrassment all around. Now that trying translation has tactfully withdrawn to obscurity among these footnotes.

⁵ Or, "Live in your blood"; or, "I said to you *when I saw you trampled* in your blood, 'Live!'"

Deuteronomy 26:6

<i>Deut 26:6</i> The Egyptians treated us badly, they oppressed us, and they put us to forced labor.	וַיַּרְעוּ אֹתָנוּ הַמִּצְרִים וַיַּעֲנוּנוּ וַיִּתְּנוּ עָלֵינוּ עֲבָדָה קָשָׁה	Vayare'u otanu haMitzrim, vay'anunu, vayitnu alenu avoda kasha.
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And the Egyptians ill-treated us*As the Torah says, Pharaoh said,**Ex 1:10* “Let’s be smart about this,

in case they grow big,

and there’s a war,¹

and they join our enemies,

and fight against us

and go up out of the land.”²

וַיַּרְעוּ אֹתָנוּ הַמִּצְרִים

כָּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר

הִכָּה נִתְחַכְמָה לוֹ

פֶּן־יִרְבֶּה

וְהָיָה כִּי־תִקְרָאנָה מִלְחָמָה

וְנוֹסַף גַּם־הוּא עַל־שֹׁנָאֵינוּ

וְנִלְחַם־בָּנוּ

וְעָלָה מִן־הָאֶרֶץ

Vayare'u otanu haMitzrim:

Kema shene'emar,

“Hava nitchakma lo

pen yirbeh,

vehaya ki tikrena milchama,

venosaf gam hu al sonenu,

venilcham banu

ve'alah min ha'aretz.”

And they oppressed us:*As the Torah says,**Ex 1:11* And they set taskmasters over them

to oppress them with burdens,

and they built store-cities for Pharaoh,

Pitom and Raamses.

וַיַּעֲנוּנוּ

כָּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר

וַיַּשִּׁימוּ עָלָיו שָׂרֵי מִסִּים

לְמַעַן עֲנוּתוֹ בְּסִבְלָתָם

וַיִּבְנוּ עָרֵי מִסְכְּנוֹת לַפַּרְעֹה

אֶת־פִּתוֹם וְאֶת־רַעַמְסֵס

Vay'anunu:

Kema shene'emar,

Vayasimu alav sarei misim

lema'an anoto besivlotam,

vayiven arei miskanot leFar'oh,

et Pitom ve'et Ra'amses.

And they put us to forced labor:*As the Torah says,**Ex 1:13* And the Egyptians made

the Children of Israel toil rigorously.

וַיִּתְּנוּ עָלֵינוּ עֲבָדָה קָשָׁה

כָּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר

וַיַּעֲבִדוּ מִצְרַיִם

אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכָפֶדֶךְ

Vayitnu alenu avoda kasha:

Kema shene'emar,

Vaya'avidu Mitzrayim

et B'nei Yisra'el befarech.

⁶ Hoenig, p. 81, quotes Maimonides, *Guide*, III:46. The Israelites had neglected circumcision but performed it before the Passover, so the blood of the sacrifice mingled with the blood of circumcision. (Some Hagadot omit these four lines: Elias includes them, Glatzer does not.)

¹ “And-it-will-be if will-happen a war”

² Exodus 1:10. Pharaoh’s sentence looks incomplete in the translation, but so it is in the original.

Deuteronomy 26:7

<i>Deut 26:7</i> And we cried out to the Ruler, God of our ancestors, and God heard our voice and saw our suffering, our toil and our oppression.	וּנְצַעֲק אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה אֶת־קוֹלֵנוּ וַיַּרְא אֶת־עֲנִינֵנוּ וְאֶת־עֲמָלָנוּ וְאֶת־לַחַצְזֵנוּ	Vanitzak el Adonai Elohei avoteinu, vayishma Adonai et koleinu, vayar et onyenu ve'et amalenu ve'et lachatzenu.
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And we cried out to the Ruler,

God of our ancestors:

As the Torah says,

Ex 2:23 In the course of time,¹
the king of Egypt *who knew Joseph* died,
and the Children of Israel groaned
because of their slavery,
and they cried out,
and their plea rose up to God
because of the slavery.

וּנְצַעֲק אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ כְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר וַיְהִי בַיָּמִים הָרַבִּים הָהֵם וַיָּמָת מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם וַיֵּאָנְחוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן־הָעֲבָדָה וַיִּזְעֻקוּ וַתָּעַל שׁוֹעַתָם אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים מִן־הָעֲבָדָה	Vanitzak el Adonai Elohei avoteinu, Kema shene'emar, Vayehi vayamim harabim hahem vayamat melech Mitzrayim vaye'anchu Venei Yisrael min ha'avodah vayiz'aku vata'al shav'atam el haElohim min ha'avodah.
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And God heard our voice:

As the Torah says,

Exodus 2:24 God heard their screaming,
and God remembered the pact
with Abraham, Isaac
and Jacob.

וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה אֶת־קוֹלֵנוּ כְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נַאֲקָתָם וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־בְּרִיתוֹ אֶת־אַבְרָהָם אֶת־יִצְחָק וְאֶת־יַעֲקֹב	Vayishma Adonai et kolenu Kema shene'emar, Vayishma Elohim et na'akatam; vayizkor Elohim et berito et Avraham, et Yitzchak ve'et Ya'akov.
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¹ “And it was, in those many days”

And God saw our suffering:

This refers to the broken families,¹

As the Torah says,

Ex 2:25 And God saw the Children of Israel, וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, וַיַּדַּע אֱלֹהִים Vayar Elohim et B'nei Yisra'el, and God knew. vayeda Elohim.

And our labor:

These are the children,

As the Torah says,

Ex 1:22 Pharaoh told his people, “Every boy that is born, וְאֶת־עַמְלָנוּ אֵלּוּ הַבָּנִים Kema shene'emar, throw it into the river; כֹּל־חֶבֶן תִּלְוֶה Kol haben hayilod hay'orah tashlichuhu and let all the girls live.” וְכָל־חַבַּת תְּחַיֶּינָה vechol habat techayun.

And our oppression:

This is the slavedriving,

As the Torah says,

Ex 3:9 “And I’ve seen the oppression וְנִם־רָאִיתִי אֶת־חֲלָחִץ Ve’et lachatzenu: Zeh hadochak, Kema shene'emar, with which Egypt pressures them.” וְאֶשֶׁר מִצְרַיִם לֹחֲצִים אֹתָם Vegam ra'iti et halachatz asher Mitzrayim lochatzim otam.

¹ Husbands and wives would separate to avoid having children, lest the children be drowned.

Deuteronomy 26:8

<i>Deut 26:8</i> And God led us out of Egypt	וַיֹּצֵאֵנוּ יְהוָה מִמִּצְרַיִם	Vayotzi'enu Adonai miMitzrayim
with a strong hand and an outstretched arm,	בְּיָד חֲזָקָה וּבְזֵרַע נְטוּיָה	beyad chazakah uvizro'ah netuya
and with great terror,	וּבִמְרָא גָדֹל	uv'morah gadol,
and signs and wonders.	וּבִאֲתוֹת וּבִמִּפְתִּים	uve'otot, uvemoftim.

And God led us out of Egypt:

Not by means of a messenger,
nor by that of a seraph
or a representative,
but the Holy One who is blessed
came in glory and in person.¹

As the Torah says at the final plague

Ex 12:12 “I will pass through the land of Egypt
this night,
and I shall strike every firstborn
in the land of Egypt,
both man and beast,
and upon all the gods of Egypt
I will execute judgements: I am the Ruler.”

וַיֹּצֵאֵנוּ יְהוָה מִמִּצְרַיִם
לֹא-עַל-יְדֵי מַלְאָךְ
וְלֹא-עַל-יְדֵי שְׂרָף
וְלֹא-עַל-יְדֵי שְׁלִיחַ
אֱלֹהֵי הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא
בְּכְבוֹדוֹ וּבְעֶצְמוֹ
שֵׁנָּה מֵרַם
וְעַבְדִּי בְּאֶרֶץ-מִצְרַיִם
בַּלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה
וְהִכֵּיתִי כָל-בְּכוֹר
בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
מֵאָדָם וְעַד-בְּהֵמָה
וּבְכָל-אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרַיִם
אֶעֱשֶׂה שְׁפָטִים אֲנִי יְהוָה
Vayotzienu Adonai miMitzrayim:
Lo al yedei malach
velo al yedei saraf
velo al yedei shaliach
elah Hakadosh Baruch Hu
bich'vodo uve'atzmo.
Shene'emar,
“Ve'avarti ve'erezt Mitzrayim
balaylah hazeh,
vehiketi chol bechor
be'erezt Mitzrayim
me'adam ve'ad behemah
uvechol elohei Mitzrayim
e'eshe shefatim: ani Adonai.”

¹ This passage stresses God's personal involvement in the Exodus. God, rather than Moses, is the principal actor as the Hagadah tells the story.

..... Next, we explain each phrase of Exodus 12:12

"I will pass through the land of Egypt this night,"	וְעָבַרְתִּי בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בַּלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה	"Ve'avarti ve'erezt Mitzrayim balaylah hazeh,
I, and not a messenger.	אֲנִי וְלֹא מַלְאָךְ	ani velo malach.
"And I shall strike every firstborn in the land of Egypt,"	וְהִכֵּיתִי כָל-בְּכוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם	vehiketi chol bechor be'erezt Mitzrayim
I, and not a seraph.	אֲנִי וְלֹא שָׂרָף	ani velo saraf.
"And upon all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements."	וְכָל-אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרַיִם אֶעֱשֶׂה שְׁפָטִים	uvechol elohei Mitzrayim e'eseh shefatim.
I, and not a representative.	אֲנִי וְלֹא שְׁלִיחַ	ani velo shaliach.
"I am the Ruler."	אֲנִי יְהוָה	"Ani Adonai,"
It is I and no other.	אֲנִי הוּא וְלֹא אֲחֵר	ani hu velo acher.

..... We return to explaining the verse from Deuteronomy

With a strong hand:

This is the plague,

As the Torah says,

Ex 9:3 "Look, the hand of God will be

on your cattle in the field,

on the horses, donkeys, camels,

oxen and sheep,

a very severe plague."

בְּיָד חֲזָקָה	Beyad chazakah:
זו הַדָּבָר	Zu hadever,
כִּמָּה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר	Kema shene'emar,
הִנֵּה יַד-יְהוָה הַזֹּאת	"Hineh yad Adonai hoyah
בְּמִקְנֶה אֲשֶׁר בַּשָּׂדֶה	bemiknecha asher basadeh
בַּסּוּסִים בַּחֲמֹרִים בַּגְּמָלִים	basusim, bachamorim, bag'malim
בַּבָּקָר וּבַצֹּאן	babakar uvatzon,
דָּבָר כָּבֵד מְאֹד	dever kaved me'od."

And with an outstretched arm:

This is the sword,

As the Book of Chronicles says,

1 Chron 21:16 And his drawn sword in his hand,

stretched out over Jerusalem.

וּבְזֵרַע נְטוּיָה	Beyad chazakah:
זו הַחֶרֶב	Zu hacherev,
כִּמָּה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר	Kema shene'emar,
וַחֲרָבוֹ שְׁלֹפָה בְּיָדוֹ	Vecharbo shelufah beyado
נְטוּיָה עַל-יְרוּשָׁלַם	netuyah al Yerushalayim.

And with great terror:

This is the revelation of God's presence,
 As the Torah says,
Deut 4:34 Or has God ever tried to come
 and take a people for God's own,
 from the midst of another people—
 with trials and signs,
 wonders and war,
 with strong hand and outstretched arm,
 and with great terrors,
 like everything God did for you—
 the Ruler your God—
 in Egypt before your *very* eyes?

ובמרא גדל
 זו גילוי שכינה
 כמה שנאמר
 או | הנסה אלהים לבוא
 לקחת לו גוי
 מקרב גוי
 במסות באתות
 ובמופתים ובמלחמה
 וביד חזקה ובזרוע נטויה
 ובמוראים גדלים
 ככל אשר-עשה לכם
 יהוה אלהיכם
 במצרים לעיניך
 Uvemora gadol:
 Zu gilui shechinah,
 Kema shene'emar,
 O hanisa Elohim lavo
 lakachat lo goy
 mikrev goy,
 bemasot beatot
 uvemofitim uvemilchamah,
 uveyad chazakah uvizro'ah netuyah
 uvemora'im gedolim,
 kechol asher asah lachem
 Adonai Eloheichem
 beMitzrayim le'einecha?

And with signs:

This is Aaron's rod (*which Moses used*),
 as the Torah says:
Ex 4:17 "You will take this rod
 in your hands,
 to perform the signs with it."

ובאתות
 זה המטה
 כמה שנאמר
 ואת-המטה הזו
 תקח בידך
 אשר תעשה בו את-האותות
 Uve'otot:
 Zeh hamatch,
 kemah shene'emar:
 Ve'et hamatch hazeh
 tikach beyadecha,
 asher ta'aseh bo et ha'otot.

And with wonders:

This is the blood,
 as the Book of Joel says:
Joel 3:3 And I will show

wonders in heaven and earth...

... For each of the three words, Blood, Fire, and Smoke, some people dip a finger in the wine to remove a drop...

Joel 3:3 ...blood and fire and pillars of smoke.

ובמופתים
 זה הדם
 כמה שנאמר
 ונתתי מופתים
 בשמים ובארץ
 דם ואש ותימרות עשן
 Uvemoftim:
 Zeh hadam,
 kemah shene'emar:
 Venatati moftim
 bashamayim uva'aretz...
 ...dam va'esh vetimarot ashan.

The revelation of God's presence in Deut 4:34 (above) inspires a fresh look at the suffering of the Egyptians. The previous interpretations found references to several of the Ten Plagues in different verses; now we find that Deut 4:34 refers to all ten of the Ten Plagues.

Another explanation for Deut 4:34:

“With a strong hand” is two plagues.

“And with an outstretched arm” is two.

“And with great terror” is two.

“And with signs” is two.

“And with wonders” is two.

These are the ten blows

which the Holy One (bless God) brought

upon the Egyptians in Egypt,

and here they are:

דָּבָר אֲחֵר

Davar acher:

בְּיָד חֲזָקָה שְׁתֵּימִם

beyad chazakah shtayim

וּבִזְרוֹעַ נְטוּיָה שְׁתֵּימִם

uvizro'ah netuyah shtayim

וּבְמִרְאָה גָדֹל שְׁתֵּימִם

uvemorah gadol shtayim

וּבְאִתּוֹת שְׁתֵּימִם

uve'otot shtayim

וּבְמוֹפְתִים שְׁתֵּימִם

uvemoftim shtayim.

אֵלּוּ עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת

Elu eser makot

שֶׁהָבִיא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא

shehevi haKadosh baruch hu

עַל-הַמִּצְרִים בְּמִצְרַיִם

al haMitzrim beMiztrayim,

וְאֵלּוּ הֵן

ve'elu hen

עֶשֶׂר הַמַּכּוֹת¹ The Ten Plagues (or Blows)

.....Dip your finger in the wine and remove a drop as we recite each of the 10 plagues
We temper our joy because of the Egyptian lives that were lost.

Blood and Frogs and Lice and Beasties wild, דָּם צַפְרָדַיִם כְּנִים עָרֹב

Dam tzfarde'ah kinim arov

Blight Boils Hail and Locusts (nothing mild), דֶּבֶר שַׁחִין בָּרָד אֲרֶבָה

Dever sh'chin barad arbeh

Darkness, Killin' first-born chillun'— חֹשֶׁךְ מַכַּת-בְּכוֹרוֹת

Choshech macat bechorot—

Ten conniptions for the Egyptians

Elu eser hamakot,

BuFfeL, BuBbuB and HoLiDuK (2)

detzach, adash be'achav (2)

.....Dip your finger in the wine and remove a drop for each of the three mnemonics
Rabbi Yehudah took the first letter of each plague to make his mnemonic.

Rabbi Yehudah

רַבִּי יְהוּדָה

Rabi Yehudah

used to make a mnemonic:

הָיָה נוֹתֵן בָּהֶם סִמָּנִים

haya noten bahem simanim

BuFfel, BuBbuB and HoLiDuK.

דַּע"ךְ עַד"ש בָּאֲח"ב

DeTZaCH, AdaSH, BeACHaV.

.....Top up the cups, after the drops you took out.

¹ The word usually translated as “plague” is related to the root for “smite” or “hit.” That’s why I translate the plagues as blows.

How Bad Was It?¹

Rabbi Yose the Galilean says,
How can you say
that in Egypt the Egyptians suffered
ten blows,

and on the sea

they were struck by fifty blows?

In Egypt, what does it say?

Ex 8:15 And the magicians told Pharaoh,

“This is the finger of God.”²

And on the sea, what does it say?

Ex 14:31 And Israel saw the great hand

that God laid upon Egypt,

and the people feared God

and believed in God

and in God’s servant Moses.

How many did they suffer for the finger?

Ten blows.

From this, you can tell that

in Egypt *the Egyptians* suffered ten blows, **מִצְרַיִם**

but on the sea they suffered fifty blows. **וְעַל-הַיָּם**

רַבִּי יוֹסֵי הַגָּלִילִי אוֹמֵר

מִנַּיִן אַתָּה אוֹמֵר

שֶׁלֹּקוּ הַמִּצְרִים בְּמִצְרַיִם

עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת

וְעַל-הַיָּם

לָקוּ חֲמִשִּׁים מַכּוֹת

בְּמִצְרַיִם מָה הוּא אוֹמֵר

וַיֹּאמְרוּ הַחֲרָטִימִים אֶל-פָּרֹעַ

אֲצַבֵּעַ אֱלֹהִים הִוא

וְעַל-הַיָּם מָה-הוּא אוֹמֵר

וַיֵּרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-הַיָּד הַגְּדֹלָה

אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה בְּמִצְרַיִם

וַיִּירָאוּ הָעָם אֶת-יְהוָה

וַיֵּאֱמִינוּ בַּיהוָה

וּבִמּוֹשֶׁה עַבְדּוֹ

כָּמָה לָקוּ בְּאֲצַבֵּעַ

עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת

אָמַר מֵעַתָּה

בְּמִצְרַיִם לָקוּ עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת

וְעַל-הַיָּם לָקוּ חֲמִשִּׁים מַכּוֹת

Rabi Yose haGelili omer,

Minayin ata omer

shelaku haMitzrim beMitzrayim

eser makot,

ve'al hayam

laku chamishim makot?

BeMitzrayim mah hu omer?

Vayomru hachartumim el Paro,

“Etzba Elohim hi.”

Ve'al hayam mah hu omer?

Vayar Yisra'el et hayad hagdolah

asher asah Adonai beMitzrayim,

vayir'u ha'am et Adonai

vaya'aminu bAdonai

uveMoshe avdo.

Kama laku be'etzba?

Eser makot.

Emor me'atah,

beMitzrayim laku eser makot,

ve'al hayam laku chamishim makot.

¹ Some people think think that bad things happen in threes—or maybe tens; if they read this, they'll never want to count their disasters again! Seriously, though, however much the Egyptians suffered on land with the separate plagues, they suffered more on the sea, because that's where they drowned.

² This section continues to stress God's direct role in the story. Pharaoh's magicians managed to imitate the plagues of blood and frogs, but they couldn't imitate Moses' third trick, turning dust into lice. They conceded that Moses was backed by a higher power than theirs. See Exodus 8:15.

Rabbi Eliezer says,
How do we know that every plague
which the Holy, Blessed One
brought the Egyptians in Egypt
was *made up* of four plagues?¹
As the scripture says,

רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר אוֹמֵר
מִיָּיִן שֶׁכָּל־מַכָּה וּמַכָּה
שֶׁהָבִיא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא
עַל־הַמִּצְרִים בְּמִצְרַיִם
הָיְתָה שֶׁל אַרְבַּע מַכּוֹת
שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר

Rabi Eliezer omer,
Minayin shekol makah umakah
shehevi haKadosh baruch hu
al haMitzrim beMitzrayim
hayta shel arba makot.
Shene'emar,

Ps. 78:14 God will send against them blazing anger,
wrath, and fury, and trouble,
a pack of devils.
“Wrath” is one.
“And fury” makes two.
“And trouble” makes three.
“A pack of devils”² makes four.
So you can say,
in Egypt they suffered forty blows,
and on the sea they suffered 200.

יִשְׁלַח־בָּם חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ
עֲבָרָה וְזַעַם וְצָרָה
מִשְׁלַחַת מַלְאֲכֵי רָעִים
עֲבָרָה אַחַת
וְזַעַם שְׁתַּיִם
וְצָרָה שְׁלֹשׁ
מִשְׁלַחַת מַלְאֲכֵי רָעִים אַרְבַּע
אָמַר מֵעַתָּה
בְּמִצְרַיִם לָקוּ אַרְבָּעִים מַכּוֹת
וְעַל־הַיָּם לָקוּ מֵאַתֵּים מַכּוֹת

Yeshalach bam charon apo,
evra, vaza'am, vetzarah,
mishlachat mal'achei ra'im.
“Evra” achat.
“Vaza'am” shtayim.
“Vetzarah” shalosh.
“Mishlachat mal'achei ra'im” arba.
Emor me'atah,
BeMitzrayim laku arba'im makot,
ve'al hayam laku ma'taim makot.

¹ How can each plague be four plagues? It's not so hard to imagine this, if you think what it must have been like to suffer even one. Imagine the darkness—how the Egyptians must have banged into the pots in the kitchen and broken the prized vase from Aunt Nefertiti; and before you know it, little Amon goes padding through the house in his bare feet (“I’ve told you before, child, get your sandals on!”) and cuts his toe on a potsherd. Then there’s all the banging round looking for an ancient Bandida. Soon it’s easy to see how one plague or blow brings others with it.

² “A pack of devils” is literally “evil angels” or “a contingent of messengers of evils.”

Rabbi Akiva says,

How do we know that every plague
the Holy, Blessed One brought
the Egyptians in Egypt
was five plagues?

As *the scripture* says,

Ps 78:14 God will send against them blazing anger,
wrath, and fury, and trouble,
a pack of devils.

“Blazing anger” is one.

“Wrath” is two.

“And fury” is three.

“And trouble” makes four.

“A pack of devils”

makes five.

From this, *you can* say,

in Egypt they suffered fifty blows,
and on the sea

they suffered 250.¹

For how many stages of goodness

do we owe *thanks* to God who is everywhere!²

רַבִּי עֲקִיבָה אוֹמֵר

מִנַּיִן שֶׁכָּל־מַכָּה וּמַכָּה

שֶׁהָבִיא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא

עַל־הַמִּצְרִים בְּמִצְרַיִם

הָיְתָה שֶׁל חֲמֵשׁ מַכּוֹת

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר

יִשְׁלַח־בָּם חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ

עֲבָרָה וְזַעַם וְצָרָה

מִשְׁלַחַת מַלְאֲכֵי רָעִים

חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ אַחַת

עֲבָרָה שְׁתַּיִם

וְזַעַם שְׁלֹשׁ

וְצָרָה אַרְבַּע

מִשְׁלַחַת מַלְאֲכֵי רָעִים

חֲמֵשׁ

אֹמֵר מֵעַתָּה

בְּמִצְרַיִם לָקוּ חֲמִשִּׁים מַכּוֹת

וְעַל־הַיָּם

לָקוּ חֲמִשִּׁים וּמֵאֵתַיִם מַכּוֹת

כָּמָה מַעֲלֹת טוֹבוֹת

לְמָקוֹם עֲלֵינוּ

Rabi Akiva omer,

Minayin shekol makah umakah
shehevi haKadosh Baruch Hu
al haMitzrim beMitzrayim
hayta shel chamesh makot.

Shene'emar,

Yeshalach bam charon apo,
evra, veza'am, vetzarah,
mishlachat mal'achei ra'im.

“Charon apo” achat.

“Evra” shtayim.

“Vaza'am” shalosh.

“Vetzarah” arba.

“Mishlachat mal'achei ra'im”

chamesh.

Emor me'atah,

BeMitzrayim laku arba'im makot,
ve'al hayam

laku chamishim uma'taim makot.

Kama ma'alot tovot

laMakom alenu!

¹ Is this serious, or is Rabbi Akiva taking the argument into absurdity (Glatzer, 42)? If this is a joke, perhaps it is not intended to mock the discussions of other rabbis. Perhaps instead it springs from a deeply pious levity, a delight in toying with the mysteries upon which we speculate.

² Or, “For how many good stages are we indebted to the Everpresent.” The idea is that God, who is everywhere, did many good things for us, raising us higher and higher, and we owe God big-time!

Dayenu (Enough, already!) דִּינֵנוּ¹

Had God saved us, saved us, saved us,	אֱלֹהֵינוּ הוֹצִיאָנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם	Illu hotzi'anu miMitzrayim
Saved us from the nasty 'Gyptians	וְלֹא עָשָׂה בָּהֶם שְׂפָטִים	Velo asah vahem shefatim (2)
Without giving them conniptions,	דִּינֵנוּ	Dayenu

Dayenu

Had God given those Egyptians	אֱלֹהֵינוּ עָשָׂה בָּהֶם שְׂפָטִים	Illu asah vahem shefatim
Unforgettable conniptions,	וְלֹא עָשָׂה דִּין בְּאַלְהֵיהֶם	Velo asah din beloheihem (2)
Without smashing all their idols,	דִּינֵנוּ	Dayenu

Dayenu

Had God smashed up all their idols—	אֱלֹהֵינוּ עָשָׂה דִּין בְּאַלְהֵיהֶם	Illu asah din beloheihem
Pulverized those gal- and guy-dolls	וְלֹא הָרַג בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם	Velo harag bechoreihem (2)
—Without killing all their first-born,	דִּינֵנוּ	Dayenu

Dayenu

Had God killed all their first-born	אֱלֹהֵינוּ הָרַג בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם	Illu harag bechoreihem
(Made families high and low forlorn)	וְלֹא נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת-מָמוֹנָם	Velo natan lanu et mamonam (2)
But hadn't given us their riches,	דִּינֵנוּ	Dayenu

Dayenu

Had God given us their riches—	אֱלֹהֵינוּ נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת-מָמוֹנָם	Illu natan lanu et mamonam
Pharaoh's treasures now are Mitch's—	וְלֹא קָרַע לָנוּ אֶת-הֵימָם	Velo kara lanu et hayam (2)
But hadn't split the sea in two,	דִּינֵנוּ	Dayenu

Dayenu

Had God split the sea in two—	אֱלֹהֵינוּ קָרַע לָנוּ אֶת-הֵימָם	Illu kara lanu et hayam
We strolled across, I next to you—	וְלֹא הֶעְבִּירָנוּ	Velo he'eviranu
But hadn't dried the path across it,	בְּתוֹכוֹ בְּחֶרֶבָה	vetocho becharavah (2)

Dayenu

דִּינֵנוּ	Dayenu
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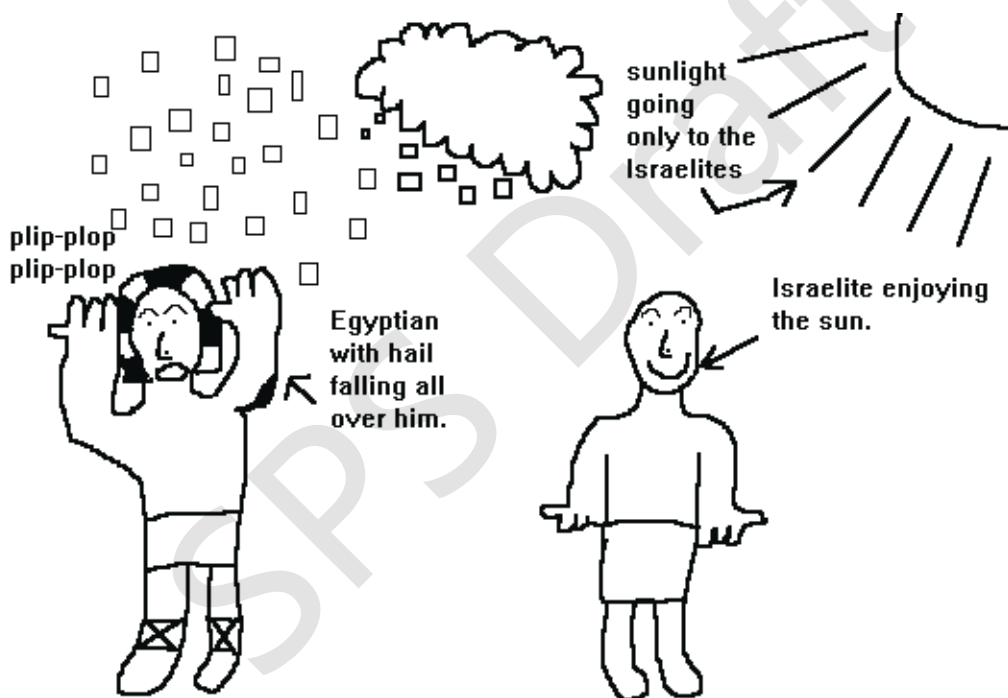
¹ “Dayenu” means “It would have been enough for us,” or “We couldn’t have asked for more.” Let’s face it, though: we would probably have perished unless we had enjoyed every one of the gracious miracles done for us, so in fact it wouldn’t have been enough. To convey the idea that we would have been content but we would not have survived, you might translate it, “We’d have died content.” You could almost fit this to the tune. Otherwise, you could just say, Dayenu!

Had <i>God</i> dried the path across it, Left no mud, no dripping faucet, But hadn't sunk our troubles ¹ in it, <i>Dayenu</i>	אלו האבירנו בתוכו בַּחֲרֵבָה ולא שקע צָרֵינוּ בְּתוֹכוֹ דינו	Illu he'eviranu vetocho becharavah Velo shikah tzarenu betocho (2) Dayenu
Had <i>God</i> sunk our troubles in it Without watching us each minute, Forty years of wandering guided, <i>Dayenu</i>	אלו שקע צָרֵינוּ בְּתוֹכוֹ ולא סִפֵּק צָרֵכֵנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה דינו	Illu shikah tzarenu betocho Velo sipek tzorkenu bamidbar arba'im shanah (2) Dayenu
Had <i>God</i> years of wandering guided, Soothed our troubles, cared and chided, Without feeding us with manna, <i>Dayenu</i>	אלו סִפֵּק צָרֵכֵנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה ולא האכילנו אֶת-הַמָּן דינו	Illu sipek tzorkenu bamidbar arba'im shanah Velo he'echilanu et haman (2) Dayenu
Had <i>God</i> fed us all that manna— Eat as much of it as you wanna— But had kept the Shabbat from us, <i>Dayenu</i>	אלו האכילנו אֶת-הַמָּן ולא-נָתַן לָנו אֶת-הַשַּׁבָּת דינו	Illu he'echilanu et haman Velo natan lanu et haShabat (2) Dayenu
Had <i>God</i> not kept Shabbat from us (A day of rest and not of commerce) But not brought us to the Mountain, <i>Dayenu</i>	אלו נָתַן לָנו אֶת-הַשַּׁבָּת ולא קָרְבָנוּ לְפָנֵי הַר סִינִי דינו	Illu natan lanu et haShabat Velo kervanu lifnei Har Sinai (2) Dayenu
Had <i>God</i> brought us to the Mountain (Blessings enough we had for countin') Without giving us the Torah, <i>Dayenu</i>	אלו קָרְבָנוּ לְפָנֵי הַר סִינִי ולא נָתַן לָנו אֶת-הַתּוֹרָה דינו	Illu kervanu lifnei Har Sinai Velo natan lanu et haTorah (2) Dayenu
Had <i>God</i> given us our law, A way to live and love and more, But left us on the banks of Jordan, ² <i>Dayenu</i>	אלו נָתַן לָנו אֶת-הַתּוֹרָה ולא הכניסנו לְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל דינו	Illu natan lanu et haTorah Velo hichnisanu le'erezt Yisrael (2) Dayenu

¹ Or “our oppressors.”² Literally, “and had not brought us into the land of Israel.”

Had God brought us o'er the Jordan	אלו הכניסנו לארץ ישראל	Illu hichnisanu le'erez Yisrael
(A kindness which	ולא בנה לנו	Velo vanah lanu
who could ask more than?)	את בית הבחירה	et beit hab'chirah (2)
Without building us the Temple,	דינו	Dayenu
Dayenu		

The Plague of Hail



How Much More, Then¹

How much more, then, do we owe to
the One who is always there² for
manifold goodness—
who took us out of Egypt,
and executed judgement on them,
and judged their gods,
and killed their first-born,
and gave us their wealth,
and parted the sea for us,
and brought us through it dry,
and drowned our oppressors in it,
and took care of us in the wilderness
for forty years,
and gave us manna to eat,
and gave us Shabbat,
and gathered us before Mount Sinai,
and gave us the Torah,
and brought us to the Land of Israel,
and built us the Temple,
to atone for all our sins.

עַל אַחַת כַּמָּה וְכַמָּה
טוֹבָה כְּפוּלָה וּמִכְפֻּלָּת
לַמָּקוֹם עָלֵינוּ
שֶׁהוֹצִיאָנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם
וַעֲשָׂה בָהֶם שְׁפָטִים
וַעֲשָׂה דִין בְּאֱלֹהֵיהֶם
וַהֲרַג בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם
וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת-מַמּוֹנָם
וְקָרַע לָנוּ אֶת-הַיָּם
וַהֲעִבִירָנוּ בְּתוֹכוֹ בַּחֲרָבָה
וְשָׁקַע צָרֵינוּ בְּתוֹכוֹ
וְסִפֵּק צָרְכָּנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר
אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה
וַהֲאָכִילָנוּ אֶת הַמָּן
וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת
וְקָרְבָנוּ לִפְנֵי הָרֹם סִינַי
וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת-הַתּוֹרָה
וַהֲכִינִסָנוּ לָאָרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל
וּבָנָה לָנוּ אֶת-בֵּית הַבְּחִירָה
לְכַפֵּר עַל-כָּל-עֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ

Al achat kamah vechamah
tovah chefula umechupelet
laMakom alenu—
shehotzianu miMitzrayim
ve'asah vahem shefatim
ve'asah din beloheihem
veharag bechoreihem
venatan lanu et mamonam
vekara lanu et hayam
vehe'eviranu vetocho becharava
veshika tzareinu betocho
vesipek tzorkeinu bamidbar
arba'im shana
vehe'echilanu et haman
venatan lanu et haShabat
vekervanu lifnei Har Sinai
venatan lanu et haTorah
vehichnisanu le'Eretz Yisra'el
uvanah lanu et beit habchira
lechaper al kol avonoteinu.

¹ The summary of God's deeds concludes the telling of the story. If you want to hear about Baby Moses, the Burning Bush, and so on, you'll have to add it yourself!

² In the Hagadah, the term מָקוֹם "makom" is often used for God. Literally, it means "place." The usual translation is "Omnipresent"—one who is present in every place. Perhaps this helps to stress the spatial nature of the Exodus, when we moved from one place to another, always under God's guidance and care.

Pesach, Matzah, and Maror פֶּסַח מַצָּה וּמָרוֹר

.....Now that we have retold the Pesach story, have we done our duty? By no means!

Rabbi Gamliel used to say,	רַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל הָיָה אוֹמֵר	Raban Gamliel haya omer,
Anyone who doesn't speak	כָּל-שֵׁלָא אָמַר	kol shelo amar
about these three things on Pesach	שְׁלוֹשָׁה דְּבָרִים אֵלּוּ בַּפֶּסַח	sheloshah devarim elu baPesach
has not fulfilled his duty.	לֹא יֵצֵא יְדֵי חוּבָתוֹ	lo yatza yedei chovato.
And these are the three:	וְאֵלּוּ הֵן	Ve'elu hen:
the Passover sacrifice, matzah, and maror.	פֶּסַח מַצָּה וּמָרוֹר	Pesach, matzah, umaror.

.....During the next passage, don't point at the bone¹ on the Seder plate

The Passover sacrifice	פֶּסַח	Pesach
which our ancestors used to eat	שֶׁהָיוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אוֹכְלִים	shehayu avoteinu ochlim
in the time when the Temple	בְּזִמַּן שֶׁבֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ	bizman shebeit hamikdash
was standing—what was it for?	הָיָה קָיָם עַל-שׁוּם מָה	haya kayam—al shum mah?
Because God passed over—	עַל-שׁוּם שֶׁפָּסַח	al shum shepasach
the Holy, Blessed One—	הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא	haKadosh baruch hu
the houses of our ancestors in Egypt	עַל-בֵּתֵינוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם	al batei avoteinu beMitzrayim.
when the Angel of Death killed the Egyptians' first-born.		

As the Torah says:

Ex 12:27 You shall say

“It is a Passover sacrifice to God,
because God passed over the houses
of the Children of Israel in Egypt,
when God struck Egypt
and saved our houses,
and the people bowed low in homage.”

שְׁנֵאֵמַר	Shene'emar,
וְאָמַרְתֶּם	Va'amartem,
זֶבַח-פֶּסַח הוּא לַיהוָה	“Zevach pesach hu lAdonai
אֲשֶׁר פָּסַח עַל-בֵּתֵינוּ	asher pasach al batei
בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִצְרַיִם	Venei Yisra'el beMitzrayim
בְּנוֹגְפוֹ אֶת-מִצְרַיִם	benogpo et Mitzrayim
וְאֶת-בֵּיתֵינוּ הִצִּיל	ve'et bateinu hitzil
וַיִּקְדּוּ הָעָם וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ	vayikod ha'am vayishtachavu.”

¹ “But,” you say, “surely we should point at the bone; it represents the Passover sacrifice, and that’s what we’re talking about.” Even so, we don’t point at the bone. Why not? Since the Temple exists no more, we cannot offer sacrifices, and we carefully avoid any gesture that might make the bone seem like a sacrifice. Rather than concentrating on this outward symbol—a bone on a plate—we can direct our attention inward, to our spiritual understanding of the meaning of the sacrifice, what we gained with the Temple and what we lost at its destruction.

..... *Hold up the middle (broken) matzah for all to see.*

This matzah which we eat—	מצה זו שאנו אוכלים	Matzah zo she'anu ochlim
What is it for?	על-שום מה	al shum mah?
Because there wasn't time	על-שום שלא הספיק	al shum shelo hispik
for our ancestors' dough	בצקם של-אבותינו	betzekam shel avoteinu
to become leavened	להחמיץ	lehachamitz
before the Ruler of the rulers of rulers,	עד-שנגלה עליהם	ad shenigla alehem
the Holy One (whom we bless),	מלך מלכי המלכים	melech malchei hamlachim
was revealed to them and saved them.	הקדוש ברוך הוא וגאלם	haKadosh baruch hu uge'alam.
<i>As the Torah says,</i>	שנאמר	Shene'emar,
<i>Ex 12:39</i> And they baked the dough	ויאפו את-הבצק	Vayofu et habatzek
which they had brought from Egypt	אשר הוציאו ממצרים	asher hotzi'u miMitzrayim
into unleavened cakes, because it didn't rise,	ענת מצות כי לא חמץ	ugot matzot ki lo chametz
because they were thrust out of Egypt,	כי-גרשו ממצרים	ki gorshu miMitzrayim
and they couldn't dawdle,	ולא יכלו להתמהמה	velo yachlu lehitmame'a
and they didn't even get food ready.	ונם-צדה לא-עשו להם	vegam tzeda lo asu lahem.

..... *Put down the matzah, and hold up the maror for all to see*

This maror that we eat—	מרור זה שאנו אוכלים	Maror zeh she'anu ochlim
what is it for?	על-שום מה	al shum mah?
It's because the Egyptians made our	על-שום שמררו המצרים	Al shum shemer'ru haMitzrim
ancestors' lives bitter	את-חיי אבותינו	et chayey avoteinu
in Egypt,	במצרים	beMitzrayim.
<i>As the Torah says,</i>	שנאמר	Shene'emar,
<i>Ex 1:14</i> And they made their lives bitter	וימררו את-חיייהם	Vayemar'ru et chayehem
with hard labor,	בעבדה קשה	ba'avodah kasha
with clay and bricks,	בחמר ובבנים	bechomer uvilvenim
and with all the work in the field;	ובכל-עבדה בשדה	uvechol avodah basadeh
all that labor	את כל-עבדתם	et kol avodatam
at which they made them toil with rigor.	אשר-עבדו בהם בפרך	asher avdu vahem befarech.

.....Put down the Maror

This is the central injunction to experience the redemption personally.

As time cycles round	בְּכָל-דּוֹר וָדוֹר	Bechol dor vador
Each person¹ is bound	חַיָּב אָדָם	chayav adam
Himself (herself) to view	לִרְאוֹת אֶת-עַצְמוֹ	lirot et atzmo
As if he (she) too	כְּאִילוּ הוּא	ke'ilu hu
Was among those led from Egypt (2)	יָצָא מִמִּצְרַיִם	yatzta miMitzrayim
As it is said (16)	שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר	Shene'emar
<i>Ex 13:8</i> And you shall tell your child	וְהִגַּדְתָּ לְבִנְךָ	"Vehigadta levincha
on that day, saying,	בְּיוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר	bayom hahu lemor,
"It's because of what God did for me	בְּעֲבוּר זֶה עָשָׂה יְהוָה לִי	'Ba'avur ze asa Adonai li
when I went out from Egypt." ²	בְּצֵאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם	betzeti miMitzrayim."
Not just our ancestors	לֹא אֶת-אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּלֻבָד	Lo et avoteinu bilvad
did God save (holy and blessed),	גָּעַל הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא	ga'al haKadosh baruch hu
but us too, <i>God</i> saved us with them.	אֶלָּא אֲף אֶתָּנוּ גָּאֵל עִמָּהֶם	ela af otanu ga'al imahem.
<i>As the Torah</i> says,	שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר	Shene'emar,
<i>Deut 6:23</i> And us, <i>God</i> led us out of there,	וְאוֹתָנוּ הוֹצִיא מִשָּׁם	Ve'otanu hotzi misham
so as to take us	לְמַעַן הֵבִיא אֹתָנוּ	Lema'an havi otanu
and give us the land	לָתֵת לָנוּ אֶת-הָאֶרֶץ	latet lanu et ha'aretz
<i>God</i> promised to our ancestors.	אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ.	asher nishba la'avoteinu.

¹ Because each of us was saved individually, each of us is bound to offer praise. Perhaps we're also allowed to do some things individually which were normally reserved for the professionals. Some aspects of the Passover sacrifice and reciting Hallel might fall into this category. Bokser (42-45) has much to say on this point.

² For the simple child, it's "us"—"God led us." But for the last child, it's "me"—"God did for me," using the same words as those thrown at the bad child. Why do the different children earn reactions which seem similar?

..... Cover the matzot, and lift up your cup
 If you're interested in the fours of the Hagadah—four children, four cups of wine, and so on—you'll notice here
 nine expressions of praise, and five expressions of redemption. Don't forget the Ten Plagues.

And so we are bound	לְפִיכַח אֲנַחְנוּ חַיָּאִיִּם	Lefichach anachnu chayavim
to thank, hail, praise,	לְהוֹדוֹת לְהַלֵּל לְשַׁבַּח	lehodot lehallel leshabe'ach
glorify, exalt, honor,	לְפָאֵר לְרוֹמֵם לְהַדָּר	lefa'er leromem lehader
bless, acclaim, and salute	לְבָרֵךְ לְעֹלֶה וּלְקַלֵּס	levarech le'aleh ul'kaless
the One who did—	לְמִי שָׁעָשָׂה	lemi she'asa
for our ancestors and for us—	לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ וְלָנוּ	la'avoteinu velanu
all these miracles.	אֶת-כָּל-הַנִּסִּים הָאֵלֵּינוּ	et kol hanisim ha'elu
God led us from slavery to freedom,	הוֹצִיאָנוּ מֵעֲבָדוֹת לְחֵירוֹת	hotzi'anu me'avdut lecherut
from sorrow to joy,	מִיָּגוֹן לְשִׂמְחָה	miyagon lesimcha
from mourning to festival,	מֵאֵבֶל לְיוֹם טוֹב	me'evel leyom tov
from darkness to bright light,	וּמֵאֲפֶלֶת לְאוֹר גָּדוֹל	ume'afela le'or gadol
and from bondage to redemption.	וּמִשְׁעָבֻד לְגִאֻלָּה	umishibud lig'ula.
Now let us raise	וְנֹאמַר לְפָנָיו	Venomar lefanav
Our voices in songs of praise. ¹	שִׁירָה חֲדָשָׁה	shira chadasha
Halleluyah!	הַלְלוּיָהּ	halleluyah!

..... Put your cup down and uncover the matzot.
 Hallel comes next; it begins before the meal and continues after it.

¹ Literally, “And let’s sing before God a new song,”—a way to encourage any kind of harmonious creativity to share the joy of the Seder experience.

Hallel (Part 1) הלל י

Moshivi: Psalm 113²

¹ Halleluyah, God's servants, give praise! Praise God's reputation!	הללויה הללו עבדי יהוה הללו את־שם יהוה	Halleluyah Hallelu avdei Adonai hallelu et shem Adonai,
² Now and forevermore God's name be blessed.	יהי שם יהוה מברך מעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם מִמִּזְרַח־שֶׁמֶשׁ	yehi shem Adonai mevorach me'ata ve'ad olam; mimizrach shemesh
³ From where the sun begins its course, Until at last it comes to rest, God's name be praised.	עַד־מְבוֹאוֹ מְהֻלָּל שֵׁם יְהוָה רַם עַל־כָּל־גּוֹיִם יְהוָה	ad mevo'o mehulal shem Adonai. Ram al kol goyim Adonai,
⁴ Above all peoples God is high, God's glory soars above the sky.	עַל הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ מִי כִיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַמַּגְבִּיחַ לַשָּׁבֶת	al hashamayim kevodo; mi kAdonai Eloheinu, hamagbihi lashavet,
⁵ Who is like our sovereign God, whose throne is high above the sky, ⁶ who deigns to peer on us down here? ³	הַמַּשְׁפִּילִי לְרֹאוֹת בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ מְקִימִי מֵעָפָר דָּל	hamashpili lir'ot bashamayim uva'aretz. Mekimi me'afar dal,
⁷ God lifts the pauper from the dust, from ashes brings the mourner, ⁸ to seat him with the upper crust, in the big givers' corner. ⁴	מֵאֲשָׁפֹת יָרִים אֶבְיוֹן לְהוֹשִׁיבִי עִם־נְדִיבִים עִם נְדִיבֵי עָמוֹ	me'ashpot yarim evyon lehoshivi im nedivim, im nedivei amo.
⁹ God makes the childless woman a joyful mother of children; Halleluyah!	מוֹשִׁיבִי עֲקֶרֶת חַבַּיִת אִם־חֲבָנִים שְׂמֵחָה הִלְלוּיָהּ	Moshivi akeret habayit em habanim semecha: Halleluyah!

¹ We are familiar with Hallel, psalms 113-118, from our festival morning prayers. But reciting Hallel was also part of the passover sacrificial ritual in Temple days (Mishnah Pesachim 5:7).

² For this psalm, at our Seders we usually speed through the Hebrew and sing the last couplet.

Some people may find verse 9 disturbingly anti-feminist, but earlier times children—especially sons—were a woman's dearest wish, and the Psalmist says God fulfills our dearest wishes.

³ Literally, "Who becomes lower in order to look on heaven and earth"—God is so very high that even the heights of barely deserve God's lofty attention.

⁴ It would be more literal to translate verses 7 and 8, "The pauper in the dust, God stands him upright. The mourner in ashes, God lifts him up, to seat him with the big givers in the community." אֶבְיוֹן is a magnanimous person as well as brand of cheap Israeli cigarettes.

Betzeit Yisrael: Psalm 114¹

¹ When Jacob's house left Egypt land
*(They had been there too long!)*²
They left behind a place where people
 Spoke in foreign tongue.³

² Judah was *God's* holy place—
A place God found among 'em.
 Israel was in God's own grasp,
 And *to their home God* brung 'em.

³ The sea saw it and tried to split,
 Upstream the Jordan ran.

⁴ Like lusty rams the mountains pranced,
 Hills skipped around like lambs.⁴

⁵ **What's got you on the run,**
What is your problem, ocean?
What's got you cringing, Jordan,
That backward is your motion?

⁶ **What's put you all a-jitter—**
You mountains jump like rams!
What's put you all a-skitter,
Hills gambolling like lambs?⁵

בְּצֵאת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם Betzeit Yisra'el miMitzrayim,
 בֵּית יַעֲקֹב מֵעַם לֹעֵז beit Ya'akov me'am lo'ez,

הָיְתָה יְהוּדָה לְקֹדֶשׁ hayta Yehudah lekodshoh,
 יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמְּשֻׁלוֹתָיו Yisrael mamshelotav;

הַיָּם רָאָה וַיָּנֹס hayam ra'ah vayanos,
 הַיַּרְדֵּן יָסַב לְאַחֹר haYarden yisov le'achor;
 הַהָרִים רָקְדוּ כְּאַיִלִּים heharim rakdu che'eilim
 גִּבְעוֹת כִּבְנֵי־צֹאן geva'ot kivnei tzon.

מַה־לָּךְ הָיָם Mah lecha hayam
 כִּי תָנוּס ki tanoos,

הַיַּרְדֵּן haYarden
 תִּסֹּב לְאַחֹר tisov le'achor?

הַהָרִים Heharim
 תִּרְקְדוּ כְּאַיִלִּים tirkedu che'eilim
 גִּבְעוֹת geva'ot
 כִּבְנֵי־צֹאן kivnei tzon?

¹ In our house, we usually sing the Hebrew (you know, “Da da da da da” and so on), but the English verses would work with “Let My People Go.” You’d have to add your own chorus, though. For the rest of Psalm 114, you can sing the English to the same tune as the Hebrew.

² How long they spent in Egypt is a good topic for discussion.

³ “When Israel came out of Egypt, *when* Jacob’s descendants left a people with a foreign language”

⁴ Literally, “When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob out of a people who spoke a strange language, Judah became *God's* holy thing, Israel *God's* possession. The sea saw it and fled; the Jordan ran backwards. The mountains danced like rams, the hills like lambs.”

⁵ “What’s wrong, sea, that you run away? / Jordan, that you turn back? / Mountains, that you dance like rams? / Hills, like lambs?”

⁷ At the presence of the Boss¹

The fearful earth will shiver

At the presence of the Boss,

God of Jacob, it will quiver.

⁸ God made a pool of water

From rock that flanked a mountain;

That brittle flinty stone

Became a running fountain.²

מִלִּפְנֵי אֲדוֹן Milifnei Adon

חֹלִי אֶרֶץ chuli aretz,

מִלִּפְנֵי milifnei

אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב Elo'ah Ya'akov—

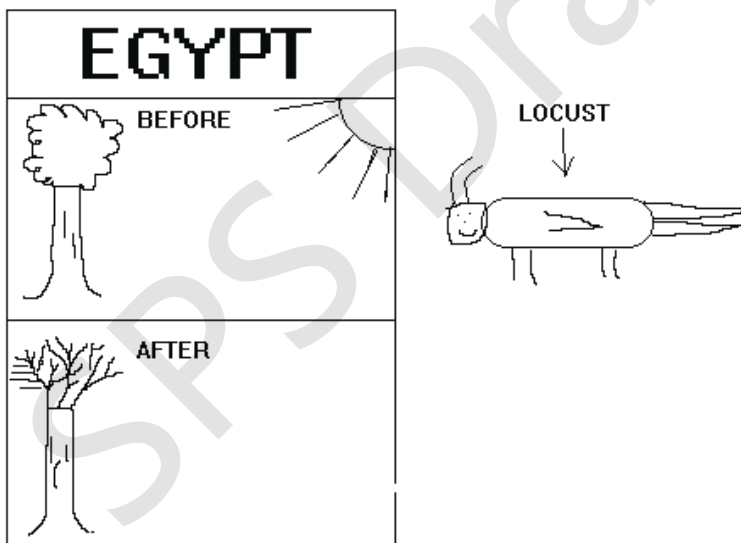
הַהֹפְכִי הַצּוּר Ha'hofchi hatzur

אֲגַם-מַיִם agam mayim,

חֲלָמִישׁ Chalamish

לִמְעֵינֹ-מַיִם lemay'no mayim.

The Plague of Locusts



¹ “Adon” in Hebrew is for someone in charge; in our society, that’s the Boss.

² “Before God, dance, O earth, / Before the God of Jacob, / Who turned the rock into a pool of water, / The flinty rock into a fountain.”

Blessing to Finish First Part of Hallel

Lift your cup

We bless you, Sovereign God	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי	Baruch ata Adonai
Ruler of the universe,	אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Eloheinu melech ha'olam
who saved us	אֲשֶׁר גָּאֵלָנוּ	asher ge'alanu
and saved our ancestors	וְגָאֵל אֶת-אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֶת-אִמּוֹתֵינוּ ¹	vega'al et avoteinu ve'et imoteinu
from Egypt,	מִמִּצְרַיִם	miMitzrayim
and brought us on this night	וְהִגִּיעָנוּ הַלֵּילָה הַזֶּה	vehigi'anu halayla hazeh
to eat matzah and maror.	לֶאֱכֹל-בּוֹ מַצָּה וּמָרֹר	le'echol-bo matzah umaror.
Just so, ruling God	כֵּן יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Ken Adonai Eloheinu
and God of our ancestors,	וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ	vElohei avoteinu ve'imoteinu
bring us to other holidays	הִגִּיעָנוּ לְמוֹעֲדִים	hagi'enu lemo'adim
and foot-festivals	וְלִרְגָלִים אֲחֵרִים	velirgalim acherim
(may they come to us in peace!),	הַבָּאִים לְקִרְאָתָנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם	haba'im likratenu leshalom,
glad to be building your city	שְׂמֵחִים בְּבִנְיַן עִירְךָ	semachim bevinyan irecha
and happy in your service.	וְשִׂשִׁים בְּעַבֹדְתְּךָ	vesasim ba'avodatecha.
And there we shall eat	וְנֹאכַל שָׁם	Venochal sham
from the sacrifices and Pesach offerings—	מִן הַזְבָּחִים וּמִן הַפִּסְחִים	min hazvachim umin haPesachim
their blood will reach	אֲשֶׁר יִגִּיעַ דָּמָם	asher yagi'a damam
the sides of your altar for your delight—	עַל-קִיר מִזְבֶּחְךָ לְרִצּוֹן	al kir mizbach'cha leratzon,
and we'll thank you with a new song	וְנוֹדֶה לְךָ שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ	venodeh lecha shir chadash
for setting us free and saving our souls.	עַל-גְּאֻלָּתָנוּ וְעַל פְּדוּת נַפְשֵׁנוּ	al ge'ulatenu ve'al pedut nafshenu.
Blessed are you, Ruler, who saved Israel.	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי גָּאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל	Baruch ata Adonai ga'al Yisra'el.
We bless you, Sovereign God	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי	Baruch ata Adonai
Who rules eternal space and time,	אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Eloheinu melech ha'olam
Creator of the grapevine's fruit,	בּוֹרֵא פְרֵי הַגֶּפֶן	Boreh peri hagafen.
From which we make this wine.		

¹ Those who wish will include the reference to the Matriarchs, the Mothers. The word is added as an option in prayer formulas. Some will find that “avoteinu” (literally, “fathers,” though the plural inflection is feminine) includes all parents; others will want to include “imoteinu” for the mothers; and still others will say that God’s relationship with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob meant something different from God’s relationship with anyone else, ever.

.....Lean on your left and drink the second cup

Blessings to Begin the Meal

Washing Hands רְחִצָּה

.....Everyone, wash hands in the traditional manner

To wash in the traditional manner, remove your rings, pour water from a vessel three times over the right hand, then the left; recite the blessing as you dry your hands. Of course, customs differ among families.

We bless you, Sovereign God,	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי	Baruch ata Adonai
Ruler of endless lands	אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
Who made us holy with your rules	אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו	asher kidshanu bemitzvotav
And said, "Go wash your hands!"	וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת יָדַיִם	vetzivanu al netilat yadayim.

First Berachah for Matzah מוֹצֵיא

.....The leader takes the two whole matzot and the half in the middle and says this blessing

The leader says this blessing on behalf of everyone present. It's the normal blessing for bread; the next blessing will be the special one for matzah.

We bless you, Sovereign God,	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי	Baruch ata Adonai
Ruler of this endless spread,	אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
Who brings out of the ground	הַמוֹצֵיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ	Hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz.
All of our food, especially bread.		

Let the lower matzah slip from the hands and say this blessing. Then give each person a piece of the upper and the middle matzot to eat as a sandwich. To make sure each person gets enough matzah to fulfil the commandment, give just a little from the upper and middle, and add more from the box.

Hint: eat the size of an olive (some say a mammoth olive.)

Special Berachah for Matzah מִצָּה

.....Once you have your matzah, recline and eat it—don't just nibble.....

If it tastes dry and awful, remember that it's the bread of affliction. Don't be afraid to blunt your appetite for the meal: our obligation is to eat matzah and maror; soup, chicken, kugel, and vegetables are optional.

We bless you, Sovereign God	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי	Baruch ata Adonai
Who guides this infinite continuum,	אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Eloheinu melech ha'olam
You made us holy with your rules	אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו	asher kidshanu bemitzvotav
and said "Eat lotsa matzah!" Yum.	וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מִצָּה	vetzivanu al achilat matzah.

.....Now recline and eat your matzah

Maror מרור

Think you're up to eating a mammoth-jumbo piece of maror? Just peel some of that obscene-looking horseradish root, grate it fresh, cover it so you lose none of its powerful pungency, dip it in charoset, shake off excess charoset, pop it in your mouth, and suffer! (Of course, you say the blessing first.) Don't recline. We're supposed to eat the size of an olive. That's a lot of maror.

We bless you, Sovereign God	ברוך אתה יי	Baruch ata Adonai
Who rules eternal time and space,	אלהינו מלך העולם	Eloheinu melech ha'olam
Who made us holy with the rules	אשר קדשנו במצותיו	Asher kidshanu bemitzvotav
About this bitter taste.	וצוננו על-אכילת מרור	vetzivanu al achilat maror.

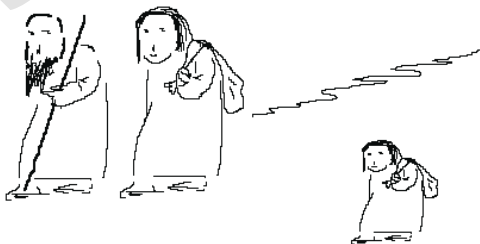
Hillel Sandwich כורף

Now we eat matzah and maror together. Use the third matzah (there's probably nothing left from the other two, anyway), and the usual quantity of maror, dipped in charoset and shaken off.

Stick it on the matzah and chow down.

Let's think about the Temple,	זכר למקדש כהלל	Zecher lemikdash keHillel:
and Hillel's practice follow.	כן עשה הלל בזמן	Ken asa Hillel bizman
The Pesach meal in Temple days,	שבית המקדש היה קים	sheBet Hamikdash haya kayam.
so Hillel used to eat it:	היה כורף	Haya corech
He'd put some Maror on the meat;	פסח מצה ומרור	Pesach matzah umaror
with matzah he would swallow.	ואוכל ביחד	ve'ochel beyachad,
The rule ^{Num 9:11} "Eat meat with bread and herbs,"	לקים מה שנאמר	lekayem mah shene'emar:
so Hillel did complete it.	על-מצות ומרורים יאכלהו	"al matzot um'rorim yochluhu."

If you've eaten the recommended quantities you've probably eaten the equivalent of two boards of matzah, a couple of leaves of romaine lettuce, and a big gob of horseradish, with some charoset. And don't forget the parsley or lettuce you dipped way back at the beginning.



Eat the Meal שולחן עורף

Give everyone a boiled egg and some broccoli, they'll have their protein and their vegetables, and you're ready for the Afikomen.

Well, if you must eat, and if you want your guests to be able to eat, sing, and still have energy for the rest of the proceedings, here's a word of advice which is routinely ignored: make it simple. Make few courses, few dishes, and those easy to serve.

Sliced beef is quicker than turkey. Gefilte fish and soup are nice—but you can save them for another meal. Salad you already had. One stodge should suffice: you don't need stuffing and kugel and potatoes.

Eat the usual monstrous quantity of matzah to finish up the meal, along with a piece from the Afikomen, which was hidden away earlier.

If you allowed the children to hide the Afikomen, you are now at their mercy. Until they produce it, you can't go on. Negotiating with them can become tedious, so it's wise to prepare a little gift for each of the likely troublemakers. Wrap the gift, so they can't tell what's inside; otherwise, you risk hearing, "A candy bar is very nice, Dad. Add a [insert name of wildly expensive toy], and you'll probably get the Afikomen."

Instead of negotiating, you can outwit the children by stealing the Afikomen when they aren't looking, or—my favorite ploy of all—by hiding a fake Afikomen in advance. A piece of matzah wrapped up in a paper napkin: who can tell one from another? And you should see their jaws drop when they have hidden it, but they see you reach under the table muttering, "Afikomen... Afikomen...ah, here it is."

Afikomen' צפון

.....After eating the Afikomen, fill the third cup

¹ I used to think that "afikomen" came from the Greek meaning something like "we went home" (first person plural aorist from ἀφικνεσθαι), but it's hard to be sure with Greek verbs since they are a tense and moody lot, and I was never entirely happy with my interpretation. But then I thought: Look, the word comes from the Mishna, and the Mishna doesn't have vowels; maybe different vowels fit the Hebrew consonants. אפיקומן: you could begin with A or E followed by F or P, with a last vowel of A or E, perhaps even O. So now I think it's from the Greek ἐπὶ κομῶν, "epi komon"—ἐπὶ (upon/extra, a preposition that can take the accusative case) and κομῶν (revelry, in the accusative case). Some people think Greek banquets would sometimes end with tipsy revellers roaming the streets looking for another party to crash. The Jerusalem Talmud says (and I think they knew more Greek than the Babylonians): שלא יהא עומד מחבורה זו ונכנס לחבורה אחרת, "that one would not stand up from this group and enter a different group." In Temple times, people would register with a group for the Passover sacrifice. This would ensure you'd have enough people to eat the lamb, and everyone would have enough. So once you're registered with your group, after the sacrificial meal you're not supposed to go and join another group: that would be extra revelry. I should call it the Epikomon, but then nobody would know what to look for; it would be forever lost. However, some say the idolatrous Greeks are totally irrelevant (Sotah 49b), and Afikoman comes from Aramaic אפיקו מנייכו on Pesachim 119b, "Let's move on (to another party)," or "Bring out the goodies (Did you pick up your Chocolate Oblivion?)."

Cup 3: Grace after Meals בְּרַכַּת הַמִּזוֹן

*Did you fill the third cup yet?*Psalm 126¹

A song of going up:

When God returns the Jews,

Takes us back to Zion,

We'll marvel at the news.

Our talk will all be laughter,

Words can't tell our mirth;

No tongue can speak our joy,

No language upon earth.²

Among the other folk they'll say,

“What God has done for them is great.” הַגִּדִּיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִם־אֱלֹהֵי

God's done an awful lot for us;

הַגִּדִּיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ

Filled with joy, we celebrate.

הַיִּינוּ שְׂמֵחִים

Take us back, God, back to our old land

שׁוּבָה יְהוָה אֶת־שְׁבִיתֵנוּ

Like streams returning to the arid sand.

כַּאֲפִיקִים בְּנָגַב

In mourning though they sow their seed,

הַזֹּרְעִים בְּדַמְעָה

In happiness they'll reap their yield.

בְּרִנָּה יִקְצְרוּ

To sow the seed, bowed with grief

הָלוֹךְ יֵלֵךְ וּבִכָּה

The plowman plods his weary way;

נָשָׂא מִשְׁעַד־הַזֶּרַע

His heart will surely feel relief

בֹּאֲיָבוֹא בְּרִנָּה

Bringing in the sheaves on harvest day.

נָשָׂא אֲלֻמֹּתָיו

Shir hama'a lot:

Beshuv Adonai

et shivat Tziyon

hayinu kecholmim.

Az yimaleh

sechok pinu

ulshonenu rina.

Az yomru vagoyim,

“Higdil Adonai la'asot im eileh.”

Higdil Adonai la'asot imanu;

hayinu semechim.

Shuva Adonai et shevitenu

ka'afikim banegev.

Hazorim bedima

berina yiktzoru.

Haloch yelech uvacho

no'se meshech hazara,

bo yavo verina

no'se alumotav.

¹ Glatzer omits this psalm; other Hagadot include it.² “Then will-be-filled *with* joy our mouth, and our tongue with joy.”

.....Some add these verses from different psalms

<i>Ps. 145:21</i> In praise of God my mouth will speak,	תְּהִלַּת יְהוָה יְדַבֵּר־פִּי	Tehillat Adonia yedaber pi
And every living thing will bless	וַיְבָרֶךְ כָּל־בָּשָׂר	vivarech kol basar
God's holy name for evermore.	שֵׁם קִדְשׁוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד	shem kodsho le'olam va'ed.
<i>Ps. 115:18</i> And as for us, we shall bless God	וְאַנְחֲנוּ נִבְרָךְ יְהוָה מִעַתָּה	Va'anachnu nevarech Yah
From now for ever. Halleluyah!	וְעַד־עוֹלָם הַלְלוּ־יָהּ	me'atah ve'ad olam, halleluyah!
<i>Ps. 115:1</i> Thank our God, for God is good,	הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־טוֹב	Hodu lAdonai ki tov
God's kindness forever stays.	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	ki le'olam chasdo.
<i>Ps. 106:2</i> Who can tell God's mighty deeds,	מִי יַמַּלֵּל גִּבּוּרֹת יְהוָה	Mi yemalel gevurot Adonai,
Or set to words all of God's praise?	יִשְׁמִיעַ כָּל־תְּהִלָּתוֹ	yashmi'a kol tehilato?

Invitation to Say Grace

When three or more adults have eaten together, one invites the others to join in prayer.

.....The leader begins

Friends, let's give thanks!	חֲבֵרַי נִבְרָךְ	Chaverai, nevarech!
<i>Friends respond, and the leader repeats</i>		
<i>Ps. 113:2</i> May God's name be blessed	יְהִי שֵׁם יְהוָה מְבָרָךְ	Yehi shem Adonai mevorach
now and forever.	מִעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם	me'ata ve'ad olam.
<i>The leader continues (add "Eloheinu" if 10 or more Jewish adults are at the table)</i>		
With the approval of my friends,	בְּרִשּׁוֹת חֲבֵרַי	Bir'shut chaverai,
let's bless our God, the one	נִבְרָךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ	nevarech Eloheinu
who provides our food.	שֶׁאַכְלָנוּ מִשְׁלוֹ	she'achalnu mishelo.
<i>Friends respond, and the leader repeats (add "Eloheinu" when 10 Jewish adults gather)</i>		
Bless our God, the one	בָּרוּךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Baruch Eloheinu
who provides our food,	שֶׁאַכְלָנוּ מִשְׁלוֹ	she'achalnu mishelo
and by whose goodness we live.	וּבְטוֹבוֹ חַיִּינוּ	uv'tuvo chayinu.

All together

Blessed is God, blessed is God's name!	בָּרוּךְ הוּא וּבָרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ	Baruch hu uvaruch shemo!
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1. God the Provider¹

We bless you Sovereign God,

Who rules eternal time and space

Who kindly feeds the world entire

In mercy, love, and grace—

God Ps. 136:25 gives each species food to eat

In endless magnanimity.

God never makes us go

makes us go without (2)

—*God* is good beyond infinity.

For the sake of *God's* powerful name

Because each one *God* does

feed and sustain

And does all of us good,

and gives all of us food

(Every creature on earth

by *God* was given birth),

Blessed are you, Sovereign God,

Who feeds the whole wide world.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי

אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם

הַזֶּן אֶת-הָעוֹלָם כָּלֹ בְּטוֹבוֹ

בְּחֶן בְּחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים

הוּא נֹתֵן לֶחֶם לְכָל-בָּשָׂר

כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדִּי

וּבְטוֹבוֹ הַגָּדוֹל

תָּמִיד לֹא-חָסַר לָנוּ

וְאֵל יַחֲסֹר לָנוּ

מָזוֹן לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד

בְּעֲבוּר שְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל

כִּי הוּא אֵל זֶן

וּמַפְרִינֵס לְכָל

וּמְטִיב לְכָל

וּמְכִין מָזוֹן

לְכָל בְּרִיּוֹתָיו

אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי

הַזֶּן אֶת-הַכֹּל

Baruch ata Adonai

Elohenu melech ha'olam,

hazan et ha'olam kulo betuvo

bechen bechesed uv'rachamim.

Hu "noten lechem lechol basar

ki le'olam chasdo."

Uv'tuvo hagadol

tamid lo chasar lanu

ve'al yech'sar lanu

mazon le'olam va'ed.

Ba'avur shemo hagadol

ki hu El zan

um'farnes lakol,

umetiv lakol

umechin mazon

lechol beriyotav

asher barah.

Baruch atah Adonai

hazan et hakol.

¹ Grace after Meals consists of four blessings. In the first, we thank God for providing food for all creatures. You may ask, "But what about the starving masses?" Some would answer that, in general, the amount of food is adequate; but for economic or political reasons we humans often prevent it from reaching those in need.

Why does God provide food? Here, it is because of God's kindness, and for the sake of God's reputation, not for our merit. So if ever we are able to feed the hungry, we should not wait to find out whether they are deserving.

2. For The Land

*In the second blessing, for the land of Israel, we offer thanks for the many ways
in which God has fulfilled God's commitment to us.*

We thank you, Sovereign God,	נוֹדֶה לְךָ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Nodeh lecha Adonai Eloheinu
because you willed ¹	עַל שֶׁנִּחַלְתָּ	al shehin'chalta
to our ancestors	לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ וְלֵאֲמֹתֵינוּ	la'avoteinu ule'imoteinu
a land pleasant, good, and spacious,	אֶרֶץ חֲמֵדָה טוֹבָה וְרַחֲבָה	eretz chemda tova ur'chava
and because you brought us out	וְעַל שֶׁהוֹצַאתָנוּ	ve'al shehotzetanu
(Sovereign God)	יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Adonai Elohenu
from the land of Egypt	מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם	me'eret Mitzrayim
and saved us from the house of slaves	וּפְדִיתָנוּ מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים	ufeditanu mibet avadim
and because of the contract	וְעַל בְּרִיתְךָ	ve'al berit'cha
which you sealed in our flesh ²	שֶׁחַתַּמְתָּ בְּבָשָׂרֵינוּ	shechatamta bivsareinu
and because of the Torah	וְעַל תּוֹרַתְךָ	ve'al Torat'cha
which you taught us	שֶׁלִּמְדָתָנוּ	shelimadtanu
and because of the statutes	וְעַל חֻקֶּיךָ	ve'al chukecha
which you made known to us	שֶׁהוֹדַעְתָּנוּ	shehodatanu
and because of the life	וְעַל חַיִּים	ve'al chayim
of grace and love	חֵן וְחֶסֶד	chen vachesed
which you granted us	שֶׁחֻנַּנְתָּנוּ	shechonantanu
and because of the eating of food	וְעַל אֲכִילַת מָזוֹן	ve'al achilat mazon
through which you nourish	שֶׁאַתָּה זֵן	sha'ata zan
and sustain us forever—	וּמִפְרִיָּס אוֹתָנוּ תָּמִיד	umfarnes otanu tamid—
Every day, at every time,	בְּכָל-יוֹם וּבְכָל-עֵת	Bechol yom, uv'chol et,
and in every hour.	וּבְכָל-שָׁעָה	uvechol sha'ah.

¹ “Gave as an inheritance.”

² Some say “in our heart / בְּלִבֵּינוּ / belibeinu”; this egalitarian alternative recalls Deuteronomy 30:6.

And please don't let us have to beg

O ruling God, *our only God*,

Not for gifts from hands

of flesh and blood,

Not for gifts and not for loans from men;

We'd rather get it at your hand—

it's jam packed, it's open,

It's holy and expansive;

So we won't be ashamed,

And we won't be disgraced

To the end of time.

וְנֹא אֶל-תִּצְרִיכֵנוּ

יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ

לֹא לִידֵי

מַתְנַת בָּשָׂר וְדָם

וְלֹא לִידֵי הַלּוֹאֲתָם

כִּי אִם לְיָדְךָ

הַמְּלֵאָה הַפְּתוּחָה

הַקְּדוּשָׁה וְהַרְחֵבָה

שֶׁלֹא נִבּוֹשׁ

וְלֹא נִכְלָם

לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד

Vena al tatzrichenu,

Adonai Eloheinu,

lo lidei

matnat basar vadam,

velo lidei halva'atam;

ki im leyadcha

hamle'ah, haptucha,

hakdosha vehar'chava,

shelo nevosha

velo nikalem

le'olam va'ed.

..... On Shabbat, include this shaded paragraph

Favor this prayer, Sovereign God,

and give us success in your rules,

and in the rules of the seventh day,

this great and holy Sabbath.

For this is a great and

holy day in your eyes,

a time to rest and relax lovingly,

according to the rules you favored.

Grant us your favor,

Sovereign God,

to have no trouble, grief, or sorrow

on our day of rest.

And show us, Sovereign God,

by consoling Zion your city

and rebuilding Jerusalem,

your holy city, that you command¹

both salvation and consolation.

רִצֵּה וְהַחֲלִיצֵנוּ

יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ

וּבְמִצְוַת יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי

הַשַּׁבָּת הַגָּדוֹל וְהַקְּדוֹשׁ הַזֶּה

כִּי יוֹם זֶה גָּדוֹל

וְקְדוֹשׁ הוּא לְפָנֶיךָ

לְשִׁבְתָּ-בוֹ וּלְנוּחַ בּוֹ

בְּאַהֲבָה כְּמִצְוַת רְצוֹנְךָ

וּבְרְצוֹנְךָ הַנִּיחַ לָנוּ

יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ

שֶׁלֹא תִהְיֶה צָרָה וְיָגוֹן וְאַנְחָה

בְּיוֹם מְנוּחָתֵנוּ

וְהִרְאָנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ

בְּנִחָמַת צִיּוֹן עִירְךָ

וּבְבִנְיַן יְרוּשָׁלַיִם

עִיר קְדֻשָּׁךְ כִּי אַתָּה הוּא

בַּעַל הַיְשׁוּעוֹת וּבַעַל הַנִּחְמוֹת

Retzeh vehachalitzenu

Adonai Eloheinu bemitzvotecha,

uv'mitzvat yom hashvi'i

haShabbat hagadol vehakadosh hazeh.

Ki yom zeh gadol

vekadosh hu lefanecha,

lishbot bo velanu'ach bo

be'ahavah kemitzvat retzonecha.

Uvirtszoncha hani'ach lanu

Adonai Eloheinu,

shelo teheh tzara veyagon va'anacha

beyom menuchatenu.

Vehar'enu Adonai Eloheinu

benechamat Tziyon irecha

uv'vinyan Yerushalayim,

ir kodshecha, ki ata hu

ba'al hay'shu'ot uva'al hanechamot.

¹ Literally, “because you are the ‘Ba’al’ of salvations and consolations.” “Ba’al” often means “master” as in “master of the house”: it’s the person in charge.

For Passover

God and God of
 our ancestors,
 may there rise, approach and reach you,
 be seen, favored, and heard,
 noticed and remembered—
 thoughts and memories of us,
 with memories of our ancestors,
 and memories of the Messiah
 (your servant David's descendant),
 and memories of Jerusalem
 your holy city,
 and memories of all your people
 the house of Israel—
 for deliverance, good,
 grace, kindness, mercy,
 life and peace,
 on this festival of matzah
 Remember us today for good,
 Sovereign God;
 and think of us for blessing;
 and save us for life.
 And with a word of salvation and mercy
 take pity on us, be gracious to us,
 have mercy on us, and save us;
 for our eyes are on you,
 because you are God, a ruler
 both gracious and compassionate.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי
 אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ
 יַעֲלֶה וַיָּבֹא וַיַּגִּיעַ
 וַיֵּרָא וַיִּרְצֶה וַיִּשְׁמַע
 וַיִּפְקֹד וַיִּזְכֹּר
 זִכְרוֹנֵנוּ וּפְקֻדוֹנֵנוּ
 וְזִכְרוֹן אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ
 וְזִכְרוֹן מָשִׁיחַ
 בֶּן דָּוִד עֲבֹדְךָ
 וְזִכְרוֹן יְרוּשָׁלַיִם
 עִיר קֹדְשְׁךָ
 וְזִכְרוֹן כָּל-עַמְּךָ
 בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְפָנֶיךָ
 לְפִלִּיטָה לְטוֹבָה
 לְחַן וּלְחֶסֶד וּלְרַחֲמִים
 לְחַיִּים וּלְשָׁלוֹם
 בְּיוֹם חַג הַמַּצּוֹת הַזֶּה
 זָכְרֵנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 בּוֹ לְטוֹבָה
 וּפְקֻדְנוּ בּוֹ לְבִרְכָּה
 וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ בּוֹ לְחַיִּים
 וּבְדָבָר יְשׁוּעָה וּרַחֲמִים
 חוּס וְחַנּוּן
 וְרַחֵם עָלֵינוּ וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ
 כִּי אֵלֶיךָ עֵינֵינוּ
 כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ
 חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם אַתָּה

Elohenu velohei
 avoteinu ve'imoteinu,
 ya'aleh veyavo veyagi'a
 veyera'eh veyeratzeh veyishama
 veyipaked veyizacher
 zichronenu ufikdonenu,
 vezichron avoteinu ve'imoteinu,
 vezichron Mashiach
 ben David avdecha,
 vezichron Yerushalayim
 ir kodshecha,
 vezichron kol amcha
 bet Yisra'el lefanecha
 lifleita letova
 lechen ul'chesed ul'rachamim
 lechayim ul'shalom,
 beyom chag hamatzot hazeh.
 Zochrenu Adonai Eloheinu
 bo letovah;
 ufokdenu vo livracha;
 vehoshi'enu vo lechayim.
 Uvidvar yeshuah verachamim
 chus vechanenu
 verachem alenu vehoshi'enu,
 ki elecha enenu,
 ki el melech
 chanun verachum ata.

Rebuild Jerusalem

..... To conclude the third blessing, we ask God to rebuild Jerusalem

Build Jerusalem the holy city up again (2)	וּבְנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם	Uv'nei Yerushalayim ir hakodesh (2)
You will build, you will build,	עִיר הַקֹּדֶשׁ	Uv'nei uv'nei
you will build Jerusale-em.	בְּמִהְרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ	uv'nei Yerushalayim
Do it soon, do it soon,		Bimhera bimhera
do it soon while we're still living.		bimhera veyamenu
You will build (2)		Uv'nei v'nei uv'nei v'nei
You will build Jerusale-e-em. (2)		uv'nei Yerushalayim. (2)
Blessed are you, Ruler	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי	Baruch ata Adonai
Who in mercy builds Jerusalem.	בוֹנֵה בְּרַחֲמָיו יְרוּשָׁלַיִם	Boneh verachamav Yerushalayim.
Amen.	אָמֵן	Amen.

4. The Source of Goodness

The fourth blessing thanks God for divine goodness. It was added to the Grace after Meals after the fall of Betar, the last Jewish stronghold in Bar Kochba's rebellion. It expresses our gratitude when the Romans allowed us to bury our dead.¹

Blessed are you, Sovereign,	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי	Baruch ata Adonai,
God who rules forever,	אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
Source of life, our God who rules us,	הָאֵל אֲבִינוּ מִלְּכֵנוּ	Ha'El avinu malkenu
Our great leader and creator,	אֲדִירֵנוּ בּוֹרְאֵנוּ	adirenu bor'enu
Our redeemer, you who school us,	גֹּאֲלֵנוּ יּוֹצְרֵנוּ	go'alenu yotzrenu
Holy to Jacob and holy to us,	קְדוֹשְׁנוּ קְדוֹשׁ יַעֲקֹב	kedoshenu kedosh Ya'akov
Shepherd of Israel and us,	רוֹעֵנוּ רוֹעַה יִשְׂרָאֵל	ro'enu ro'eh Yisrael
The good ruler	הַמֶּלֶךְ הַטוֹב	hamelech hatov
with goodness for all,	וְהַמְטִיב לָכֹל	vehametiv lakol
Who in every day—	שֶׁבְּכֹל יוֹם וְיוֹם	sheb'chol yom vayom—

¹ Bamidbar Rabbah 23 asks, What blessing did people say before they entered their land? The first blessing. Once they entered the land, they added the second blessing. When the land was destroyed, they added the third blessing, confident that God would rebuild Jerusalem. When the Bar Kochba rebellion was crushed, they added the fourth blessing, “Who is good and does good”: “Who is good” because the bodies did not decay, and “who does good” because they were given burial. Such is our Midrashic tradition. One wonders if this determination to thank God after both celebration and tragedy includes some angry sense of bitter irony.

Has done good, who does good,
Will do good for us;
Who saved us,
who saves us,
Will save us again—
For grace, for love, and kindness,
For relief, deliverance, and success,
Blessing, salvation, comfort,
sustenance, and support,
And mercy, and life, and peace
And all that's good;
And may *God* not let us
Lack anything good.

הוא הטיב הוא מטיב Hu hetiv hu metiv
הוא ייטיב לנו hu yetiv lanu
הוא גמלנו hu g'malanu
הוא גומלנו hu gomlenu
הוא יגמלנו לעד hu yigmelenu la'ad,
לחן לְחֶסֶד וּלְרַחֲמִים lechen lechesed ul'rachamim
וּלְרוּחַ הַצֶּלָה וְהַצִּלָּה ul'revach hatzala vehatzlacha
בְּרָכָה וִישׁוּעָה נְחָמָה beracha vishua nechama
פִּרְנָסָה וְכֻלְכָּלָה parnasa vechalkala,
וְרַחֲמִים וְחַיִּים וְשָׁלוֹם verachamim vechayim veshalom
וְכֹל-טוֹב vechol tov
וּמְכֹל-טוֹב umikol tov
אֶל יַחְסָרֵנוּ al yechasrenu.

The Merciful One

After the fourth blessing, these short prayers were added.

May the merciful one
rule us for ever;
May the merciful one
be blessed in heaven and earth.
The source of mercy
shall be praised in every age;
And may *God's* glory
through us shine for endless time,
And in us manifest
***God's* splendor without end.**
May the merciful one
sustain us with dignity.
May the merciful one smash
the yoke which weighs around our necks
and lead us,
walking tall, to our own land.

הַרְחָמֵן הוא Harachaman hu
יִמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד yimloch aleinu le'olam va'ed;
הַרְחָמֵן הוא Harachaman hu
יִתְבָּרַךְ בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ yitbarach bashamayim uva'aretz.
הַרְחָמֵן Harachaman
הוא יִשְׁתַּבַּח לְדוֹר דּוֹרִים hu yishtabach ledor dorim;
וְיִתְפָּאֵר- Veyitpa'ar
בָּנוּ לְעֵד וּלְנֶצַח נְצָחִים banu la'ad ul'netzach netzachim,
וְיִתְהַדָּר- Veyit'hadar
בָּנוּ לְעֵד וּלְעוֹלָמֵי עוֹלָמִים banu la'ad ul'ol'mei olamim.
הַרְחָמֵן הוא Harachaman, hu
יִפְרֹנְסֵנוּ בְּכָבוֹד yefarnesenu bechavod.
הַרְחָמֵן הוא יִשְׁבּוֹר Harachaman, hu yishbor
עָלֵנוּ מֵעַל צוּאֲרֵנוּ ulenu me'al tzavarenu
וְהוּא יוֹלִיכֵנוּ vehu yolichenu
קוֹמְמִיּוֹת לְאַרְצֵנוּ kom'miyut le'artzen.

At the word שְׁלַח (table) many people tap (or pound) the table

May the merciful one send הרַחֲמָן הוּא יִשְׁלַח לָנוּ Harachaman, hu yishlach lanu
 a manifold blessing to this building בְּרַכָּה מְרֻבָּה בְּבֵית הַזֶּה beracha meruba babayit hazeh
 and to this table at which we have eaten. וְעַל שֻׁלְחָן זֶה שֶׁאָכַלְנוּ עָלָיו ve'al shulchan zeh she'achalnu alav.

We ask God to send us Elijah, the herald of the Messianic Era.

It's God who will send Elijah, and Elijah who will bring the good news.

The Source of Mercy¹ soon² will send us הרַחֲמָן הוּא יִשְׁלַח לָנוּ Harachaman hu yishlach lanu
Elijah the seer; אֶת-אֱלִיָּהוּ הַנָּבִיא et Eliyahu hanavi
The Source of Mercy soon will send us זָכוֹר לטוֹב zachur latov,
Elijah remembered for good— וַיִּבְשֶׁר-לָנוּ vivaser lanu
And he'll bring us the hoped-for news (2) בְּשׂוֹרוֹת טוֹבוֹת besorot tovot
He'll bring salvation and consolation יְשׁוּעוֹת וְנַחֲמוֹת yeshu'ot venechamot.
for us and all our fellow Jews.

This part has many variations to honor hosts, parents and guests. The leader can choose what is appropriate for the occasion and add to the traditional formulae if so inclined.

May the merciful one bless... הרַחֲמָן הוּא יְבָרֵךְ Harachaman hu yevarech...

At your own table

...me אוֹתִי ...oti
 (and my wife/husband) (וְאֵת אִשְׁתִּי/בַעְלִי) (ve'et ishti/ba'ali)
 (and my children) (וְאֵת זַרְעִי) (ve'et zar'i)
 and whatever is mine... וְאֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לִי ve'et kol asher li...

As a guest

...(my father, my teacher) אֶת (אָבִי מוֹרִי) ...et (avi mori)
 the master of this house בַּעַל הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה ba'al habayit hazeh
 and (my mother, my teacher) וְאֵת (אִמִּי מוֹרָתִי) ve'et (imi morati)
 the mistress of this house, בַּעֲלַת הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה ba'alat habayit hazeh,
 them and their house and children אוֹתָם וְאֵת בֵּיתָם וְאֵת זַרְעָם otam ve'et beitam ve'et zar'am
 and whatever is theirs... וְאֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם ve'et kol asher lahem.

For a large group

...everyone seated here... אֶת כָּל הַמְּסֻבִּין כָּאֵן ...et kol hamesubin kan...

¹ “The Source of Mercy” is literally “the merciful one.”

² “Soon” is added for the rhythm, but our tradition holds that the arrival of Messiah is imminent.

Continue here; some omit the references to the Matriarchs

...us and whatever is ours,
as our ancestors were blessed,

Abraham and Sarah,
Isaac and Rebecca,
and Jacob and Rachel and Leah
in every thing...

**May God bless us, all of us
As one and the same
With a blessing that's perfect,
And let's say "Amen."
May this house be a shelter
Of peace and of love,
When our merit and theirs
Is acknowledged from above;
And a blessing from God
Be bestowed here below,
A gift from God our savior.
With sense and grace,
God and human race—
May they show us favor!**

אוֹתָנוּ וְאֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר לָנוּ

כְּמוֹ שֶׁנִּתְבָּרְכוּ

אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ

אַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה

יִצְחָק וְרִבְקָה

וְיַעֲקֹב וְרָחֵל וְלֵאָה

בְּכָל מִכֹּל כָּל

כֵּן יְבָרֵךְ אוֹתָנוּ

כְּלָנוּ יַחַד

בִּבְרָכָה שְׁלֵמָה

וְנֹאמַר אָמֵן

בְּמֵרוֹם יְלַמְדוּ

עָלֵיהֶם וְעָלֵינוּ

זְכוּת שִׁתְּהָא

לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת שְׁלוֹם

וְנִשָּׂא בְרָכָה מֵאֵת יי

וְצִדְקָה מֵאֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ

וְנִמְצָא-חֵן וְשִׂכָּל טוֹב

בְּעֵינֵי אֱלֹהִים וְאָדָם

...otanu ve'et kol asher lanu

kemo shenitbar'chu

avoteinu ve'imoteinu

Avraham veSarah

Yitzchak veRivkah

veYa'akov veRachel veLe'ah

bakol mikol kol...

Ken yevarech otanu

kulanu yachad

bivracha shelemah,

venomar, "Amen."

Bamarom yelamdu

aleihem ve'aleinu

Z'chut shet'heh

lemishmeret shalom,

Venisah verachah me'et Adonai

Utz'dakah me'Elohei yisheinu,

Venimtzah chen vesechel tov

Be'einei Elohim ve'adam.

For Shabbat

May the merciful one let us inherit
the day which is all rest and repose
for eternal life.

הַרְחֵמֵן הוּא יִנְחִילָנוּ

יוֹם שְׁכָלוּ שַׁבָּת וּמְנוּחָה

לְחַיֵּי הָעוֹלָמִים

Harachaman hu yan'chilenu

yom shekulo Shabbat um'nucha

lechayey ha'olamim.

For Pesach

May the merciful one
let us inherit the day
which is completely good.

הַרְחֵמֵן הוּא

יִנְחִילָנוּ יוֹם

שְׁכָלוּ טוֹב

Harachaman hu

yan'chilenu yom

shekulo tov.

We may add these prayers for the State of Israel, for peace and for freedom from oppression for all who suffer.

May the merciful one bless	הַרְחָמֵן הוּא יְבָרֶךְ	Harachaman hu yevarech
the State of Israel,	אֶת-מְדִינַת יִשְׂרָאֵל	et Medinat Yisra'el,
first sign of our coming redemption.	רֵאשִׁית צְמִיחַת גְּאֻלָּתֵנוּ	reshit tzemichat ge'ulatenu.
May the merciful one bestow friendship	הַרְחָמֵן הוּא יִתֵּן אַחֻוּהַ	Harachaman hu yiten achavah
between the descendants	בֵּין בְּנֵי יִצְחָק	bein benei Yitzchak
of Yitzchak and Yishma'el.	וּבֵין בְּנֵי יִשְׁמָעֵאל	uvein benei Yishma'el.
May the merciful one bless	הַרְחָמֵן הוּא יְבָרֶךְ	Harachaman hu yevarech
all who are given over	אֶת-כָּל הַנְּתוּנִים	et kol hanetunim
to pain and misery,	בְּצָרָה וְאַנְחָה	betzarah va'anachah
and bring them from darkness to light.	וְיוֹצִיאֵם מֵאֲפֶלֶה לְאוֹרָה	veyotzi'em me'afelah le'orah.

We pray that we may merit the arrival of the Messianic Era.

May the merciful one make us worthy	הַרְחָמֵן הוּא יַזְכֵּנֵנוּ	Harachaman hu yezakenu
of the Messianic Era	לִימּוֹת הַמָּשִׁיחַ	limot hamashiach
and the life of the world to come.	וּלְחַיֵּי הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא	ul'chayey ha'olam haba.
^{2 Sam 22:51} A tower of salvation for God's king;¹	מִגְדּוֹל יְשׁוּעוֹת מַלְכוּ	Migdol yeshu'ot malko
Gracious actions does God bring	וַעֲשֵׂה-חֶסֶד לְמַשִּׁיחוֹ	ve'oseh chesed limshicho
To David and his royal line for endless time.	לְדָוִד וּלְזֶרְעוֹ עַד-עוֹלָם	leDavid ul'zaro ad olam.
The One who makes peace on high,	עֲשֵׂה שָׁלוֹם בְּמִרְמֹי	Oseh shalom bimromav,
will make peace	הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם	hu ya'aseh shalom
for us and for all Israel.	עֲלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל	aleinu ve'al kol Yisra'el,
Now you say, "That's right."	וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן	ve'imru: "Amen."

¹ Our tradition retains two versions of the first word of this verse; the festival version is read aloud (*Qeri*) when we chant the verse, but the other is written (*Ketiv*) in the text; Psalms 18:51 retains a third version of the word. Such apparent discrepancies are far from unusual in our scripture.

A Selection From Psalms

Psalms 34:10-11 Stand in awe of God,

You holy ones; stand back.

The people who respect *God* never lack.

Hunger and want assail the lion's whelp

But those who seek for God

Will need no help.

Ps. 118:1 Thank *our* God, for *God* is good,

With kindness everlasting,

Ps. 145:16 Opening your generous hand

To satisfy the deep desire of every living thing. וּמִשְׁבִּיעַ לְכָל־חַי רָצוֹן.

Jer. 17:7 Blessed is the one

Who says, "In God I trust."

For him God is reliable and just.

Ps. 37:25 I've been a boy,

And now my beard is grey;

I've never seen a good man cast away,

Nor his children beg for food. (2)¹*Ps. 29:11* Our people God with strength uplifts,

Blessed with peace and all God's gifts. יְהוָה יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם. Adonai yevarech et amo vashalom.

.....Drinking our third cup of wine concludes Grace After Meals

We bless you, Sovereign God, who rules

Eternal space and time,

Creator of the grapevine's fruit,

From which we make this wine.

.....Recline, and drink the third cup; then fill the fourth cup.

יִרְאוּ אֶת־יְהוָה Y'ru et Adonai

קְדוֹשָׁיו kedoshav

כִּי־אֵין מַחְסוֹר לִירְאָיו ki ein machsor li're'av;

כִּפְרִים רָשׁוּ וְרָעִבוּ kefirim rashu vera'evu

וְדֹרְשֵׁי יְהוָה לֹא vedorshei Adonai

יַחְסְרוּ כֹל־טוֹב lo yachseru chol tov.

הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־טוֹב Hodu lAdonai ki tov

כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ ki le'olam chasdo.

פֹּתַח אֶת־יָדָי pote'ach et yadecha

וּמִשְׁבִּיעַ לְכָל־חַי רָצוֹן. umasbi'a lechol chai ratzon.

בָּרוּךְ הַגִּבֹּר Baruch hagever

אֲשֶׁר יִבְטַח בַּיהוָה asher yivtach bAdonai

וַהְיָה יְהוָה מִבְטָחוֹ vehaya Adonai mivtacho.

נַעַר הָיִיתִי Na'ar hayiti

גַּם־זָקַנְתִּי gam zakanti

וְלֹא־רָאִיתִי צַדִּיק נִעָזַב velo ra'iti tzadik ne'ezav,

וְיָרַעוּ מִבִּקְש־לָחֶם vezar'o mevakesh lachem. (2)

יְהוָה עֹז לְעַמּוֹ יֵתֵן Adonai oz le'amo yiten

יְהוָה יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם. Adonai yevarech et amo vashalom.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי Baruch ata Adonai

אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם Eloheinu melech ha'olam,

בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן Boreh peri hagafen.

¹ Some recite this verse quietly as a prayer of hope since they haven't yet seen it come true.

Cup 4: Hallel Continues הַלֵּל

*Fill the Cup of Elijah (if you didn't fill it at the beginning of the Seder) and open the door.
If Elijah is going to visit your Seder, now is the time.*

Spill Your Anger¹ שְׂפֹךְ חֲמַתְךָ

Ps 79:6-7 Spill your anger, *Ruling God*,

(For us who do adore you)

On them who never call your name,

Those people who ignore you.

For Jacob they have swallowed,

Left his home in devastation.

Pour down your fury on them,

And consume that alien nation.

Catch them with your burning wrath;

In constant anger chase them;

And from beneath the arching sky,

Completely, God, erase them!²

שְׂפֹךְ חֲמַתְךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ

אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִדְעוּךָ

וְעַל מַמְלָכוֹת אֲשֶׁר

בְּשִׁמְךָ לֹא קָרְאוּ

כִּי אָכַל אֶת־יַעֲקֹב

וְאֶת־בֵּיתוֹ הִשְׁמָנוּ

שְׂפֹךְ־עֲלֵיהֶם זַעֲמָךְ

וְחֲרוֹן אַפְּךָ יִשְׁיֵגֵם

תִּרְדֹּף בְּאֵף וְתִשְׁמִידֵם

מִתַּחַת שְׁמֵי יי

Shefoch chamatcha el hagoyim

asher lo yeda'ucha

ve'al mamlachot asher

beshimcha lo kara'u

ki achal et Ya'akov

ve'et navehu heshamu.

Shefach aleihem za'amecha,

vacharon ap'cha yasigem;

tirdof be'af vetashmidem

mitachat shemei Adonai.

.....Close the door and continue with the rest of Hallel

¹ This paragraph is not, actually, part of Hallel. We add it to show our confidence in God, in bold despite of our enemies. Of course, we'd look a whole lot bolder if we said this sort of thing in a language our enemies could understand.

Is this passage, about “spilling” or “pouring out” anger, a commentary on the pouring of the fourth cup? See Elias, p. 176.

² Literally, “Spill your anger on those nations which ignore you and on the kingdoms which have not called on your name. For they have eaten Jacob and destroyed his dwelling. Dump your fury on them, and let your burning wrath catch them. Chase them in anger, and destroy them from beneath the heavens of God.”

Psalm 115: 1-11¹

“From the beginning,” we read on page 15, “our ancestors worshipped idols”; but Abraham led the way to worship of a single, invisible God. With this psalm, and with the rest of the Seder service, we may begin to experience that spiritual redemption—accepting our God—which Abraham and our other ancestors experienced, and which accompanied the physical redemption of the Exodus.²

¹ Not for us, God, not for us, לא לנו יהוה לא לנו Lo lanu, Adonai, lo lanu
but for the sake of your name give glory, כי לשמך תן כבוד ki leshimcha ten kavod
for the sake of your kindness and truth. על חסדך על אמתך al chasd'cha al amitecha

² Why should the other nations say of us, למה יאמרו הגוים lama yomru hagoyim,
“Where is their God?” איה נא אלהיהם “Aych na eloheihem?”

³ When our God is in heaven ואלהינו בשמים vEloheinu vashamayim,
doing whatever God wishes? כל אשר חפץ עשה kol asher chafetz asah.

..... The chorus is Atzabayhem; start singing here!

⁴ Their idols are fashioned by man;³ עצביהם כסף וזהב Atzabayhem kesef vezahav,
they're not made by God— מעשה ידי אדם Ma'aseh yedei adam.

Gold and silver made by flesh and blood (2)⁴

Chorus of Atzabayhem

⁵ They have a mouth but cannot speak; פה להם ולא ידברו Peh lahem velo yedaberu,
eyes, but they cannot see. עינים להם ולא יראו einayim lahem velo yir'u.

⁶ They have ears, but they can't hear; אזנים להם ולא ישמעו Oznayim lahem velo yishma'u,
a nose, but they can't smell— אף להם ולא יריחון af lahem velo yerichun.

Chorus of Atzabayhem

¹ We may always wonder whether prayers such as Grace After Meals and Hallel, prayers said at other times of the year, gain extra meaning from their context in the Seder. In this case, the previous passage, Shefoch chamatcha, criticised idolatrous nations, so it's a perfect transition to Psalm 115.

² See Elias, p. xxxiii.

³ Why not “humankind”? Well, for one thing the long word won't fit the rhythm. Then, if you're a feminist who doesn't want to use “man” all the time, you won't mind it in this case, which satirizes man's puny efforts to capture the divine. And if you're a traditionalist, you won't notice. For once, everybody is satisfied.

⁴ This psalm brings to mind the story about young Abram, who was to become Abraham. His father made a nice living selling idols. One day, Abram smashed most of the idols in his dad's shop, leaving one statue to hold the hammer. Dad was angry; Abram blamed the idol. “That's ridiculous,” said Dad, “they're just stone.” “In that case,” says Abram, “how can you sell them and let people pray to them?” Was Abraham a Wise Child or a Rebellious Child? For sure, he was a wiseguy!

⁷ hands, but they can't feel;
feet, but they can't walk;
they can't make a sound with their throat.

יְדֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִמִּישׁוּן
רַגְלֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִהְלְכוּ
לֹא־יִהְיוּ בְּגִרְוֹנָם

Yedeihem velo yemishun,
ragleihem velo yehalechu,
lo yeh'gu bigronam.

Chorus of Atzabayhem

⁸ Their makers are dumb as their own idols,¹
and so are all who rely on them.

כְּמוֹהֶם יְהִיו עֲשִׂיהֶם
כָּל אֲשֶׁר־בִּטַּח בָּהֶם

Kemohem yih'yu oseihem,
kol asher bote'ach bahem.

⁹ But Israel relies on God.
God is their help and their shield.

יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּטַּח בִּיהוָה
עֲזָרָם וּמִגְנָם הוּא

Yisra'el b'tach bAdonai,
ezram umaginam hu.

Chorus of Atzabayhem

¹⁰ Aaron's house trusts in God;
God is their help and their shield.

בֵּית אַהֲרֹן בִּטַּחוּ בִיהוָה
עֲזָרָם וּמִגְנָם הוּא

Beit Aharon bit'chu bAdonai,
ezram umaginam hu.

¹¹ Those who fear God trust in God;
God is their help and their shield.

יִרְאֵי יְהוָה בִּטַּחוּ בִיהוָה
עֲזָרָם וּמִגְנָם הוּא

Yir'ei Adonai bit'chu vAdonai,
ezram umaginam hu.

Psalm 115: 12-18²

.....In this one, you sing all but the first three words

¹² God has remembered us and will bless—
will bless the house of Israel,
will bless the house of Aaron,

יְהוָה זָכָרְנוּ וַיְבָרֵךְ
יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־בֵּית אַהֲרֹן

Adonai zecharanu; yevarech—
yevarech et beit Yisra'el,
yevarech et beit Aharon,

¹³ God will bless those who fear God,
both small and great.

יְבָרֵךְ יִרְאֵי יְהוָה
הַקְטָנִים עַם־הַגְּדֹלִים

yevarech yir'ei Adonai,
haktanim im hagdolim.

¹⁴ God will give you more,
you and your children.

יֹסֵף יְהוָה עֲלֵיכֶם
עֲלֵיכֶם וְעַל־בְּנֵיכֶם

Yosef Adonai aleichem,
aleichem ve'al beneichem.

¹⁵ You'll be blessed by God,
the maker of heaven and earth.

בְּרוּכִים אַתֶּם לַיהוָה
עֹשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ

Beruchim atem lAdonai,
oseh shamayim va'aretz.

¹⁶ Heaven is for God,
who gave the earth to people.³

הַשָּׁמַיִם שְׁמַיִם לַיהוָה
וְהָאָרֶץ נָתַן לְבְנֵי־אָדָם

Hashamayim shamayim lAdonai,
veha'aretz natan livnei adam.

¹ “Like them (the idols) are their makers”; i.e., people who make and worship idols are as stupid as the idols.

² How is this related to the beginning of psalm 115? The first part speaks of our trust in God; this part speaks of God fulfilling that trust. The first part contrasts inanimate idols with the living God; this part contrasts the dead, who cannot praise God, with us, who live and praise God.

³ “The heavens are the heavens of God, and God gave the earth to the children of Adam.”

¹⁷ Dead people don't hail God,
nor do those who have gone down to silence.

¹⁸ But we will bless God
from now on and forever. Halleluyah!

לא המתימ יתהלל יה
ולא כל ירד דומה
ואנחנו נברך יה
מעתה ועד עולם הללויה
Lo hametim yehal'lu Yah,
velo kol yordei dumah.
Va'anachnu nebarech Yah
me'atah ve'ad olam Halleluyah.

Psalm 116: 1-11

¹ I love *it* when God hears
my voice, my prayers.

² For *God* bent an ear to me,
so I'll call *on God* all my days.

³ The bonds of death had tied me,
the narrow grave had found me;
I had come to grief and trouble.

⁴ So I called in the name of God,
"God, please! Save my soul!"

⁵ God is gentle and righteous,
and our God acts kindly.

⁶ God guards the simple;
I was down, but *God* saved me.

⁷ O my soul, return and rest,
because God has been kind to you

⁸ and has saved my soul from death,
my eyes from weeping,
and my legs from failing.

⁹ I'll walk before God
in the lands of the living.

אהבתי כי ישמע יהוה
את קולי תחנוני
כי הטה אזנו לי
ובימי אקרא
אפוני חבל מות
ומצרי שאל מצאני
צרה ונגון אמצא
ובשם יהוה אקרא
אנה יהוה מלטה נפשי
חנון יהוה וצדיק
ואלהינו מרחם
שומר פתאים יהוה
דליתי ולי יהושע
שובי נפשי למנוחיכי
כי יהוה גמל עליכי
כי חלצת נפשי ממוות
את עיני מן דמעה
את רגלי מן דחי
אתה להל לפני יהוה
בארצות החיים
Ahavti ki yishma Adonai
et koli tachanunai,
ki hita ozno li
uv'yamai ekra.
Afafuni chevlei mavet,
um'tzare She'ol m'tza'uni.
tzara veyagon emtza.
Uv'shem Adonai ekra,
"Ana Adonai, malta nafshi!"
Chanun Adonai vetzadik,
vEloheinu merachem;
shomer peta'im Adonai,
daloti veli yehoshi'a.
Shuvi nafshi limnuchaychi
ki Adonai gamal alaychi,
ki chilatzta nafshi mimavet,
et eini min dim'a,
et ragli midechi.
Et'halech lifnei Adonai
be'artzot hachayim.

¹⁰ I kept my faith even when I said,
“I’m really suffering.”

¹¹ I said in my haste,
“All people are liars.”¹

הֶאֱמַנְתִּי כִּי אֲדַבֵּר
אֲנִי עֲנִיתִי מֵאֵד
אֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי בְּחַפְזִי
כָּל־הָאָדָם כֹּזֵב

He’emanti ki adaber,
“Ani aniti me’od.”
Ani amarti vechofzi,
“Kol ha’adam kozev.”

Psalm 116: 12-19²

¹² What can I do for God, in return
for all that *God* has done for me?

¹³ I’ll raise the cup of salvation,
and I’ll call on the name of God.

¹⁴ I’ll pay off my pledges to God
in front of all *God’s* people.

¹⁵ God sets a high price on
the death of those *God* loves.

¹⁶ God, I am your servant,
your servant, the child of your handmaid—
so you have unshackled me.

¹⁷ I’ll bring you thank-offerings
and I’ll call on the name of God.

¹⁸ I’ll pay off my pledges to God
in front of all *God’s* people,

¹⁹ in the courts of God’s Temple,
in your center, O Jerusalem.
Halleluyah!

מַה־אֲשִׁיב לַיהוָה
כָּל־תַּגְּמוּלוֹהִי עָלַי
כּוֹס־יְשׁוּעוֹת אֶשָּׂא
וּבְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא
נִדְרֵי לַיהוָה אֲשַׁלֵּם
נִגְדָה־נָּא לְכָל־עַמּוֹ
יָקָר בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה
הַמָּוֶתָה לַחֲסִידָיו
אָנָּה יְהוָה כִּי־אֲנִי עַבְדְּךָ
אֲנִי־עַבְדְּךָ בֶּן־אֲמֵתָךְ
פִּתַּחְתָּ לְמוֹסְרִי
לֶךָ־עִזְבַּח זֶבַח תּוֹדָה
וּבְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא
נִדְרֵי לַיהוָה אֲשַׁלֵּם
נִגְדָה־נָּא לְכָל־עַמּוֹ
בְּחִצְרוֹת בֵּית יְהוָה
בְּתוֹכְכִי יְרוּשָׁלַם
הַלְלִיָּהּ

Mah ashiv lAdonai
kol tagmulohi alay?
Kos yeshu’ot esah
uv’shem Adonai ekra.
Nedarai lAdonai ashalem
negda na lechol amo.
Yakar be’einei Adonai
hamavtah lachasidav.
Ana Adonai ki ani avdecha,
ani avd’cha, ben amatecha—
pitachta lemoseray.
Lecha ezbach zevach todah
uv’shem Adonai ekra.
Nedarai lAdonai ashalem
negda na lechol amo.
Bechatzrot beit Adonai,
betochechi Yerushalayim,
Halleluyah!

¹ The sense could be: “Even when I was suffering, and God seemed to have abandoned me, I trusted *God*. But as for people, I could see pretty quickly that they’re not reliable.”

² How does this follow from the first part of the psalm? The psalmist resolves to be as reliable toward God as God has been toward him. The British have a tune for this entire paragraph; it is not one of their most singable melodies. But I shall lift my voice in tipsy joy and sing.

Psalm 117

¹ Hail God, all you nations;
praise *God*, all you peoples.

² For *God's* kindness has overwhelmed us,
and *God's* truth, forever. Halleluyah.

הללו את־יהוה כל־גוים
שבְּחוּהוּ כל־הָאָמִים
כִּי נִבְרַעַלֵינוּ חֶסֶדוֹ
וְאֶמֶת־יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם הִלְלוּיָהּ

Halelu et Adonai kol goyim,
shab'chuhu kol ha'umim;
ki gavar aleinu chasdo,
ve'emet Adonai le'olam. Halleluyah!

Psalm 118: 1-4

¹ *God* is good, so we give thanks;
God's kindness is unlimited.

² Let this be sung by Israel's ranks;
God's kindness is unlimited.

³ Let Aaron's children join the chorus:
God's kindness is unlimited.

⁴ Revere *and* praise what *God* does for us,
God's kindness is unlimited.

הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־טוֹב
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדוֹ
יֹאמְרוּ־נָא יִשְׂרָאֵל
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדוֹ
יֹאמְרוּ־נָא בֵּית־אַהֲרֹן
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדוֹ
יֹאמְרוּ־נָא יְרֵאֵי יְהוָה
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדוֹ

Hodu l'Adonai ki tov;
"Ki le'olam chasdo."
Yomar nah Yisra'el,
"Ki le'olam chasdo."
Yom'ru nah veit Aharon:
"Ki le'olam chasdo."
Yom'ru nah yir'ei Adonai
"Ki le'olam chasdo."

Psalm 118: 5

⁵ Bound in chains, I called on *God*;
God answered me with liberty.

מִן־הַמִּצָּר קָרָאתִי יְהוָה
עֲנֵנִי בַמִּרְחֹב יְהוָה

Min hametzar karati Yah
anani vamer'chav Yah

Psalm 118: 6-14

⁶ *God* is on my side, so I won't worry;
what can a person do to me?

⁷ *God* is on my side, with my friends,
so I can face my enemies.

⁸ It's better to trust *God*
than rely on people.

⁹ It's better to trust *God*
than rely on princes.

¹⁰ All the nations surrounded me;
in the name of *God* I cut them down.

¹¹ They were all around me, hordes of them;
in the name of *God* I cut them down.

יְהוָה לִי לֹא אִירָא
מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה לִי אָדָם
יְהוָה לִי בְעֹזְרִי
וְאֲנִי אֶרְאֶה בְּשֹׁנְאֵי
טוֹב לַחֲסוֹת בַּיהוָה
מִבְּטָח בָּאָדָם
טוֹב לַחֲסוֹת בַּיהוָה
מִבְּטָח בַּנְּדִיבִים
כָּל־גּוֹיִם סָבְבוּנִי
בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמִילָם
סָבְבוּנִי נִם־סָבְבוּנִי
בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמִילָם

Adonai li lo ira;
mah ya'aseh li adam?
Adonai li be'ozrai,
va'ani er'eh v'son'ai.
Tov lachasot b'Adonai
mibto'ach ba'adam.
Tov lachasot b'Adonai
mibto'ach bindivim.
Kol goyim s'avuni;
beshem Adonai ki amilam.
Sabuni gam s'avuni;
beshem Adonai ki amilam.

¹² They swarmed like bees;
they are quenched like a fire of thorns;
in the name of God I cut them down.

¹³ You pushed and pushed me to make me fall,
but God helped me.

¹⁴ God is my strength and my song,
and this has been my salvation.

סבּוּנִי כְּדַבּוּרִים
דַּעֲכוּ כְּאֵשׁ קוֹצִים
בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אָמִילָם
דָּחָה דְּחִיתָנִי לְנֶפֶל
וַיְהוּה עֲזָרָנִי
עֲזִי וְזִמְרַת יְהוָה
וַיְהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה
Sabuni chidvorim;
do'achu ke'esh kotzim;
beshem Adonai ki amilam.
Dach d'chitani linpol,
vAdonai azarani.
Ozi vezimrat Yah,
vay'hi li lishu'ah.

Psalm 118: 15-20

¹⁵ There's a cry of joy and salvation
in the tents of the righteous:

"God's right hand is valiant

¹⁶ God's right hand is lifted up,
God's right hand is valiant."

¹⁷ I'm not going to die, but live
and tell what God has done.

¹⁸ God punished me severely,
but didn't give me over to death.

¹⁹ Open the gates of righteousness;
I will enter and thank God.

²⁰ This is the gate to God;
the righteous will enter it.

קוֹל רִנָּה וִישׁוּעָה
בְּאֶהְלֵי צְדִיקִים
יְמִין יְהוָה עָשָׂה חַיִּל
יְמִין יְהוָה רוֹמֵמָה
יְמִין יְהוָה עָשָׂה חַיִּל
לֹא אָמוּת כִּי־אֶחְיֶה
וַאֲסַפֵּר מַעֲשֵׂי יְהוָה
יָסַר יִסְרָנִי יְהוָה
וְלִמּוֹת לֹא נָתַנִּי
פָּתַח־לִי שַׁעַר־צֶדֶק
אֲבֹא־בָם אֹדֶה יְהוָה
זֶה־הַשַּׁעַר לַיהוָה
צְדִיקִים יָבֹאוּ בּוֹ
Kol rina viyshu'ah
be'holei tzadikim:
"Yemin Adonai osah chayil,
yemin Adonai romemah,
yemin Adonai osah chayil."
Lo amut ki echyeh
va'asaper ma'asei Yah;
Yasor yisrani Yah
velamavet lo netanani.
Pit'chu li sha'arey tzedek,
avo vam odeh Yah.
Zeh hasha'ar lAdonai
tzadikim yavo'u vo.

Psalm 118: 21-24¹*Repeat each of these four verses*

²¹ I thank you for answering me
and being my salvation.

אֲדָכָה כִּי עֲנִיתָנִי
וְתִהְיֶה לִי לִישׁוּעָה

Od'cha ki anitani
vat'hi li li'shu'ah.

²² That block—it's now the keystone—
was rejected by the mason.

אֶבֶן מָאֲסוּ חֲבוּנִים
הָיְתָה לְרֹאשׁ פִּנָּה

Even ma'asu habonim
haytah lerosh pinah.

²³ This success has come from God;
to us, it seems miraculous.

מֵעַתָּה יְהוָה הָיְתָה זֹאת
הִיא נִפְלְאוֹת בְּעֵינֵינוּ

Me'et Adonai haytah zot;
hi niflat be'eineinu.

²⁴ This is the day that God has made,
a day of joy and happiness!

זֶה הַיּוֹם עָשָׂה יְהוָה
נִגִּילָה וְנִשְׁמְחָה בּוֹ

Zeh hayom asah Adonai;
nagilah venismechah vo.

Psalm 118: 25

²⁵ Please, God, save us;

אָנָּה יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה נָּא

Ana Adonai hoshiah na;

Please, God, grant us success.

אָנָּה יְהוָה הַצְלִיחָה נָּא

Ana Adonai hatzlichah na.

Psalm 118: 26-29*Repeat each of these four verses*

²⁶ Welcome,² in God's name;
we bless you from God's temple.

בָּרוּךְ הָבָא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה
בִּרְכְּנוּכֶם מִבֵּית יְהוָה

Baruch haba beshem Adonay;
berachnuchem mibeit Adonay.

²⁷ God is the ruler who shines light upon us;
bind the festive sacrifice with ropes³
to the horns of the altar.

אֵל יְהוָה וַיֹּאדָר לָנוּ
אִסְרוּ חַג בַּעֲבוֹתָיִם
עַד־קַרְנוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ

El Adonay vaya'er lanu;
isru chag ba'avotim
ad karnot hamizbe'ach.

²⁸ You are my God and I will thank you,
my ruler and I will exalt you.

אֵלִי אַתָּה וְאֲדָכָה
אֱלֹהֵי אֲרוֹמְמֶכָה

Eli ata ve'odekah,
Elohai arom'mekah.

²⁹ Thank God, for God is good,
for God's kindness lasts forever.

הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־טוֹב
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ

Hodu l'Adonai ki tov,
ki le'olam chasdo.

¹ There are several tunes for these lines. However, the Singlish rendering is designed to fit one of the favorite English tunes. If you're not sure how to sing this, you could send for our tape.

² הָבָא בָּרוּךְ means "welcome" today, but literally it means "Blessed is the one who comes."

³ It doesn't sound like a festive occasion for the sacrifice, does it?

Conclusion of Hallel

Let all your works praise you, ruling God,
 with your devoted ones,
 the righteous people who do your will;
 and let all your people, the house of Israel,
 joyfully thank and bless,
 praise and glorify,
 exalt and revere,
 sanctify and empower
 your name, O our ruler,
 for it is good to thank you
 and fitting to sing to your name,
 because forever and ever
 you are God.
 We bless you, God,
 sovereign hailed with praises.

יְהַלְלֶךָ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 כָּל-מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וְחַסִּדֶּיךָ
 צְדִיקִים עוֹשֵׂי רְצוֹנְךָ
 וְכָל-עַמֶּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
 בְּרִנָּה יוֹדוּ וְיִבְרְכוּ
 וְיִשְׁבְּחוּ וְיִפְאָרוּ
 וְיִרְמְמוּ וְיַעֲרִיצוּ
 וְיִקְדִּישוּ וְיִמְלִיכוּ
 אֶת-שִׁמְךָ מַלְכֵנוּ
 כִּי לְךָ טוֹב לְהוֹדוֹת
 וּלְשִׁמְךָ נָאֶה לְזַמֵּר
 כִּי מֵעוֹלָם עַד עוֹלָם
 אַתָּה אֵל
 בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי
 מֶלֶךְ מְהֻלָּל בַּתִּשְׁבָּחוֹת

Yehalelucha Adonai Eloheinu
 kol ma'asecha, vachasidecha,
 tzadikim, osei retzonecha,
 vechol amcha beit Yisra'el
 berinah yodu vivar'chu
 vishabchu vifa'aru
 viromemu veyaritzu
 veyakdishu veyamlichu
 et shimcha malkenu,
 ki lecha tov lehodot,
 uleshimcha na'eh lezamer,
 ki me'olam ad olam
 atah El.
 Baruch atah Adonai,
 melech mehulal batishbachot.

Psalm 136¹

¹ Thank God for being good, (God's kindness lasts forever);	הודו ליהוה כִּי־טוֹב כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	Hodu lAdonai ki tov (ki le'olam chasdo);
² Thank the God of gods (God's kindness lasts forever);	הודו לאלהי האלהים כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	Hodu lElohei ha'elohim (ki le'olam chasdo);
³ Thank the Ruler of rulers (God's kindness lasts forever);	הודו לאדני האדנים כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	Hodu lAdonei ha'adonim (ki le'olam chasdo);
⁴ Who has done great wonders alone (God's kindness lasts forever).	לַעֲשֵׂה נִפְלְאוֹת גְּדוֹלוֹת לְבַדּוֹ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	Le'oseh nifla'ot gedolot levado (ki le'olam chasdo).
⁵ Who made heaven with insight (God's kindness lasts forever)	לַעֲשֵׂה הַשָּׁמַיִם בְּתַבּוּנָה כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	Le'oseh hashamayim bitvunah (ki le'olam chasdo)
⁶ And spread earth on water (God's kindness lasts forever),	לְרַקַּע הָאָרֶץ עַל־הַמַּיִם כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	Leroka ha'aretz al hamayim (ki le'olam chasdo),
⁷ Who made great lights— (God's kindness lasts forever),	לַעֲשֵׂה אוֹרִים גְּדֹלִים כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	Le'oseh orim g'dolim (ki le'olam chasdo),
⁸ The sun to rule by day (God's kindness lasts forever),	אֶת־הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לְמַמְשֶׁלֶת בַּיּוֹם כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	Et hashemesh lememshelet bayom (ki le'olam chasdo),
⁹ The moon and stars to rule at night (God's kindness lasts forever);	אֶת־הַיָּרֵחַ וְכּוֹכָבִים לְמַמְשֶׁלֶת בַּלַּיְלָה כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	Et hayare'ach vechochavim lememshelot balayla (ki le'olam chasdo);
¹⁰ Who struck Egypt through their first-born (God's kindness lasts forever)	לְמַכֶּה מִצְרַיִם בְּבְכוֹרֵיהֶם כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	Lemakeh Mitzrayim bivchoreihem (ki le'olam chasdo)
¹¹ And led Israel from their midst (God's kindness lasts forever)	וַיּוֹצֵא יִשְׂרָאֵל מִתּוֹכָם כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	Vayotze Yisra'el mitocham (ki le'olam chasdo)
¹² With a strong hand and outstretched arm (God's kindness lasts forever),	בְּיָד חֲזָקָה וּבִזְרוֹעַ נְטוּיָה כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	Beyad chazaka uvizro'ah netuya (ki le'olam chasdo),
¹³ Who cut the Reed Sea in parts (God's kindness lasts forever)	לְגַזֵּר יַם־סוּף לִגְזָרִים כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ	Legozer yam suf ligzarim (ki le'olam chasdo)

¹ This isn't part of regular Hallel, but the Talmud calls this psalm the "Great Hallel."¹ Make up your own tune, if your guests aren't already too restless.

The Life Force...¹ נשמת כל-חי

The life force of every living thing
will bless your name,
our sovereign God,
and every creature's spirit
will praise and exalt
the thought of you, our ruler, forever.
From eternity to eternity
you are God;
and but for you we have no ruler,
redeemer, and savior,
who notices, brings success,
sustains, and takes pity
in every time of trouble and distress.
We have no ruler but you:
God of the first and last,
God of all creatures,
ruler of all generations,
hailed with a multitude of praises,
guiding the world with kindness
and its creatures with compassion.

נשמת כל-חי Nishmat kol chai
תברך את-שמוֹךְ tevarach et shimcha
יִי אֱלֹהֵינוּ Adonai Eloheinu,
רוּחַ כָּל-בָּשָׂר veru'ach kol basar
תִּפְאֶרֶת וּתְרוֹמָם tefa'er ut'romem
זִכְרֶךָ מִלְכֵנוּ תָמִיד zichrecha malkenu tamid.
מִן-הָעוֹלָם וְעַד-הָעוֹלָם Min ha'olam ve'ad ha'olam
אַתָּה אֵל ata El,
וּמִבְלָעֲדֶיךָ אֵין לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ umibaladecha ein lanu melech,
גּוֹאֵל וּמוֹשִׁיעַ go'el umoshi'a,
פּוֹדֶה וּמַצִּיל podeh umatzil,
וּמַפְרִינֵס וּמְרַחֵם um'farnes um'rachem
בְּכָל-עֵת צָרָה וְצוּקָה bechol et tzara vetzuka.
אֵין-לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ אֶלָּא אַתָּה Ein lanu melech ela ata
אֱלֹהֵי הָרִאשׁוֹנִים וְהָאַחֲרֹנִים Elohei harishonim vеха'acharonim
אֱלֹהֵי כָל-בְּרִיּוֹת Elo'ah kol b'riyot
אֲדוֹן כָּל-תּוֹלָדוֹת adon kol toladot
הַמְהַלֵּל בְּרַב הַתְּשַׁבְּחוֹת hamhulal berov hatishbachot
הַמְנַהֵג עוֹלָמוֹ בְּחֶסֶד ham'naheg olamo bechesed
וּבְרִיּוֹתָיו בְּרַחֲמִים uv'riyotav berachamim.

¹ Most of us recognize this from the morning service for Shabbat, where it precedes the morning call to prayer.

This passage emphasizes our belief that God is for everyone, not just for Jews. The evening's topics—our personal redemption and our birth as a nation—might encourage an unhealthy separatism which this passage counteracts.

God neither slumbers nor sleeps;
waking the sleepers
and rousing the slumberers,
giving speech to the mute,
and freeing the bound,
supporting those who fall,
and lifting up those who are bent over;
to you alone do we give thanks.
Even if our mouths were
filled with song like the sea,
our tongues with joy
like the multitude of waves,
our lips with praise
like the expanse of the heavens,
our eyes bright
like the sun and moon,
our hands spread out
like eagles in the sky,
and our legs swift as gazelles—
we wouldn't be adequate
to thank you, our ruling God
and God of our ancestors,
and to bless your name
for even one of the millions
and billions and trillions¹
of favors you have done
for our ancestors and for us.

וַיִּי לֹא-יָנוּם וְלֹא-יִישָׁן
הַמַּעֲוִיר יְשָׁנִים
וְהַמְּקִיץ נִרְדָּמִים
וְהַמְּשִׁיחַ אֱלִמִּים
וְהַמַּתִּיר אֲסוּרִים
וְהַסּוֹמֵךְ נּוֹפְלִים
וְהַזּוֹקֵף כְּפוּפִים
לְךָ לְבַדְּךָ אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים
אֱלוּ פִינוּ
מָלֵא שִׁירָה חַיָּאֵם
וּלְשׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה
כְּהֶמוֹן גָּלִי
וּשְׂפִיתֵינוּ שֶׁבַח
כְּמֶרְחֵבִי רָקִיעַ
וְעֵינֵינוּ מְאִירוֹת
כְּשֶׁמֶשׁ וְכִיָּרַח
וְיָדֵינוּ פְּרוּשׁוֹת
כְּנִשְׁרֵי שָׁמַיִם
וְרַגְלֵינוּ קָלוֹת כְּאַיָּלוֹת
אֵין אֲנַחְנוּ מַסְפִּיקִים
לְהוֹדוֹת לְךָ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ
וּלְבָרְךָ אֶת-שִׁמְךָ
עַל-אַחַת מֵאַלֶּף עֶלֶף
אַלְפֵי אַלְפִּים וְרִבֵּי רֶבֻבוֹת
פְּעָמִים הַטּוֹבוֹת שְׁעֵשִׂית
עִם-אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ וְעַמָּנוּ.

VAdonai lo yanum velo yishan,
ham'orer y'shenim
vehamekitz nirdamim
vehamesi'ach ilmim
vehamatir asurim
vehasomech noflim
vezazokef kefufim;
lecha levad'cha anachnu modim.
Ilu finu
maleh shirah chayam
ulshonenu rinah
kahamon galav
vesiftoteinu shevach
kemer'chavei rakiah
ve'eneinu me'iroi
kashemesh vechayare'ach
veyadenu ferusot
kenishrei shamayim
veragleinu kalot ka'ayalot—
ein anachnu maspikim
lehodot lecha Adonai Eloheinu
vElohei avoteinu ve'imoteinu
ulevarech et shemecha
al achat me'alef elef
alfei alafim veribei revavot
pe'amim hatovot she'asita
im avoteinu ve'imoteinu ve'imanu.

¹ What are these numbers? “The thousand thousand of thousands of thousands and many myriads.” I take a myriad to be 10,000; but at any rate the numbers are huge.

You saved us from Egypt,
ruling God,
and took us from the house of slavery.
You fed us when we were hungry
and sustained us when we had plenty;
and you rescued us from the sword
and saved us from the plague,
and you guarded us
from severe and lasting diseases.
Until now your mercy has helped us
and your kindness has not left us;
and don't abandon us,
ruling God, forever.
And so the limbs you formed for us
and the spirit and soul
you breathed in our nostrils,
the tongue you put in our mouths,

they will thank, bless,
praise, laud, exalt,
worship, sanctify
and pay homage to your name, O our ruler.
For every mouth will thank you,
and every tongue will promise you,
and every knee will kneel to you,
and everything which stands
will bow down to you,
and every heart will fear you,
and all their innards and kidneys
will sing to your name.

מִמִּצְרַיִם גָּאֲלָתָנוּ
יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וּמִבֵּית עַבְדִּים פָּדִיתָנוּ
בָּרַעַב זִנְתָנוּ
וּבִשְׂבַע כָּל־כֶּלֶתָנוּ
וּמִחֶרֶב הִצַּלְתָנוּ
וּמִדָּבָר מְלֻטָתָנוּ
וּמִחֲלָיִם רָעִים
וְנַאֲמָנִים דָּלִיתָנוּ
עַד-הֵנָּה עֲזָרוֹנוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ
וְלֹא-עֲזָבוֹנוּ חֶסֶדְךָ
וְאֶל-תִּטְשֵׁנוּ
יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ לִנְצַח
עַל-כֵּן אֲבָרִים שֶׁפִּלַּגְתָּ בָנוּ
וְרוּחַ וְנִשְׁמָה
שֶׁנִּפְחַתָּ בְּאַפֵּינוּ
וְלָשׁוֹן אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַתָּ בְּפִינוּ

הֵן הֵם יוֹדוּ וַיְבָרְכוּ
וַיִּשְׁבַּחוּ וַיְפָאֲרוּ וַיְרוֹמְמוּ
וַיַּעֲרִיצוּ וַיִּקְדִּישׁוּ
וַיִּמְלִיכוּ אֶת-שִׁמְךָ מַלְכָּנוּ
כִּי כָל-פֶּה לָךְ יוֹדֶה
וְכָל-לָשׁוֹן לָךְ תִּשְׁבַּע
וְכָל-בֶּרֶךְ לָךְ תִּכְרַע
וְכָל-קוֹמָה
לִפְנֶיךָ תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה
וְכָל-לִבָּבוֹת יִירָאוּךָ
וְכָל-קֶרֶב וְכִלּוֹת
יִזְמְרוּ לְשִׁמְךָ

MiMitzrayim ge'altanu
Adonai Eloheinu
umibeit avadim peditanu;
bera'av zantanu
uv'sava kilkaltanu
umecherev hitzaltanu
umidever milat'tanu
umecholayim ra'im
vene'emanim dilitanu.
Ad hena azarunu rachamecha
velo azavunu chasadecha
ve'al titshenu
Adonai Eloheinu lanetzach.
Al ken evarim shepilagta banu
veru'ach un'shama
shenafachta ve'apeinu
velashon asher samta befinu,

hen hem yodu vivar'chu
vishabchu vifa'aru virom'mu
veya'aritzu veyakdishu
veyamlichu et shimcha, malkenu.
Ki chol pel lecha yodeh
vechol lashon lecha tishava
vechol berech lecha tichra
vechol koma
lefanecha tishtachaveh,
vechol levavot yira'ucha
vechol kerev uchlayot
yezamru lishmecha.

As it is said,

Psalms 35:10 All my bones shall say,

‘God, who is like you?

You save the poor person from the mugger,¹

the pauper and beggar from the thief.’

Who is like you, who can equal you,

and who can compare to you?

O God—great, mighty, and awesome—

Gen 14:22 God on high, who owns sky and land.

We’ll hail you and praise you

and laud you

and bless your holy name,

as it is said:

Psalms 103:1 A psalm of David:

Bless God, O my soul;

and all my innards, *God’s* holy name.

God, in the power of your strength,

great in the glory of your name,

mighty forever,

awesome for your fearsome deeds—

The ruler who sits

on a high and lofty throne,

who occupies eternity,

is called high and sacred.²

And it’s written,

Ps. 33:1 You righteous, rejoice in God;

for upright people, giving praise feels right.

כְּדָבָר שֶׁכָּתוּב

כָּל עַצְמוֹתַי תֹּאמְרָנָה

יְהוָה מִי כָמוֹךָ

מַצִּיל אֶנִּי מִחֶזֶק מִמֶּנּוּ

וְעֵנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן מִגִּזְלוֹ

מִי יִדְמֶה-לָּךְ וּמִי יִשׁוּה-לָּךְ

וּמִי יַעֲרֹךְ-לָּךְ

הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא

אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן כֹּנֵה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ

נִהְלַלְךָ וְנִשְׁבַּחְךָ

וְנִפְאָרְךָ

וְנִבְרַךְ אֶת-שֵׁם קִדְשְׁךָ

כְּאָמֹר

לְדָוִד

בָּרְכִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת-יְהוָה

וְכָל-קִרְבִּי אֶת-שֵׁם קִדְשִׁי

הָאֵל בְּתַעֲצֻמוֹת עֲזֶךָ

הַגָּדוֹל בְּכָבוֹד שְׁמֶךָ

הַגִּבּוֹר לְנִצָּח

וְהַנּוֹרָא בְּנוֹרְאוֹתֶיךָ

הַמֶּלֶךְ הַיּוֹשֵׁב

עַל-כִּסֵּא רָם וְנֹשֵׂא

שׁוֹכֵן עַד

מָרוֹם וְקָדוֹשׁ שְׁמוֹ

וְכָתוּב

רָנֵנוּ צְדִיקִים בַּיהוָה

לִישָׁרִים נָאֵה תְהִלָּה

Kadavar shekatuv,

Kol atzmotai tomarna:

‘Adonai, mi chamocha?

Matzil ani mechazak mimenu,

ve’ani ve’evyon migzlo.’

Mi yidmeh lach umi yishveh lach

umi ya’aroch lach?

Ha’El hagadol hagibor vehanorah

El elyon, koneh shamayim va’aretz.

Nehalelcha unshabech’cha

un’fa’er’cha

unevarech et shem kodshecha

ka’amur:

LeDavid:

Bar’chi nafshi et Adonai

vechol keravai et shem kodsho.

Ha’El beta’atzumot uzecha

hagadol bichvod shemecha

hagibor lanetzach

vehanorah benor’otecha—

hamelech hayoshev

al kishah ram venisah,

shochen ad

marom vekadosh shemo.

Vechatuv:

Ranenu tzadikim, bAdonai,

la’y’sharim nava tehilah.

¹ “From one who is too strong for him.”

² Or, “‘exalted’ and ‘holy’ is *God’s* name.”

You'll be hailed by honest mouths,
 blessed by words of the righteous,
 honored by tongues of the devoted
 and made holy among holy ones.¹
 And in the gatherings of myriads
 of your people Israel,
 joyfully will your name be glorified, ruler,
 in every generation;
 for this is the duty of all creatures
 before you, ruling God
 and God of our ancestors:
 to thank, hail, praise,
 glorify, honor, adorn,
 bless, exalt, and sing praises,
 more than words of song and praise
 by David the child of Jesse,
 your servant, your anointed.

בְּפִי יִשְׁרִים תִּתְהַלֵּל
 וּבִדְבָרֵי צַדִּיקִים תִּתְבָּרַךְ
 וּבִלְשׁוֹן חֲסִידִים תִּתְרוֹמַם
 וּבִקְרֵב קְדוֹשִׁים תִּתְקַדֵּשׁ
 וּבִמְקַהְלֹת רַבּוֹת
 עִמָּךְ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
 בְּרִנָּה יִתְפָּאֵר שְׁמְךָ מַלְכֵנוּ
 בְּכָל-דּוֹר וָדוֹר
 שֶׁכֶּן חֹבֶת כָּל-הַיְצוּרִים
 לִפְנֵיךָ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ
 לְהוֹדוֹת לְהַלֵּל לְשַׁבַּח
 לְפָאֵר לְרוֹמֵם לְהַדָּר
 לְבָרֵךְ לְעֹלֶה וּלְקַלֵּס
 עַל-כָּל-דְּבָרֵי שִׁירֹת וְתִשְׁבָּחוֹת
 דָּוִד בֶּן-יִשָּׁי
 עַבְדְּךָ מְשִׁיחֶךָ

Befi yesharim tit'halal
 uv'divrei tzadikim titbarach
 uvilshon chasidim titromam
 uv'kerev kedoshim titkadesh.
 Uvema'halot riv'vot
 amcha beit Yisra'el
 berina yitpa'ar shimcha malkenu
 bechol dor vador;
 sheken chovat kol hay'tzurim
 lefanecha, Adonai Eloheinu
 vElohei avoteinu ve'imoteinu,
 lehodot lehalel leshabe'ach
 lefa'er leromem lehader
 levarech le'aleh ulkaless
 al kol divrei shirot vetishbechot
 David ben Yishai
 avd'cha meshichecha.

May your name be praised for ever,
 our ruler—
 God, the ruler who is great and holy
 in sky and on earth.
 Because to you, ruling God
 and God of our ancestors,
 we should give song and praise,
 acclamation and music,
 power and government,
 victory, greatness, and strength,

יִשְׁתַּבַּח שְׁמְךָ לְעַד
 מַלְכֵנוּ
 הָאֵל הַמֶּלֶךְ הַגָּדוֹל וְהַקְדוֹשׁ
 בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ
 כִּי-לְךָ נָאָה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ
 שִׁיר וּשְׁבָחָה
 הַלֵּל וְזִמְרָה
 עֹז וּמִמְשָׁלָה
 נֶצַח גְּדֻלָּה וּגְבוּרָה

Yishtabach shimcha la'ad
 malkenu,
 ha'El hamelech hagadol vehakadosh
 bashamayim uva'aretz;
 ki lecha na'eh, Adonai Eloheinu
 vElohei avoteinu ve'imoteinu,
 shir ush'vacha,
 hallel vezimrah,
 oz umemshalah,
 netzach gedulah ug'vurah,

¹ Look at the first Hebrew letter of the second word in the last four lines of this section. The letters spell יצחק, Isaac, perhaps a reference to the person who composed the prayer. The four words of this acrostic mean upright, righteous, devout and holy, perhaps showing a progression towards God.

praise and glory,
holiness and royalty,
blessing and thanks,
from now to eternity.
Blessed are you, God,
God and ruler great in praises,
God of thanks, ruler of wonders,
who favors musical songs,
sovereign and God, life of all worlds.

תְּהִלָּה וְתַפְאֶרֶת
קְדוּשָׁה וּמַלְכוּת
בְּרָכוֹת וְהוֹדָאוֹת
מֵעַתָּה וְעַד-עוֹלָם
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי
אֵל מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל בַּתְּשַׁבְּחוֹת
אֵל הַהוֹדָאוֹת אֲדוֹן הַנִּפְלְאוֹת
הַבּוֹחֵר בְּשִׁירֵי זִמְרָה
מֶלֶךְ אֵל חַי הָעוֹלָמִים
tehilah vetif'eret,
kedushah umalchut,
berachot vehoda'ot
me'atah ve'ad olam.
Baruch ata Adonai,
El melech, gadol batishbachot,
El hahoda'ot, Adon hanifla'ot,
habochoer beshirei zimrah:
melech El, chei ha'olamim.

We bless you, Sovereign God, who rules
Eternal space and time,
Creator of the grapevine's fruit,
From which we make this wine.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
בוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן
Baruch ata Adonai
Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
Boreh peri hagafen.

..... Recline, and drain the fourth cup

על המִחְיָה¹ Al Hamichyah

.....After you finish the fourth cup, continue with the blessing after a snack

We bless you, Sovereign God,
Ruler of the universe,
for the vine and fruit of the vine,
and for the produce of the field,
and for the land—
pleasant, good, and spacious—
that you favored and gave as an inheritance
to our ancestors,
to eat its fruit
and be filled with its goodness.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
עַל-הַגֶּפֶן וְעַל-פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן
וְעַל תְּנוּבַת הַשָּׂדֶה
וְעַל-אֶרֶץ
חֶמְדָּה טוֹבָה וְרַחֲבָה
שֶׁרָצִיתָ וְהִנְחַלְתָּ
לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ וּלְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ
לְאֶכּוֹל מִפְּרִיָּהּ
וּלְשִׂבּוֹעַ מִטּוֹבָהּ
Baruch ata Adonai
Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
al hagefen ve'al peri hagefen
ve'al tenuvat hasadeh
ve'al eretz
chemdah tovah ur'chavah
sheratzita vehinchalta
la'avoteinu ule'imoteinu
le'echol mipirya
velisbo'a mituva.

¹ After the meal, we said Grace After Meals. Then we drank this cup of wine; it's a separate snack, so we say the appropriate blessing after it.

Please take pity, Sovereign God,
on Israel your people,
and on Jerusalem your city,
and on Zion where your glory dwells,
and on your altar¹ and on your Temple.
And build Jerusalem, the holy city,
quickly and in our days,
and bring us up into it,
and make us rejoice as it's rebuilt,
and we'll eat its fruit
and be filled with its goodness,
and we'll bless you for this
in holiness and purity.

רחם יי אלהינו
על-ישראל עמך
ועל-ירושלים עירך
ועל-ציון משכן כבודך
ועל-מזבחך ועל-היכלך
ובנה ירושלים עיר הקדש
במהרה בימינו
והעלנו לתוכה
ושמחנו בבנינה
ונאכל מפריה
ונשבע מטובה
ונברך עליה
בקדשה ובטהרה

Rachem Adonai Eloheinu
al Yisra'el amecha
ve'al Yerushalayim irecha
ve'al Tziyon mishkan kevodecha
ve'al mizbachacha ve'al hechalecha.
Uv'neh Yerushalayim, ir hakodesh,
bimhera veyamenu,
veha'alenu letocha
vesamchenu bevinyanah
venochal mipirya
venisba mituva
unevarechecha aleha
bikdusha uv'tohorah.

Add on Shabbat

And take pleasure in this Shabbat day,
and grant us success.

And make us happy on...
this matzah festival
because you are God,
who is good and does good to all,
and we'll thank you for the land
and for the fruit of the vine.
Blessed are you, Ruler,
for the land and fruit of the vine.

ורצה והחליצנו
ביום השבת הזה
ושמחנו ביום
חג המצות הזה
כי-אתה יי
טוב ומטיב לכל
ונודה לך על הארץ
ועל פרי הגפן
ברוך אתה יי
על הארץ ועל פרי הגפן

Uretze vehachalitzenu
beyom haShabat hazeh.
Vesamchenu beyom...
chag hamatzot hazeh,
ki ata Adonai
tov umetiv lakol,
venodeh lecha al ha'aretz
ve'al peri hagafen.
Baruch ata Adonai
al ha'aretz ve'al peri hagafen.

¹ Some omit this reference to Temple sacrifices.

Nirtzah: Our Celebration Is Accepted נִרְצָה

The service of Pesach	חֲסֵל סִדּוּר פֶּסַח כְּהִלְכָּתוֹ	Chasal sidur Pesach kehilchato,
we've brought to consummation,	כָּכֹל-מִשְׁפָּטוֹ וְחֻקָּתוֹ	Kechol mishpato vechukato;
With every ritual detail	כְּאֲשֶׁר זָכִינוּ לְסִדֵּר אוֹתוֹ	Ka'asher zachinu lesader oto, (2)
enjoined upon our nation.	כֵּן נִזְכֶּה לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ	Ken nizkeh la'asoto!

We're thankful we could do it—it shows God's approbation;
 All our food was kosher—no pig and no crustacean—
 Next year may we deserve again this recreation.

Spotless <i>God</i> you live	זָךְ שׁוֹכֵן מְעוֹנָה	Zach shochen me'onah,
in your holy habitation;	קוֹמֵם קֹהֵל מִי מָנָה	Komem ke'hal mi manah,
Take the part	קָרֵב נֹהֵל נִטְעֵי כָנָה	Karev nahel nit'ey chanah, (2)
of your countless nation;	פְּדוּיִם לְצִיּוֹן בְּרִנָּה	Peduyim leTziyon berinah.

If we were a tree we'd need no fertilization.
 We'd be flourishing with signs of germination;
 Bring us to Zion, humming in celebration.

Leshanah Haba'a BiYerushala'im

Next year in Jerusalem!	לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם	Leshana haba'ah biYerushala'im!
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Songs שירים

*Sing this alphabetical acrostic on the first night
Even I have to admit that it's rather a chore to sing.
You can use the tune to "Oh, Miss Bailey." The text is thick with allusions.*

Vayehi Bachatzi Halaylah ויהי בחצי הלילה¹

Back then, you performed lots of miracles	אז רוב נסים	Az rov nisim
at night;	הפּלאַת בלילה	hifleta balayla.
At the beginning of the first watch	בראש אשמורות	Berosh ashmurot
of this night	זה הלילה	ze halayla.
You gave victory to the good stranger (Abraham) ² when the night was divided for him	גר צדק ניצחתו	Ger tzedek nitzachto
And this was at the middle of the night.	כנחלק לו לילה	kenechelak lo layla.
	ויהי בחצי הלילה	Vayehi bachatzi halayla.
You judged the king of Gerar (Avimelech)	דנת מלך גרר	Danta melech Gerar
in a dream by night, ³	בחלום הלילה	bachalom halayla.
You frightened the Aramean (Laban) ⁴	הפחדת ארמי	Hifchadta Arami
in the darkness of night,	באמש לילה	be'emesh layla.
And Israel (Jacob) struggled with an angel	וישראל ישר לאל	VeYisra'el yashar la'El
and prevailed at night ⁵ /	ויוכל לו לילה	vayuchal lo layla.
And this was at the middle of the night.	ויהי בחצי הלילה	Vayehi bachatzi halayla.

¹ This alphabetical acrostic is from the liturgy for Shabbat Hagadol, the Shabbat before Pesach (though I've never seen it in a siddur). It records thirteen events which the Midrash placed on Pesach night. Glatzer and Elias explain and give references.

² Abraham defeated Chedorla'omer and his allies at night (Genesis 14).

³ God warned Avimelech in a dream not to pursue Sarah (Genesis 20:2-3).

⁴ God warned Laban not to harm Jacob at night (Gen. 31:29).

⁵ Jacob, whose name became Israel, struggled with the angel at night (Gen. 32:25).

The firstborn seed of Egypt
you crushed in the middle of the night.
They couldn't find their army
when they got up at night.
When *Sisera* took flight
you trampled him by the stars of night.
And this was at the middle of the night.¹

זָרַע בְּכוֹרֵי פַתְרוֹס
מַחֲצַת בַּחֲצִי הַלַּיְלָה
חֵילָם לֹא מָצְאוּ
בְקוּמָם בַּלַּיְלָה
טִיסַת נֶגִיד חַרוֹשֶׁת
סִלִּית בְּכוֹחֵי לַיְלָה
וַיְהִי בַחֲצִי הַלַּיְלָה
Zera bechorei Fatros
machatzta bachatzi halayla.
Chelam lo matzu
bekumam balayla.
Tisat negid charoshet
silita bechochvei layla.
Vayehi bachatzi halayla.

Sancherib planned to ravage your delight;
you rotted his corpses by night.
The idol Bel and its pedestal collapsed
in darkest night.
To the well-loved man *Daniel*,
the hidden insight was revealed at night.
And this was at the middle of the night.²

יַעַץ מַחֲרֵף לְנוֹפֵף אוֹוִי
הוֹבֶשֶׁת פֶּגְרָיו בַּלַּיְלָה
כָּרַע בֵּל וּמַצְבּוֹ
בְּאִישׁוֹן לַיְלָה
לְאִישׁ חַמּוּדוֹת
נִגְלָה רָז חֲזוֹת לַיְלָה
וַיְהִי בַחֲצִי הַלַּיְלָה
Ya'atz mecharef lenofef ivui
hovashta fegarav balayla.
Kara Bel umatzavo
be'ishon layla.
Le'ish chamudot
nigla raz chazut layla.
Vayehi bachatzi halayla.

Belshazzar, drunk, used the the holy cups,
and was killed that very night;
Saved from the lions' den,
Daniel explained the alarming dreams of night.
With hatred in his heart did *Haman*
write letters at night.
And this was at the middle of the night.³

מִשְׁתַּכֵּר בְּכֵלֵי קֹדֶשׁ
נִהָרַג בּוֹ בַּלַּיְלָה
נוֹשַׁע מִבוֹר אַרְיוֹת
פּוֹתֵר בְּעֵתוֹתַי לַיְלָה
שִׁנְאָה נָטַר אָגָּגִי
וְכָתַב סִפְרִים בַּלַּיְלָה
וַיְהִי בַחֲצִי הַלַּיְלָה
Mishtaker bichlei kodesh
neherag bo valayla.
Nosha mibor arayot
poter bi'atutei layla.
Sin'a natar Agagi
vechatav sefarim balayla.
Vayehi bachatzi halayla.

¹ Patros (Fatros) is Egypt (Gen. 10:14). The first-born were slain at night (Exodus 12:29). If the firstborn would be the strongest, Egypt was left without the cream of its army. The very stars fought against Sisera, the "prince of Charoshet" (Judges 5:20).

² 2 Kings 19 tells of the blasphemer (mecharef) Sennacherib who "taunted the living God" and whose army was destroyed at night. Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of a great statue which was destroyed, and Daniel interpreted his dream (Daniel 2).

³ At a banquet, Belshazzar used the cups which Nebuchadnezzar looted from the Temple; the writing appeared on the wall; Daniel interpreted; and Belshazzar died that night (Dan. 5). Daniel was saved from the lions' den (Dan. 6). Haman the Agagite sent letters condemning the Jews (Esther 3:13).

⁴ The poet uses ש instead of ס. It doesn't seem fair, but Hebrew acrostic poets often do this.

You roused your victory over <i>Haman</i> when slumber fled <i>from Ahasuerus</i> at night.	עֹרַרְתָּ נִצְחָךְ עָלָיו בְּנֹדֶד שְׁנַת-לַיְלָה	Orarta nitzchacha alav beneded shnat layla.
You'll trample the winepress for one who asks the watchman, ^{Isa 21:11} "When will the night end?"	פְּנִיחָה תִדְרוֹךְ לְשׁוֹמֵר מַח-מְלִילָה	Pura tidroch leshomer mah milayla..
He'll shout like a watchman and say, "Both morning comes and night." And this was at the middle of the night. ¹	צָרַח כְּשׁוֹמֵר וְשָׁח אֶתָּא בִּקְרָה וְגַם-לַיְלָה וַיְהִי בַחֲצִי הַלַּיְלָה	Tzarach kashomer vesach ata voker vegam layla. Vayehi bachatzi halayla
Bring near the day that is neither day nor night. Exalted <i>God</i> , show that both day and night are yours. Set guards to watch your city all the day and all the night. Make bright as day the darkness of the night. And this was at the middle of the night. ²	קָרַב יוֹם אֲשֶׁר הוּא לֹא יוֹם וְלֹא לַיְלָה רַם הוֹדַע כִּי-לֵךְ יוֹם אֶף-לֵךְ הַלַּיְלָה שׁוֹמְרִים הִפְקִיד לְעִירָךְ כָּל-הַיּוֹם וְכָל-הַלַּיְלָה תְּאִיר כְּאוֹר יוֹם חֶשֶׁכַת לַיְלָה וַיְהִי בַחֲצִי הַלַּיְלָה	Karev yom asher hu lo yom velo layla. Ram hoda ki lecha yom af lecha halayla. Shomrim hafked le'ircha kol hayom vechol halayla. Ta'ir ke'or yom cheshkat layla. Vayehi bachatzi halayla.

¹ Haman's fortunes fell when Ahasuerus, sleepless, listened to his chronicles and decided to reward Mordechai for saving his life (Esther 6). The winepress is from Isaiah 63, the watchman from Isaiah 21:12.

² Zechariah 14:7 promises a day without day or night. "Day and night are yours" is from Psalm 74:16. "Set guards" refers to Isaiah 62:6.

Say “Zevach Pesach” זֶבַח-פֶּסַח וְאַמַּרְתֶּם

Sing this on the second night¹

You showed the strength of your power at Pesach.	אִמֶּץ גְּבוּרוֹתֶיךָ הִפְלֵאתָ בַּפֶּסַח	Ometz g'vurotecha hifleta baPesach.
To the position of head of all festivals you promoted Pesach.	בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל-מוֹעֲדוֹת נִשְׂאתָ פֶּסַח	Berosh kol mo'adot niseta Pesach.
You showed Abraham the midnight of Pesach.	גִּלִּיתָ לְאַזְרָחִי חֲצוֹת לַיִל פֶּסַח	Gilita leEzrachi chatzot leil Pesach.
Everybody say, ^{Ex 12:27} “It’s the Pesach sacrifice!” ²	וְאַמַּרְתֶּם זֶבַח-פֶּסַח	Va'amartem, “Zevach Pesach.”
You knocked on Abraham’s tent door in the midday heat on Pesach.	דָּלַתְיוֹ דָּפַקְתָּ כְּחוֹם הַיּוֹם בַּפֶּסַח	Delata v dafakta kechom hayom baPesach.
He served to his radiant visitors matzah cakes on Pesach.	הִסְעִיד נּוֹצְצִים עֻגוֹת מַצּוֹת בַּפֶּסַח	His'id notz'tzim ugot matzot baPesach.
And he ran to the herd— to recall the bull offered for Pesach.	וְאֶל-הַבָּקָר רָץ זֶכֶר לְשׁוֹר עֶרְךָ פֶּסַח	Ve'el habakar ratz zecher leshor erech Pesach.
Everybody say, ^{Ex 12:27} “It’s the Pesach sacrifice!” ³	וְאַמַּרְתֶּם זֶבַח-פֶּסַח	Va'amartem, “Zevach Pesach.”

¹ It's an alphabetical acrostic about key events which by tradition happened on Pesach. Again, both Glatzer and Elias provide invaluable help in understanding the references and their connection with Pesach.

² Pesach is the first festival in the year, in that Mishnah Rosh Hashanah (1:1) sets Nisan as the New Year for Festivals. Tradition places Abraham's vision of the future (Gen. 15) at Pesach. The refrain is from Exodus 12:27.

³ Angels visited Abraham in Gen. 18; he rushed to prepare food, so the cakes could have been unleavened.

The men of Sodom angered <i>God</i> and were licked by flames on Pesach. Lot was saved from among them— he baked matzah at the end of Pesach. You swept the soil of Mof and Nof ¹ when you passed through on Pesach Everybody say, <i>Ex 12:27</i> “It’s the Pesach sacrifice!” ²	זועמו סְדוֹמִים לוֹהָטוּ בָאֵשׁ בַּפֶּסַח חֻלַּץ לוֹט מֵהֶם וּמִצּוֹת אָפָה בִקֶּץ פֶּסַח טַטֵּטַת מוֹף וְנוֹף בְּעֶבְרָךְ בַּפֶּסַח וְאָמַרְתֶּם זִבְח־פֶּסַח	Zo’amu Sedomim velohatu va’esh baPesach. Chulatz Lot mehem umatzot afa beketz Pesach. Titeta admat Mof veNof be’ovrecha baPesach. Va’amartem, “Zevach Pesach.”
God, you crushed the source of all power ³ in the vigil-night of Pesach. Mighty <i>God</i> , your own firstborn you spared in the blood of Pesach, and did not let ruin enter my doors on Pesach. Everybody say, <i>Ex 12:27</i> “It’s the Pesach sacrifice!”	יְהוָה רֹאשׁ כָּל־אוֹן מַחֲצֵתָ בַּלַּיִל שְׁמוֹר פֶּסַח כַּבִּיר עַל בֶּן בְּכוֹר פָּסַחְתָּ בְּדַם־פֶּסַח לְבִלְתִּי תֵּת מַשְׁחִית לְבֹא בִפְתָּחַי בַּפֶּסַח וְאָמַרְתֶּם זִבְח־פֶּסַח	Yah rosh kol on machatzta beleil shimur Pesach. Kabir al ben bechor pasachta bedam Pesach. Levilti tet mashchit lavo biftachay baPesach. Va’amartem, “Zevach Pesach.”
The walled town (Jericho) was besieged at Pesach time. Midian was destroyed by the barley cake, the Omer offering of Pesach. The finest of Pul and Lud ⁴ were burned in the blaze on Pesach Everybody say, <i>Ex 12:27</i> “It’s the Pesach sacrifice!” ⁵	מִסְגֶּרֶת סֻגָּרָה בְּעִתּוֹתֵי פֶסַח נִשְׁמְדָה מִדֵּין בִּצְלִיל שְׁעוֹרֵי עֹמֶר פֶּסַח שׁוֹרְפוֹ מִשְׁמַנֵּי פוֹל וְלוּד בִּיקָד יְקוֹד פֶּסַח וְאָמַרְתֶּם זִבְח־פֶּסַח	Mesugeret sugarah be’itotei Pesach. Nishmedah Midyan bitzlil se’orei Omer Pesach. Sorafu mashmanei Ful veLud bikad yekod Pesach. Va’amartem, “Zevach Pesach.”

¹ Usually understood as Memphis (so Milton referred to “Busiris and his Memphian chivalry” *PL* 1:307.)

² Lot baked matzot for the angels (Gen. 19:3), perhaps because he was observing Pesach, or perhaps because he hurried to feed his guests.

³ The first-born of Egypt were (it seems) considered its chief source of power.

⁴ Usually understood as Assyria.

⁵ Jericho fell after the Israelites observed Pesach (Joshua 5:10). In Judges 7:13, a dream about a barley-cake encouraged Gideon to attack the Midianites; the barley-cake is associated with the Omer offering for the second day of Pesach. Sennacherib’s Assyrian army falls in 2 Kings 19.

<i>Sennacherib</i> planned to stop in Nob ¹ this day before Pesach time arrived.	עוֹד הַיּוֹם בְּנוֹב לַעֲמוּד עַד גָּעָה עוֹנֵת פֶּסַח	Od hayom beNov la'amod ad ga'a onat Pesach.
A hand wrote the line <i>which forecast</i> the uprooting of Tzul ² on Pesach, when the watch was set and the table set <i>for Belshazzar's feast</i> on Pesach.	פֶּס יָד כְּתִבָּה לְקַעֲקַע צוּל בַּפֶּסַח צָפָה הַצִּפִּית עָרוֹךְ הַשְּׁלֵחָן בַּפֶּסַח	Pas yad katva leka'ake'a Tzul baPesach. Tzafo hatzafit aroch hashulchan baPesach.
Everybody say, ^{Ex 12:27} “It’s the Pesach sacrifice!” ³	וְאָמַרְתֶּם זֶבַח-פֶּסַח	Va'amartem, “Zevach Pesach.”
Hadassah (Esther) assembled the people for a three-day fast on Pesach.	קָהַל כִּנְסָה הַדָּסָה לְשַׁלֵּשׁ צוֹם פֶּסַח	Kahal kinsa Hadasa leshalesh tzom baPesach.
You slew the head of a wicked family (Haman) on a 50-cubit-high tree on Pesach.	רָאֵשׁ מִבֵּית רָשָׁע מִחַצְתָּה בָּעֵץ חֲמִשִּׁים בַּפֶּסַח	Rosh mibet rasha machatzta be'etz chamishim baPesach.
You’ll bring double trouble to Utzit (Edom) on Pesach.	שְׁתֵּי אֱלֵה רֵגַע תָּבִיא לְעוֹצִית בַּפֶּסַח	Shtei eleh rega tavi leUtzit baPesach.
May your hand be strong and lifted up, as <i>it was</i> on the night when the feast of Pesach became holy.	תָּעֹז יָדְךָ תְּרוֹם יְמִינְךָ כְּלִיל הַתְּקַדֵּשׁ חַג פֶּסַח	Ta'oz yadcha tarum yemincha keleil hitkadesh chag Pesach.
Everybody say, ^{Ex 12:27} “It’s the Pesach sacrifice!” ⁴	וְאָמַרְתֶּם זֶבַח-פֶּסַח	Va'amartem, “Zevach Pesach.”

¹ Near Jerusalem.

² Usually understood as Babylonia.

³ Isaiah 10:32 mentions Nob. The hand appears at Belshazzar's feast in Daniel 5.

⁴ Esther is called Hadassah in Esther 2:7. Haman's letters (Esther 3:12) went out on the 13th of Nisan, so Esther fasted on Pesach, and tradition holds that Haman was hanged on Pesach. Isaiah 47:9 predicts double trouble for Edom.

Ki Lo Na'eh כִּי לוֹ נָאֵה

*An alphabetical acrostic*Mighty Governor,¹

אָדִיר בְּמְלוּכָה

Adir bimluchah,

Choice like our Way,²

בַּחֹר כְּהֶלְכָה

Bachur kahalachah;

Bands of angels to God say:

גְּדוּדָיו יֹאמְרוּ לוֹ

G'dudav yomru lo

Here's the chorus

To you and to you, to you because you,

לְךָ וּלְךָ לְךָ כִּי לְךָ

Lecha ulecha, lecha ki lecha,

to you just to you,

לְךָ אַף לְךָ

lecha af lecha

Power, God, belongs to you,

לְךָ יְיָ הַמְּמַלְכָה

lecha adonai hamamlachah

For it's your due, it's right for you.

כִּי לוֹ נָאֵה כִּי לוֹ יָאֵה

ki lo na'eh, ki lo ya'eh

A banner Governor,

דָּגוּל בְּמְלוּכָה

Dagul bimluchah,

enhanced like our Way,

הָדוּר כְּהֶלְכָה

hadur kahalachah

To God veteran followers say:

וַתִּיקָו יֹאמְרוּ לוֹ

Vatikav yomru lo

Chorus

Worthy Governor,

זָכַאי בְּמְלוּכָה

Zakai bimlucha,

robust like our Way,

חָסִין כְּהֶלְכָה

chasin kahalachah

To God leading angels say:

טַפְסְרָיו יֹאמְרוּ לוֹ

Tafserav yomru lo

Chorus

Only Governor,

יָחִיד בְּמְלוּכָה

Yachid bimlucha,

great like our Way,

כָּבִיר כְּהֶלְכָה

kabir kahalachah

To God the disciples say:

לִמּוּדָיו יֹאמְרוּ לוֹ

Limudav yomru lo

Chorus

High Governor,

מָרוֹם בְּמְלוּכָה

Marom bimlucha,

awesome like our Way,

נֹרָא כְּהֶלְכָה

norah kahalachah

All around God, angels say:

סִבִּיבּוֹ יֹאמְרוּ לוֹ

Sevivav yomru lo

Chorus

Modest Governor,

עָנִיו בְּמְלוּכָה

Anav bimlucha,

a savior like our Way

פֹּדֵה כְּהֶלְכָה

podeh kahalachah

To God the saintly ones all say:

צַדִּיקָיו יֹאמְרוּ לוֹ

Tsadikav yomru lo

¹ The Hebrew says “Mighty in kingship/government/ruling.”² “Halachah” is the word for Jewish law, but it also means “walking”—a regulated way of life. That’s why I translate it “Way.”

Chorus

Holy Governor,
tender like our Way
To God a myriad angels say:

קְדוֹשׁ בְּמִלּוּכָה Kadosh bimplucha,
רַחוּם כְּהֶלֶכָה rachum kahalachah
שְׁנֵאֲנֵינוּ יֹאמְרוּ לוֹ Shin'anav yomru lo

Chorus

Firm Governor,
bracing like our Way,
To God the perfect followers say:

תְּקִיף בְּמִלּוּכָה Takif bimplucha,
תּוֹמֵךְ כְּהֶלֶכָה tomech kahalachah
תְּמִימָיו יֹאמְרוּ לוֹ Temimav yomru lo



They were oppressed ...

Adir Hu אָדיר הוא

.....Another alphabetical acrostic

Mighty he ¹ , mighty he	אָדיר הוא אָדיר הוא	Adir hu, Adir hu
	<i>Chorus</i>	
Will build his dwelling speedily	יבנה ביתו בקרוב	Yivneh veito bekarov
Quickly quickly let it be	במהרה במהרה	bim'herah, bim'herah
In the days that we shall see	בימינו בקרוב	beyamenu bekarov
Build it, God, build it, God,	אל בנה אל בנה	El bene, El bene
Build your dwelling speedily.	בנה ביתך בקרוב	bene vetcha bekarov
	<i>Chorus</i>	
Choice is he, great is he, chief is he	בָּחור הוא גָּדול הוא דָּגול הוא	bachur hu, gadol hu, dagul hu
	<i>Chorus</i>	
Fine is he, mature is he, worthy is he	הַדור הוא וְתִיק הוא זָכאי הוא	hadur hu, vatik hu, zakai hu
	<i>Chorus</i>	
Pious is he, pure is he, alone is he	חָסיד הוא טָהור הוא יָחיד הוא	chasid hu, tahor hu, yachid hu
	<i>Chorus</i>	
Great is he, learned is he, king is he	כָּבִיר הוא לָמוּד הוא מֶלֶךְ הוא	kabir hu, lamud hu, melech hu
	<i>Chorus</i>	
Glorious he, mighty he, strong is he	נָאוֹר הוא סָגִיב הוא עֲזוּז הוא	na'or hu, sagiv hu, izuz hu
	<i>Chorus</i>	
Savior he, righteous he, holy is he	פֹּדֶה הוא צַדִּיק הוא קְדוֹשׁ הוא	podeh hu, tsadik hu, kadosh hu
	<i>Chorus</i>	
Kind is he, Almighty is he, firm is he	רַחוּם הוא שְׁדִי הוא תְּקִיף הוא	rachum hu, shadai hu, takif hu

¹ Oy, I just couldn't get away from the masculine pronoun in this Singlish translation. Rhythm and rhyme demand a one-syllable word that ends in "e" to rhyme with...um..."she." Hmmm. Inclusive people, insert the "s," switch "his" to "hers" and everybody sing together!

Count The Omer סְפִירַת הָעֹמֶר

.....On the second Seder night, count the Omer

We bless you, Ruler,

our God, eternal sovereign,

who made us holy with your rules

and told us about counting the Omer.

16 Nisan Today is the first day into the Omer.

May this be what you want,

Ruler, our God

and God of our ancestors:

that the Temple be rebuilt

soon, in our days,

and restore our rights in your Torah,

and there we shall serve reverently

Mal. 3:4 as in days of old and years long past.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי

אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם

אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו

וְצִוָּנוּ עַל סְפִירַת הָעֹמֶר

הַיּוֹם יוֹם אֶחָד בַּעֲמֹר

יְהִי רָצוֹן לְפָנֶיךָ

יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ

וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ

שְׂיִבְנֶה בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ

בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ

וְתֵן חֵלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרַתְךָ

וְשָׁם נַעֲבֹדְךָ בִּירָאָה

כִּימֵי עוֹלָם וּכְשָׁנִים קְדָמוֹנִיּוֹת

Baruch atah Adonai,

Eloheinu melech ha'olam,

asher kidshanu bemitzvotav

vetzivanu al sefirat ha'Omer.

Hayom yom echad ba'Omer.

Yehi ratzon lefanecha

Adonai Eloheinu

vElohei avoteinu ve'imoteinu,

sheyibaneh beit hamikdash

bimherah veyamenu

veten chelkenu beToratecha

vesham na'avod'cha beyir'ah

kimei olam ucheshanim kadmoniyot.

Echad Mi Yode'ah אֶחָד מִי יוֹדֵעַ

Who knows a One?

I know a One!

One is our God

In heaven and earth.

אֶחָד מִי יוֹדֵעַ

אֶחָד אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ

אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ

שֶׁבַשְׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ

Echad mi yode'ah

Echad ani yode'ah

Echad Elohenu

Shebashamayim uva'aretz.

Who knows a 2?

I know a 2!

2 are the Tablets of the Covenant

1 is our God

in heaven and earth.

שְׁנַיִם מִי יוֹדֵעַ

שְׁנַיִם אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ

שְׁנֵי לַחֹת הַבְּרִית

אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ

שֶׁבַשְׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ

Shnayim mi yode'ah

Shnayim ani yode'ah

2 shnei luchot habrit

1 echad Elohenu

Shebashamayim uva'aretz.

¹ Lehman (332 ff.) offers an explanation for the choice of answers in this counting song: that they represent the merits by which Israel earned redemption.

Who knows a 3?	שְׁלוֹשָׁה מִי יוֹדֵעַ	Shelosha mi yode'ah
I know a 3!	שְׁלוֹשָׁה אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ	Shelosha ani yode'ah
3 are the Fathers	שְׁלוֹשָׁה אָבוֹת	3 shelosha avot
2 are the Tablets of the Covenant	שְׁנֵי לַחֹת הַבְּרִית	2 shnei luchot habrit
1 is our God	אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ	1 echad Elohenu
in heaven and earth.	שֶׁבַשְׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ	Shebashamayim uva'aretz.

Who knows a 4?	אַרְבַּע מִי יוֹדֵעַ	Arba mi yode'ah
I know a 4!	אַרְבַּע אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ	Arba ani yode'ah
4 are the Mothers	אַרְבַּע אִמּוֹת	4 arba imahot
3 are the Fathers	שְׁלוֹשָׁה אָבוֹת	3 shelosha avot
2 are the Tablets of the Covenant	שְׁנֵי לַחֹת הַבְּרִית	2 shnei luchot habrit
1 is our God	אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ	1 echad Elohenu
in heaven and earth.	שֶׁבַשְׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ	Shebashamayim uva'aretz.

Who knows a 5?	חֲמִשָּׁה מִי יוֹדֵעַ	Chamishah mi yode'ah
I know a 5!	חֲמִשָּׁה אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ	Chamishah ani yode'ah
5 are the fifths of the Torah	חֲמִשָּׁה חֲמִשֵּׁי תוֹרָה	5 chamisha chumshei Torah
4 are the Mothers	אַרְבַּע אִמּוֹת	4 arba imahot
3 are the Fathers	שְׁלוֹשָׁה אָבוֹת	3 shelosha avot
2 are the Tablets of the Covenant	שְׁנֵי לַחֹת הַבְּרִית	2 shnei luchot habrit
1 is our God	אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ	1 echad Elohenu
in heaven and earth.	שֶׁבַשְׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ	Shebashamayim uva'aretz.

Who knows a 6?	שִׁשָּׁה מִי יוֹדֵעַ	Shishah mi yode'ah
I know a 6!	שִׁשָּׁה אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ	Shishah ani yode'ah
6 are the books of the Mishnah	שִׁשָּׁה סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה	6 shishah sidrei Mishnah
5 are the fifths of the Torah	חֲמִשָּׁה חֲמִשֵּׁי תוֹרָה	5 chamisha chumshei Torah
4 are the Mothers	אַרְבַּע אִמּוֹת	4 arba imahot
3 are the Fathers	שְׁלוֹשָׁה אָבוֹת	3 shelosha avot
2 are the Tablets of the Covenant	שְׁנֵי לַחֹת הַבְּרִית	2 shnei luchot habrit
1 is our God	אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ	1 echad Elohenu
in heaven and earth.	שֶׁבַשְׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ	Shebashamayim uva'aretz.

Who knows a 7?

I know a 7!

7 are the days of the week

6 are the books of the Mishnah

5 are the fifths of the Torah

4 are the Mothers

3 are the Fathers

2 are the Tablets of the Covenant

1 is our God

in heaven and earth.

שִׁבְעָה מִי יוֹדֵעַ

שִׁבְעָה אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ

שִׁבְעָה יָמֵי שַׁבָּתָא

שֵׁשָׁה סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה

חֲמִשָּׁה חֻמְשֵׁי תוֹרָה

אַרְבַּע אִמָּהוֹת

שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת

שְׁנֵי לְחוֹת הַבְּרִית

אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ

שִׁבְשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ

Shiv'ah mi yode'ah

Shiv'ah ani yode'ah

7 shiv'ah yemei shabatah

6 shishah sidrei Mishnah

5 chamisha chumshei Torah

4 arba imahot

3 shelosha avot

2 shnei luchot habrit

1 echad Elohenu

Shebashamayim uva'aretz.

Who knows an 8?

I know an 8!

8 are the days before circumcision

7 are the days of the week

6 are the books of the Mishnah

5 are the fifths of the Torah

4 are the Mothers

3 are the Fathers

2 are the Tablets of the Covenant

1 is our God

in heaven and earth.

שְׁמוֹנָה מִי יוֹדֵעַ

שְׁמוֹנָה אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ

שְׁמוֹנָה יָמֵי מִילָה

שִׁבְעָה יָמֵי שַׁבָּתָא

שֵׁשָׁה סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה

חֲמִשָּׁה חֻמְשֵׁי תוֹרָה

אַרְבַּע אִמָּהוֹת

שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת

שְׁנֵי לְחוֹת הַבְּרִית

אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ

שִׁבְשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ

Sh'monah mi yode'ah

Sh'monah ani yode'ah

8 sh'monah yemei milah

7 shiv'ah yemei shabatah

6 shishah sidrei Mishnah

5 chamisha chumshei Torah

4 arba imahot

3 shelosha avot

2 shnei luchot habrit

1 echad Elohenu

Shebashamayim uva'aretz.

Who knows a 9?

I know a 9!

9 are the months of pregnancy

8 are the days before circumcision

7 are the days of the week

6 are the books of the Mishnah

5 are the fifths of the Torah

4 are the Mothers

3 are the Fathers

2 are the Tablets of the Covenant

1 is our God

in heaven and earth.

תִּשְׁעָה מִי יוֹדֵעַ

תִּשְׁעָה אָנִי יוֹדֵעַ

תִּשְׁעָה יָרַחֵי לֵידָה

שְׁמוֹנֶה יָמֵי מִלָּה

שִׁבְעָה יָמֵי שַׁבָּתָא

שֵׁשָׁה סִדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה

חֲמִשָּׁה חֻמְשֵׁי תוֹרָה

אַרְבַּע אִמָּהוֹת

שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת

שְׁנֵי לַחֹת הַבְּרִית

אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ

שֶׁבַשְׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ

Tish'ah mi yode'ah

Tish'ah ani yode'ah

9 tish'ah yarchei leidah

8 sh'monah yemei milah

7 shiv'ah yemei shabatah

6 shishah sidrei Mishnah

5 chamisha chumshei Torah

4 arba imahot

3 shelosha avot

2 shnei luchot habrit

1 echad Elohenu

Shebashamayim uva'aretz.

Who knows a 10?

I know a 10!

10 are the commandments

9 are the months of pregnancy

8 are the days before circumcision

7 are the days of the week

6 are the books of the Mishnah

5 are the fifths of the Torah

4 are the Mothers

3 are the Fathers

2 are the Tablets of the Covenant

1 is our God

in heaven and earth.

עֲשָׂרָה מִי יוֹדֵעַ

עֲשָׂרָה אָנִי יוֹדֵעַ

עֲשָׂרָה דִּבְרָיָא

תִּשְׁעָה יָרַחֵי לֵידָה

שְׁמוֹנֶה יָמֵי מִלָּה

שִׁבְעָה יָמֵי שַׁבָּתָא

שֵׁשָׁה סִדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה

חֲמִשָּׁה חֻמְשֵׁי תוֹרָה

אַרְבַּע אִמָּהוֹת

שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת

שְׁנֵי לַחֹת הַבְּרִית

אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ

שֶׁבַשְׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ

Asarah mi yode'ah

Asarah ani yode'ah

10 asarah dibrayah

9 tish'ah yarchei leidah

8 sh'monah yemei milah

7 shiv'ah yemei shabatah

6 shishah sidrei Mishnah

5 chamisha chumshei Torah

4 arba imahot

3 shelosha avot

2 shnei luchot habrit

1 echad Elohenu

Shebashamayim uva'aretz.

Who knows an 11?

I know an 11!

11 are the stars

10 are the commandments

9 are the months of pregnancy

8 are the days before circumcision

7 are the days of the week

6 are the books of the Mishnah

5 are the fifths of the Torah

4 are the Mothers

3 are the Fathers

2 are the Tablets of the Covenant

1 is our God

in heaven and earth.

אֶחָד עָשָׂר מִי יוֹדֵעַ

אֶחָד עָשָׂר אָנִי יוֹדֵעַ

אֶחָד עָשָׂר כּוֹכְבֵיָא

עָשָׂרָה דְּבִרָא

תְּשַׁעָה יָרַחֵי לֵידָה

שְׁמוֹנָה יָמֵי מִלָּה

שִׁבְעָה יָמֵי שַׁבָּתָא

שֵׁשָׁה סִדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה

חֲמִשָּׁה חֻמְשֵׁי תוֹרָה

אַרְבַּע אִמָּהוֹת

שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת

שְׁנֵי לַחֹת הַבְּרִית

אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ

שִׁבְשָׁמַיִם וּבְאָרֶץ

Achad asar mi yode'ah

Achad asar ani yode'ah

11 achad asar koch'vayah

10 asarah dibrayah

9 tish'ah yarchei leidah

8 sh'monah yemei milah

7 shiv'ah yemei shabatah

6 shishah sidrei Mishnah

5 chamisha chumshei Torah

4 arba imahot

3 shelosha avot

2 shnei luchot habrit

1 echad Elohenu

Shebashamayim uva'aretz.

Who knows a 12?

I know a 12!

12 are the tribes

11 are the stars

10 are the commandments

9 are the months of pregnancy

8 are the days before circumcision

7 are the days of the week

6 are the books of the Mishnah

5 are the fifths of the Torah

4 are the Mothers

3 are the Fathers

2 are the Tablets of the Covenant

1 is our God

in heaven and earth.

שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר מִי יוֹדֵעַ

שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר אָנִי יוֹדֵעַ

שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר שִׁבְטֵיָא

אֶחָד עָשָׂר כּוֹכְבֵיָא

עָשָׂרָה דְּבִרָא

תְּשַׁעָה יָרַחֵי לֵידָה

שְׁמוֹנָה יָמֵי מִלָּה

שִׁבְעָה יָמֵי שַׁבָּתָא

שֵׁשָׁה סִדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה

חֲמִשָּׁה חֻמְשֵׁי תוֹרָה

אַרְבַּע אִמָּהוֹת

שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת

שְׁנֵי לַחֹת הַבְּרִית

אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ

שִׁבְשָׁמַיִם וּבְאָרֶץ

Shnem asar mi yode'ah

Shnem asar ani yode'ah

Shnem asar shivtayah

11 achad asar koch'vayah

10 asarah dibrayah

9 tish'ah yarchei leidah

8 sh'monah yemei milah

7 shiv'ah yemei shabatah

6 shishah sidrei Mishnah

5 chamisha chumshei Torah

4 arba imahot

3 shelosha avot

2 shnei luchot habrit

1 echad Elohenu

Shebashamayim uva'aretz.

Who knows a 13?	שְׁלוֹשָׁה עָשָׂר מִי יוֹדֵעַ	Sheloshah asar mi yode'ah
I know a 13!	שְׁלוֹשָׁה עָשָׂר אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ	Sheloshah asar ani yode'ah
13 are God's attributes	שְׁלוֹשָׁה עָשָׂר מִדֵּיָא	13 sheloshah asar midayah
12 are the tribes	שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר שְׁבָטִיָּא	12 shnem asar shivtayah
11 are the stars	אֶחָד עָשָׂר כּוֹכְבֵּיָא	11 achad asar koch'vayah
10 are the commandments	עָשָׂרָה דְּבִרָּיָא	10 asarah dibrayah
9 are the months of pregnancy	תִּשְׁעָה יָרְחֵי לֵידָה	9 tish'ah yarchei leidah
8 are the days before circumcision	שְׁמוֹנָה יָמֵי מִילָה	8 sh'monah yemei milah
7 are the days of the week	שִׁבְעָה יָמֵי שַׁבָּתָא	7 shiv'ah yemei shabatah
6 are the books of the Mishnah	שֵׁשָׁה סִדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה	6 shishah sidrei Mishnah
5 are the fifths of the Torah	חֲמִשָּׁה חֻמְשֵׁי תוֹרָה	5 chamisha chumshei Torah
4 are the Mothers	אַרְבַּע אִמּוֹת	4 arba imahot
3 are the Fathers	שְׁלוֹשָׁה אָבוֹת	3 shelosha avot
2 are the Tablets of the Covenant	שְׁנֵי לַחֹת הַבְּרִית	2 shnei luchot habrit
1 is our God	אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ	1 echad Elohenu
in heaven and earth.	שֶׁבַשְׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ	Shebashamayim uva'aretz.



Chad Gadya חַד גָּדְיָא

Just a kid, just a kid, That Dad bought for a couple of pennies; Just a kid, just a kid.	חַד גָּדְיָא חַד גָּדְיָא דְּזַבֵּן אָבָא בִּתְרֵי זֻזֵי חַד גָּדְיָא חַד גָּדְיָא	Chad gadya, chad gadya dezabin abah bitrei zuzei chad gadya chad gadya.
Along came the cat And ate up the kid That Dad bought for a couple of pennies; Just a kid, just a kid.	וְאָתָא שׁוּנְרָא וְאָכְלָה לְגָדְיָא דְּזַבֵּן אָבָא בִּתְרֵי זֻזֵי חַד גָּדְיָא חַד גָּדְיָא	Ve'ata shunra ve'achla legadya dezabin aba bitrei zuzei chad gadya, chad gadya.
Along came the dog And bit the cat That ate up the kid That Dad bought for a couple of pennies; Just a kid, just a kid.	וְאָתָא כַּלְבָּא וְנָשַׁךְ לְשׁוּנְרָא דְּאָכְלָה לְגָדְיָא דְּזַבֵּן אָבָא בִּתְרֵי זֻזֵי חַד גָּדְיָא חַד גָּדְיָא	Ve'ata chalba venashach leshunra de'achla legadya dezabin aba bitrei zuzei chad gadya, chad gadya.
Along came the stick And beat the dog That bit the cat That ate up the kid That Dad bought for a couple of pennies; Just a kid, just a kid.	וְאָתָא חוּטְרָא וְהִכָּה לְכַלְבָּא דְּנָשַׁךְ לְשׁוּנְרָא דְּאָכְלָה לְגָדְיָא דְּזַבֵּן אָבָא בִּתְרֵי זֻזֵי חַד גָּדְיָא חַד גָּדְיָא	Ve'ata chutrah vehikah lechalba denashach leshunra de'achla legadya dezabin aba bitrei zuzei chad gadya, chad gadya.
Along came fire And burnt the stick That beat the dog That bit the cat That ate up the kid That Dad bought for a couple of pennies; Just a kid, just a kid.	וְאָתָא נוּרָא וְשָׂרַף לְחוּטְרָא דְּהִיכָה לְכַלְבָּא דְּנָשַׁךְ לְשׁוּנְרָא דְּאָכְלָה לְגָדְיָא דְּזַבֵּן אָבָא בִּתְרֵי זֻזֵי חַד גָּדְיָא חַד גָּדְיָא	Ve'ata nurah vesaraf lechutrah dehikah lechalba denashach leshunra de'achla legadya dezabin aba bitrei zuzei chad gadya, chad gadya.

Along came water	וְאַתָּא מֵיָא	Ve'ata hamaya
And put out the fire	וְכָבָה לְנוּרָא	vechava lenurah
That burnt the stick	דְּשָׂרָף לְחוּטְרָא	desaraf lechutrah
That beat the dog	דְּהִכָּה לְכַלְבָּא	dehikah lechalba
That bit the cat	דְּנָשַׁךְ לְשׁוּנְרָא	denashach leshunra
That ate up the kid	דְּאַכְלָה לְגַדְיָא	de'achla legadya
That Dad bought for a couple of pennies;	דְּזָבַן אָבָא בִּתְרֵי זֻזֵי	dezabin aba bitrei zuzei
Just a kid, just a kid.	חַד גַּדְיָא חַד גַּדְיָא	chad gadya, chad gadya.
Along came the ox	וְאַתָּא תּוֹרָא	Ve'ata torah
And drank the water	וְשָׁתָא לְמֵיָא	veshata lemaya
That put out the fire	דְּכָבָה לְנוּרָא	dechava lenurah
That burnt the stick	דְּשָׂרָף לְחוּטְרָא	desaraf lechutrah
That beat the dog	דְּהִכָּה לְכַלְבָּא	dehikah lechalba
That bit the cat	דְּנָשַׁךְ לְשׁוּנְרָא	denashach leshunra
That ate up the kid	דְּאַכְלָה לְגַדְיָא	de'achla legadya
That Dad bought for a couple of pennies;	דְּזָבַן אָבָא בִּתְרֵי זֻזֵי	dezabin aba bitrei zuzei
Just a kid, just a kid.	חַד גַּדְיָא חַד גַּדְיָא	chad gadya, chad gadya.
Along came the butcher	וְאַתָּא הַשׁוֹחֵט	Ve'ata hashochet
And slaughtered the ox	וְשַׁחַט לְתוֹרָא	veshachat letorah
That drank the water	דְּשָׁתָא לְמֵיָא	deshata lemaya
That put out the fire	דְּכָבָה לְנוּרָא	dechava lenurah
That burnt the stick	דְּשָׂרָף לְחוּטְרָא	desaraf lechutrah
That beat the dog	דְּהִכָּה לְכַלְבָּא	dehikah lechalba
That bit the cat	דְּנָשַׁךְ לְשׁוּנְרָא	denashach leshunra
That ate up the kid	דְּאַכְלָה לְגַדְיָא	de'achla legadya
That Dad bought for a couple of pennies;	דְּזָבַן אָבָא בִּתְרֵי זֻזֵי	dezabin aba bitrei zuzei
Just a kid, just a kid.	חַד גַּדְיָא חַד גַּדְיָא	chad gadya, chad gadya.

Along came the angel of death
 And slaughtered the butcher
 Who slaughtered the ox
 That drank the water
 That put out the fire
 That burnt the stick
 That beat the dog
 That bit the cat
 That ate up the kid
 That Dad bought for a couple of pennies;
 Just a kid, just a kid.

וְאַתָּא מַלְאַךְ הַמָּוֶת
 וְשַׁחַט לְשׁוֹחֵט
 דְּשַׁחַט לְתוֹרָא
 דְּשָׁתָא לְמַיָּא
 דְּכָבָה לְנוּרָא
 דְּשָׂרָף לְחוּטְרָא
 דְּהִכָּה לְכַלְבָּא
 דְּנָשַׁךְ לְשׁוּנְרָא
 דְּאַכְלָה לְגָדְיָא
 דְּזָבִין אָבָא בִּתְרֵי זֻזֵּי
 חַד גָּדְיָא חַד גָּדְיָא
 Ve'ata mal'ach hamavet
 veshachat leshochet
 deshachat letorah
 deshata lemaya
 dechava lenurah
 desaraf lechutrah
 dehikah lechalba
 denashach leshunra
 de'achla legadya
 dezabin aba bitrei zuzei
 chad gadya, chad gadya.

Along came the Holy One we bless
 And slaughtered the angel of death
 Who slaughtered the butcher
 Who slaughtered the ox
 That drank the water
 That put out the fire
 That burnt the stick
 That beat the dog
 That bit the cat
 That ate up the kid
 That Dad bought for a couple of pennies;
 Just a kid, just a kid.

וְאַתָּא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא
 וְשַׁחַט לְמַלְאַךְ הַמָּוֶת
 דְּשַׁחַט לְשׁוֹחֵט
 דְּשַׁחַט לְתוֹרָא
 דְּשָׁתָא לְמַיָּא
 דְּכָבָה לְנוּרָא
 דְּשָׂרָף לְחוּטְרָא
 דְּהִכָּה לְכַלְבָּא
 דְּנָשַׁךְ לְשׁוּנְרָא
 דְּאַכְלָה לְגָדְיָא
 דְּזָבִין אָבָא בִּתְרֵי זֻזֵּי
 חַד גָּדְיָא חַד גָּדְיָא
 Ve'ata haKadosh Baruch Hu
 Veshachat lemal'ach hamavet
 deshachat leshochet
 deshachat letorah
 deshata lemaya
 dechava lenurah
 desaraf lechutrah
 dehikah lechalba
 denashach leshunra
 de'achla legadya
 dezabin aba bitrei zuzei
 chad gadya, chad gadya.

שיר השירים From The Song of Songs

It's traditional to read The Song of Songs on Pesach, as an expression of God's enduring love for Israel.

Here are some songs to sing. The lyricists sometimes rearranged the original text.

Song 2:2-3 Like a lily among thorns,

so is my sweetheart among *the other* girls.

Like an apple in the trees of the wood,

so is my love among the other boys.

כְּשׁוֹשָׁנָה בֵּין הַחֹחִים

כֵּן רַעֲיָתִי בֵּין הַבָּנוֹת

כַּתְּפוּחַ בְּעֵצֵי הַיַּעַר כֵּן

דּוּדִי בֵּין הַבָּנִים

Keshoshana bein hachochim,

Ken ra'ayati bein habanot.

Ke'tapu'ach ba'atzei haya'ar,

Ken dodi ben habanim.

La la la la la la la la la la, etc.

Song 2:8 I hear my honey coming down the street,

Singing like a birdie, tweet, tweet, tweet,

Skiping like a ram on the craggy mountain,

Frisky as a lamb by the cool, shady fountain.

קוֹל דּוּדִי

הִנֵּה-זֶה בָּא

מְדַלֵּג עַל-הַהָרִים

מְקַפֵּץ עַל-הַנִּבְעוֹת

Kol dodi, kol dodi, kol dodi

hine ze bah. (2)

Medaleg al heharim,

mekapetz al hagva'ot.

2:11-13 Buds sprouting from the earth

proclaim it's spring, the time for birds to sing.¹

See, winter's gone,

it's passed away;

The blossoming vines

yield their bouquet!

נִצָּנִים נִרְאוּ בָאָרֶץ

עַתָּה זְמִיר הִגִּיעַ

כִּי-הִנֵּה סָתְיוֹ עָבָר

סָתְיוֹ חָלַף חָלַף לוֹ

הַגָּפְנִים סִמְדָר

נָתְנוּ רֵיחָם

Nitzanim nir'u nir'u va-aretz;

Et zamir higi'a, et zamir. (2)

Ki hineh, stav avar,

Stav chalaf, halach lo;

Hag'fanim semadar

Natnu, natnu recham. (2)

Song 2:16 My love is mine, and I am his,

The shepherd among the lilies;

Song 4:9 You have stolen my heart,

my partner, my bride,

you've stolen my heart, my bride.

דּוּדִי לִי וָאֲנִי לוֹ

הָרֹעֶה בַּשּׁוֹשָׁנִים

לִבַּבְתִּנִּי

אָחֹתִי כָלָה

לִבַּבְתִּנִּי כָלָה

Dodi li, va'ani lo,

Ha-roeh bashoshanim;

Libavtini,

achoti chalah,

libavtini chalah.

¹ "The time for music has arrived"

Song 4:8 Come with me from Lebanon,

Come with me, my bride,

From the lions' lairs,

From the top of Senir and Hermon;

Song 4:1 How beautiful you are, my love

Your eyes are doves.

Song 5:16 This is my love, this is my sweetheart;

O daughters of Jerusalem, this is my sweetheart.

Song 5:10 My best buddy is bright and ruddy;

He stands out in the crowd.

Song 6:1-2 Where has your lover gone,

lovely lady?

Which way did your lover turn?

We'll help you look for him.

My love went down to his garden,

To his fragrant flower beds.

8:13-14 Darling, You're sitting in my garden.

My friends can hear your voice.

Let me hear it *too*!

Run, darling,

And show yourself like a gazelle

Or a young wild goat

On the fragrant mountains.

אֶתִּי מִלְּבָנוֹן

אֶתִּי כָלָה תָּבוֹאִי

מִמְעֻנוֹת אַרְיֹת

מִרֹאשׁ שֶׁנִּיר וְחֶרְמוֹן

הֵנָּה יָפָה רַעֲיָתִי הֵנָּה יָפָה

עֵינֶיךָ יוֹנִים

זֶה דּוֹדִי זֶה רַעִי

בָּנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם זֶה רַעִי

דּוֹדִי דּוֹדִי צָח וְאָדוֹם

דָּגוּל מִרֶבֶבָה:

אָנָּה הָלַךְ דּוֹדֶךָ

הַיָּפָה בְּנָשִׁים

אָנָּה פָּנָה דּוֹדֶךָ

וְנִבְקָשְׁנוּ עִמָּךְ

דּוֹדִי יָרַד לְגַנוֹ

לְעֻרְוֹנוֹת הַבָּשִׂם

הַיּוֹשֶׁבֶת בַּגָּנִים

חֲבֵרִים מִקְשִׁימִים לְקוֹלֶךָ

הַשְּׁמִיעֵינִי

בְּרַח דּוֹדִי

וּדְמֵה-לֶךָ לְצִבִּי

אוֹ לְעֹפֶר הָאֵיָלִים

עַל הָרֵי בִשְׁמִים

Iti miL'vanon,

iti kalah tavoi. (2)

Mim'onot arayot,

Merosh S'nir veChermon

Hinach yafa ra'ayati,

Einayich yonim. (2)

Ze dodi, ze re'i,

B'not Yerushalayim, ze re'i. (2)

Dodi, dodi tsach ve'adom,

Dagul mereevah. (hei hei!)

Ana halach dodech,

hayafah banashim?

Ana panah dodech?

un'vakshenu imach. (2)

Dodi yarad legano, yarad legano,

la'arugot habosem (2)

Hayoshevet baganim, (6)

Chaverim makshivim lekolech. (2)

Hashmi'ini (ohs, lais, and claps)

B'rach dodi, b'rach dodi,

Ud'meh lecha litz'vi,

O le'ofar ha'ayalim

Al harei vesamim. (2)

Hashmi'ini, etc.

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