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The Join-In, Participate, Sing-Along Hagadah

הַגָּדָה שֶׁל פֶּסַח

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SAMPLE
A Hagadah for Irreverent People
at Different Levels of Hebrew Literacy
by
Irrev. Dr. Joe Lewis



Prepared by
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Sixth Edition

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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!*

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**In loving memory of
Betty Lewis and Minnie Naidoff**

Would that they had seen our children grow!

תם ולא נשלט

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Preface

Preface to the Sixth Edition

We 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

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.

**Had God saved us, saved us, saved us,
Saved us from the nasty 'Gyptians
Without giving them conniptions,
Dayenu**

Hebrew is clear and set in logical phrases.

**אָלוּ הַזִּיאָנוּ מִמְצָרִים
וְלֹא עָשָׂה בָּהֶם שְׁפָטִים
דִּינּוּ**

Transliteration lines up with Hebrew, so everyone keeps the same place on the page.

Illu hotzi'anu miMitzrayim
Velo asah vahem shefatim (2)
Dayenu

distillation—of the need for a second edition?

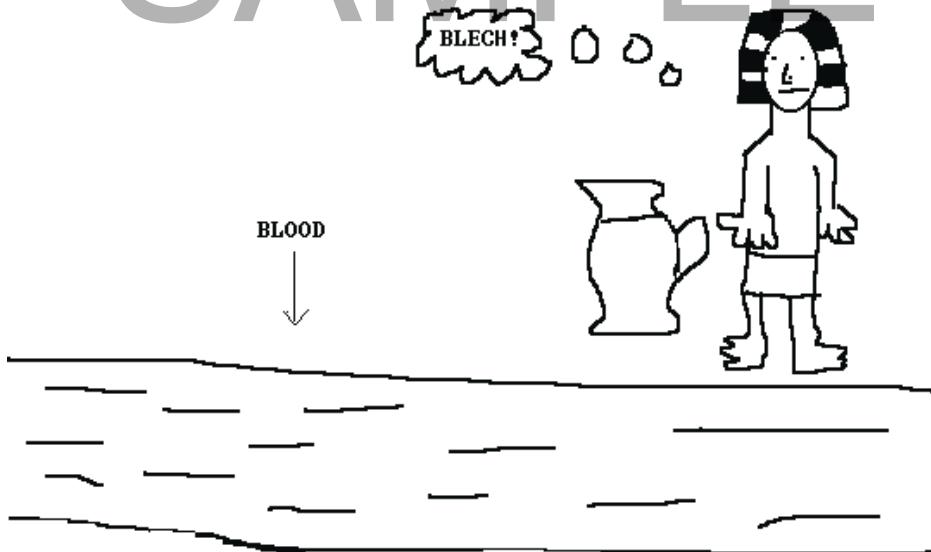
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The Plague of Blood



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 יְקַדֵּשׁ אֶתְנוּ
Scripture יְקַדֵּשׁ אֶתְנוּ
Torah יְקַדֵּשׁ אֶתְנוּ
Matriarchs יְקַדֵּשׁ אֶתְנוּ

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 Haggadah (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 Rabbis; 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 be-nighted 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 free-way 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 Ganzfried, 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 Hafsaḥah—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
Who rules both earth and heaven;
You made us holy with your rules
And told us, "Burn that leaven!"

ברוך אתה יי' אליהינו מלך העולם
אשר קדשנו במצוותיו
וצונו על בעור חמץ

Baruch ata Adonai
Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
asher kidshan bemitzvotav
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
Remaining in my trust,
neither singed nor burned nor seared—
I didn't know that it was here—
It's now as if it never was:
It's ownerless, like dust.

כל חמירא וחמיעא
דאכא ברשותי
דלא חמיתה וدلא בערתה
וدلא ידענא ליה
לבטול ולהוי הפקר
כעפרא דארעא

Kol chamira vachamiya
de'ika virshuti,
dela chamitei udela vi'artei,
udela yada'na lei,
livtel velehevei hefker,
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
Remaining in my trust
Whether I noticed it or not,
Whether I blackened it or not,
Whether I burned it up or not,
It's now as if it never was:
It's ownerless, like dust.

כל חמירא וחמיעא
דאכא ברשותי
דחתתה וدلא חזתה
ד חמיתה וدلא חמיתה
ד בערתה וدلא בערתה
לבטול ולהוי הפקר
כעפרא דארעא

Kol chamira vachamiya
de'ika virshuti,
dachazitei udela chazitei,
dachamitei udla chamitei,
devi'artei udela vi'artei,
livtel velehevei hefker,
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

Preparing the Seder Table

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

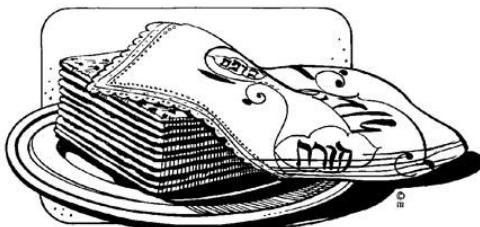
Candles

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-

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.

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?

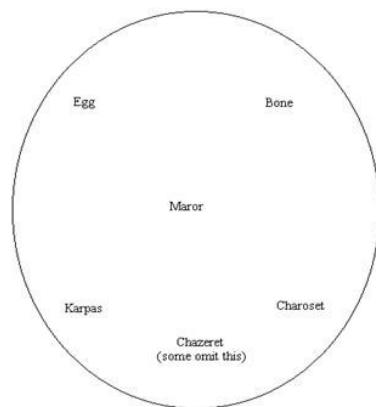
Miriam's Cup

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 spasmodic 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.

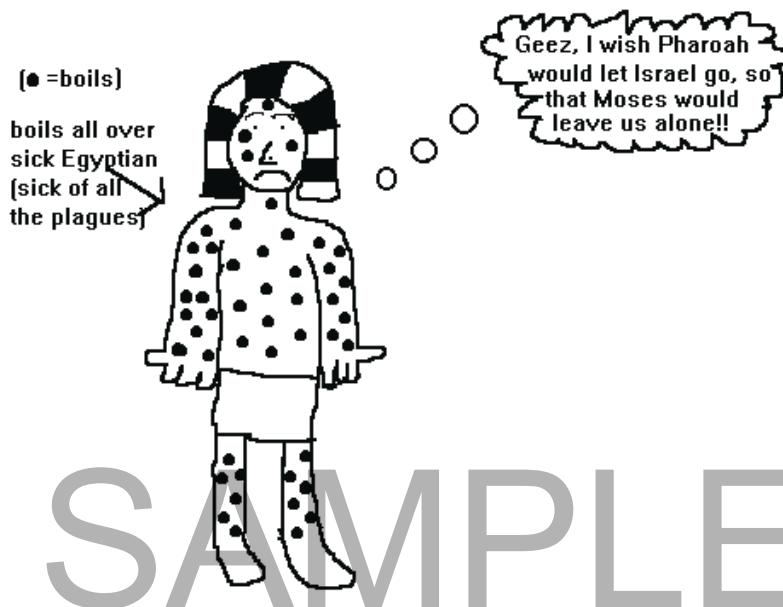
While I think these are noble gestures, I also think each one quickly becomes out of date. What is more, our suffering under the Egyptians implies the oppressions that we suffered later—from Romans, from Crusaders, even from Nazis. Some would say the Nazis were a special case, that neither before nor 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' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
אָשֶׁר קָדְשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו
וְצִוּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר
שֶׁל שְׁבָת וַיּוֹם טוֹב

Baruch ata Adonai
Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
Asher kidshnu 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 ורchatz
כרכס יחת
מגיד רחצחה
מוציא מצה
מרור כורח
שולחן עורך
צפונ ברכ
הallel נירצחה

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 → 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.

Gen 2:1-3 Now they were completed—

sky and land

and all their hosts of *creatures*.

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 God rested from the whole project

which God had created to work on.

וַיְהִי־עָרֵב וַיַּהַרְבֵּךְ Vayehi erev, vayehi voker,

יּוֹם הַשְׁבִּיעִי yom hashishi

וַיָּכֹל Vayechulu

הַשְׁמִימִים וְהָאָרֶץ hashamayim vha'aretz

וְכָל־צְבָאָם vechol tzeva'am.

וַיָּכֹל אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְׁבִּיעִי vayechal Elohim bayom hashvi'i

מְלָאכָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה melachto asher asah,

וַיִּשְׁבַּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְׁבִּיעִי vayishbot bayom hashvi'i

מִכָּל־מְלָאכָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה mikol melachto asher asah.

וַיָּבֹרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־יּוֹם הַשְׁבִּיעִי Vayevarech Elohim et yom hashvi'i

וַיִּקְדַּשׁ אֹתוֹ vayekadesh oto,

כִּי בֹּשֶׁת מִכָּל־מְלָאכָתוֹ ki vo shavat mikol melachto

אֲשֶׁר־בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לְעַשׂוֹת 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 י"י

אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם

בּוֹרֶךְ פָּרִי הָגָפָן

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.

ברוך אתה ייְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
אשר בחר בנו מִכֶּלֶעֶם
ורומםנו מִכֶּלֶשׁוֹן
וקדשנו בְּמִצּוֹתָיו

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

וְתַתֵּן לְנוּ ייְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאַהֲבָה שְׁבָתוֹת לִמְנוּחָה וּמַעֲדִים לְשִׁמְחָה חָגִים וּזְמָנִים לְשָׁזָן אֶת-יּוֹם הַשְׁבָתָה הַזֶּה וְאֶת-יּוֹם חַג הַמְּמַצּוֹת הַזֶּה זָמֵן חִרּוֹתֵנוּ בְּאַהֲבָה מִקְרָא קָדֵשׁ זֶכֶר לִיצְיאַת מִצְרָיִם כִּי בְּנָנו בְּחִרְפָּת וְאָוֹתֵנוּ קָדְשָׁת מִכֶּלֶעֶם וּשְׁבָתָה וּמוֹעֵד קָדֵשׁ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצֵן בְּשִׁמְחָה וּבְשָׁזָן הַנְּחַלְתֵּנוּ בְּרָךְ ייְהוָה מִקְדָּשׁ הַשְׁבָתָה וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל 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 litziyat 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 *קֹרַא*, to call.

Havdalah

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

We bless you, Sovereign God,
Who rules the universe entire;
You are creator of this flickering light,
The light of fire.

We bless you, Sovereign God,
Ruler of the universe,
who distinguishes holy from secular,
darkness from light,
Israel from other peoples,
the seventh day
from the six days of creative activity.
You distinguished Shabbat's holiness
from the holiness of the festival,
and you made Shabbat more holy
than the six days of creative activity.
You distinguished and hallowed
your people Israel through your holiness.
Blessed are you, God,
who distinguishes types of holiness.¹

ברוך אתה יי' אליהינו מלך העולם בורא מאורי האש

Baruch ata Adonai
Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
borei me'orei ha'esh.

ברוך אתה יי' אליהינו מלך העולם המבדיל בין קדש לחול בין אור לחשך בין ישראל לעמים בין يوم השביעי לששת ימי המעשה בין קדשות שבת לבין קדשות יום טוב הבדלה ואית-יום השביעי משלשת ימי-המעשה קדשות הבדלה וקדשות האת-עمرך ישראל בקדשתך ברוך אתה יי' המבדיל בין קדש לקדש

Baruch ata Adonai
Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
hamavdil bein kodesh lechol,
bein or lechoshech,
bein Yisra'el la'amim,
bein yom hashvi'i
lesheshet yemei hama'aseh.
Bein kedushat Shabbat
likdushat yom tov hivdalta
ve'et yom hashvi'i
misheshet yemei hama'aseh kidashta.
Hivdalta vekidashta
et amcha Yisra'el bikdushatecha.
Baruch ata Adonai
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,
Who rules eternal time and space;
You raised us and sustained us,
And you brought us to this place.²

ברוך אתה יי' אליהינו מלך העולם שהחיינו וקימנו והגינו בזמן הזה

Baruch ata Adonai
Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
Shehecheyanu vekimanu
Vehig'i'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?

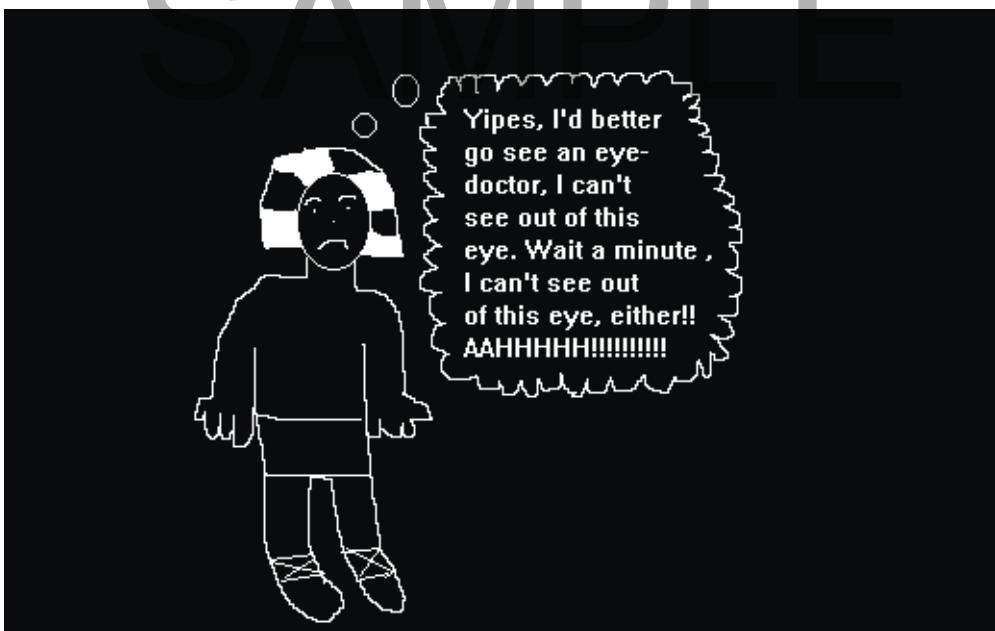
Urchatz וּרְחַץ*Wash hands without making a blessing.***Karpas כְּרָפָס***Everyone gets a piece of the greens, dipped in salt water**This is one of the two dippings mentioned in The Four Questions (page 7).*

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

ברוך אתה יי' אליהינו מלך העולם
 בורא פרי האדמה Baruch ata Adonai
 Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
 borei peri ha'adamah.

Yachatz יָחָצֶת*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

מַגִּיד: Tell the Story*Uncover the matzot, hold up the Seder plate, and sing.***הָא לְחַמָּא¹**

This is the dough,	הָא לְחַמָּא	Ha lachmah,
This is the dough of woe,	עֲנֵנִיא	Ha lachmah anya
Which they ate,	דִ-אָכְלוּ	Di achalu,
Our parents ate so long ago	אָבָהָתָנָא	Achalu avahatana
Back in Egypt, back in Egypt, back in Egypt land (2)	בָּאָרְעָא דְמִצְרָיִם	Be'arah, be'arah deMitzrayim.(2)
Let the hungry come and eat with us;	כָּל-דְכַפֵּין יִתְיִי וַיְכֹל	Kol dichfin yetei veylechol
Let the needy feast (no need to fuss).	כָּל-דְצַרְיךָ יִתְיִי וַיְפִסְחָה	Kol ditzrich yetei veysach.
We are here	הַשְׁתָּא הַכָּא	Hashatah hachah,
For this year;	לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה	Leshanah haba'ah
Next year we	בָּאָרְעָא דִיְשָׁרָאֵל	Be'arah deYisra'el.
All want to be	הַשְׁתָּא עֲבָדִי	Hashatah avdei,
In the land of Israel;	לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה	Leshanah haba'ah
Slavery	בְּנֵי חֹרִין	Benei chorin.
Is now our lot		
Next year we		
Sure hope that it will not,		
And we'll all be free—		
Mom and Dad as well!		

SAMPLE

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

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

I have to sing: this evening

מה נשותנה הלילה הזה

Mah nishtana halaylah hazeh

Is not like others I've known

מכל-הלילהות

mikol halaylot?

(not like others I've known).

שְׁבָכָל-הַלְילוֹת

Shebechol halaylot

On all other nights

אָנוּ אָכְלִין

anu ochlin

We're happy to chew

חַמְץ וּמַצָּה

chametz umatzah.

Both matzah and yeasty roll,

הַלְילָה הַזָּה

Halaylah hazeh, halaylah hazeh

But tonight, tonight

כָּלּוּ מַצָּה

kulo matzah.

(Tell me, am I not right?)

It's matzah or nothing at all.¹

שְׁבָכָל-הַלְילוֹת

Shebechol halaylot

On all other nights

אָנוּ אָכְלִין

anu ochlin

We eat all kinds of veg

שְׁאָר יְרָקוֹת

she'ar yerakot.

From asparagus to zucchini, (2)

הַלְילָה הַזָּה

Halaylah hazeh, halaylah hazeh

But tonight, tonight

מָרוֹר

Maror, maror. (2)

(Tell me, am I not right?)

It's maror—and that's a real meanie! (2)²

שְׁבָכָל-הַלְילוֹת

Shebechol halaylot

On all other nights

אָנוּ אָכְלִין

anu ochlin

We don't need to dip

אַפִּילּוּ פָעֵם אַחֲת

afilu pa'am echat. (2)

Our veg in water with salt, (2)

הַלְילָה הַזָּה

Halaylah hazeh, halaylah hazeh

But tonight, tonight

שְׁתַּיִם פָעִים

sh'tey fe'amim. (2)

(Tell me, am I not right?)

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.

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:

מַעֲשָׂה בֶּרֶבִי אֱלִיעֶזֶר
וּרְبִי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ
וּרְבִי אֱלִיעֶזֶר בֶּן־עֲזָרִיה
וּרְבִי עֲקִיבָּא וּרְבִי טְרָפּוֹן
שְׁהַיּוּ מְסֻבִּין בְּבָנֵי בָּרָק

Ma’ase beRabi Eliezer
veRabi Yehoshua
veRabi Elazar Ben Azarya
veRabi Akiva veRabi Tarfon
shehayu mesubin biVnei Verak.

וְהַיּוּ מְסִפְרִים
בִּיצְיאַת מִצְרָיִם
כָּל־אָוֹתָו הַלִּילָה
עַד־שְׁבָאוֹ תַּלְמִידֵיכֶם
וְאָמַרְוּ לָהֶם
רְבּוֹתֵינוּ הָגַע זָמָן
קְרִיאַת שָׁמָעْ שֶׁל־שָׁחָרִית
אָמַר רְبִי אֱלִיעֶזֶר בֶּן־עֲזָרִיה
הָרַי אַנְיָ קְבּוֹן־שְׁבָעִים שָׁנָה
וְלֹא זָכִיתִי שְׁתָאָמֵר
יְצִיאַת מִצְרָיִם בְּלִילּוֹת
עַד שְׁדָרְשָׁה בֶּן־זּוּמָא
שְׁנָאָמֵר

Vehayu mesaprim
bitziyat Mitzrayim
kol oto halayla,
ad sheba’u talmidehem
ve’amru lahem,
“Raboteinu, higya z’man
keri’at shema shel shacharit.”
Amar Rabi Elazar ben Azarya,
“Harei ani keven shiv’im shana,
velo zachiti shete’amer
yetziyat 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

לְקַעַן תִּזְכֵּר
אֶת יוֹם צִאָתֶךָ
מִאָרֶץ מִצְרָיִם
כָּל יְמֵי חַיָּךְ
יְמֵי חַיָּךְ הַיּוֹם
כָּל יְמֵי חַיָּךְ הַלִּילוֹת
וְחַכְמִים אָוּמְרִים
יְמֵי חַיָּךְ הַעוֹלָם הַזֶּה
כָּל יְמֵי חַיָּךְ
לְהַבְיאָ לִימוֹת הַפְּשִׁיחָה

Lema'an tizkor
et yom zet'cha
me' eretz 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 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.

בָּרוּךְ הַמָּקוֹם בָּרוּךְ הוּא
בָּרוּךְ שְׁנַתָּן תּוֹרָה
לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל
בָּרוּךְ הוּא

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

Sing this to “O, Susannah.”¹

The Torah speaks of children four:
 One smarter than the rest,
 A second child is naughty,
 And the third is all perplexed.
 The fourth so young and nervous,
 Full of wonder and delight:
 That child can't form a question
 To ask about this night.
O, Jews an'a
*Mixed variety:*²
We're coming out of Egypt
For God has set us free.

That wicked child has questioned
 The root of our belief;
 So answer him with anger:
 Don't hold back your grief.
 “Because of what God did for me,
 “To me God was so kind.
 “And had you been there, wicked child,
 “You'd have been left behind.”⁴
O, Jews ran a
Mile or two in glee,
For God brought us from Egypt,
From the house of slavery.

“Because of what God did for me
 “When I from Egypt came,
 “Because of this Jews everywhere
 “This night will feast the same.”
 Perhaps you want another verse
 To fill the symmetry:
 But if you need it, can you say
 That you are really free?
Oh the cantor
Sings a joyous song:
We're coming out of Egypt, where
We worked and slaved too long!

The smart one asks, “What are the laws
 That God did you command?”
 “Carousing³ after dinner's done
 On Pesach night is banned.”
 The bad one barely hides a sneer:
 “What does this mean to you?”
 To you and not to him:
 He doesn't want to be a Jew!
O, Jews an'a
Mingled multitude:
We're coming out of Egypt,
And God will give us food.

The simple one asks, “What is this?”
 You answer, “With great might,
 God rescued us from Egypt,
 From slavery this night.”
 The one who cannot even ask,
 Why—don't you hem and haw:
 It is your duty to explain,
 It's written in our law.
O, our banner
Is riding proud and high,
God leads us with fire and cloud,
*Reaching to the sky!*⁵

Here are some spare choruses, in
 case you need them:

Oh, Jews an'a
Multitude of folk;
We're coming out of Egypt,
And we're free of slavery's yoke.

O, chew manna,
Guaranteed to please:
It comes down overnight, and then
You pick it off the trees.

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 **כַּנְגֵד אַרְבָּעָה בָּנִים דִּבְרָה תּוֹרָה** a wise one, a bad one, a simple one, and one who doesn't know how to ask *about Pesach*.

What does the wise one say?

Deut 6:20 “What are the testimonies, statutes, and judgements which the Ruler our God has laid on you?” So you tell him about the ways of Pesach: “You don't have dessert after eating the Pesach sacrifice.”

אַחֲד חִכּוּם וְאַחֲד רָשָׁע וְאַחֲד טָם וְאַחֲד שָׁאַלְוָן

חִכּוּם מָה הוּא אָמַר מִהָּדָעַת וְהַחֲקִים וְהַמְשֻׁפְתִּים אֲשֶׁר צוֹהֵה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אַחֲקָם וְאַף אַתָּה אָמַר לוּ כְּהַלְכֹות הַפֵּסָח אַיִן מַפְטִירֵין אַחֲרַ הַפֵּסָח אֲפִיקוֹמָן

Keneged arba'ah vanim dibra Torah: Echad chacham, ve'echad rasha, ve'echad tam, ve'echad she'eno yode'ah lish'ol.

Chacham ma hu omer?

“Ma ha'edot vehachukim vehamishpatim asher tzivah Adonai Eloheinu et'chem.” Ve'af ata emor lo kehilchot haPesach, “Ein maftirin 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 אֹמֵר

מִה חֲעֹבָה הָזֶה לְכֶם

לְכֶם וְלֹא לוּ

וְלֹפִי שְׁהֹזֵיא אַתְ-עַצְמוֹ

מִן-הַכָּלֵל

וְכַפֵּר בַּעֲקָר

אָפַי הַקְהָה אַת-שְׁנִינוּ

וְאָמָר לוּ

בַּעֲבֹור זוּ עַשְׂתָּה יְהֹוָה לֵי

בְּצָאָנוּ מִמְּצָרִים

לֵי וְלֹא לוּ

אַלְוִי הַיָּה שָׁם

לֹא הַיָּה נִגְאָל

תָּם מָה הוּא אֹמֵר

מִה-זֶּה

וְאָמְרָתְךָ אֲלֵינוּ

בְּחֹזֶק יָד

הַזְּצִיאָנוּ יְהֹוָה מִמְּצָרִים

מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים

וְשָׁאַיָּנוּ יוֹדֵעַ לְשֹׁאָל

אַתְ פַּתַּח לוּ

שְׁנִיאָמָר

וְהִנֵּגֶת לְבָנֶךָ

בַּיּוֹם הַהּוּא לְאָמָר

בַּעֲבֹור זוּ עַשְׂתָּה יְהֹוָה לֵי

בְּצָאָנוּ מִמְּצָרִים

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.

יכל מראש חודש
תלמוד לומר ביום הוה
אי ביום הוה
יכל מבעוד יומ

Yachol merosh chodesh.

Talmud lomar “bayom hahu.”

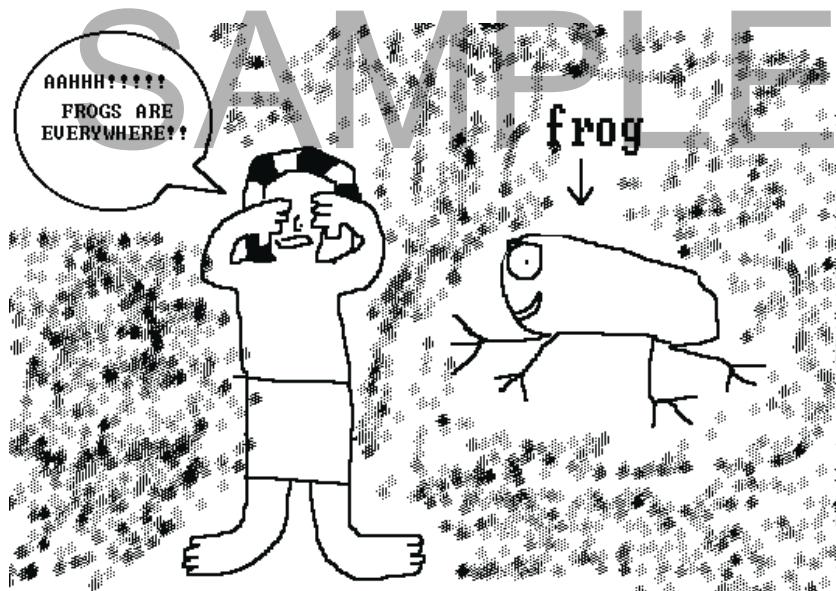
Ee “vayom hahu”

yachol mib’od yom.

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

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."

מִתְחָלָה עֹבֶדֶת עֲבוֹדָה זָרָה

הִיוֹ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ

וְעַבְשׂוּ קְרַבְנוּ הַמָּקוֹם

לְעֹבֶדֶתּוּ

שְׁגַגְתָּםּוּ

נִיאָמָר יְהוָשָׁעַ

אֶל־כָּל־הָעָם

כִּי־אָמָר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

בְּעֵבֶר הַנָּהָר

יִשְׁבּוּ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם מַעֲלָם

תְּרַח אָבִי אַבְרָהָם

וְאַבִּי נָחוֹר

וַיַּעֲבֹר אֱלֹהִים אֶחָרִים

וְאַחֲרֵה אֶת־אֶבְרָהָם

מִעֵבֶר הַנָּהָר

וְאַולֵּד אָתוֹ בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ כְּנָעָן

וְאַרְבָּה אֶת־זָרָעוֹ

וְאַתְּרַלְוּ אֶת־יִצְחָק

וְאַתְּן לְיִצְחָק

אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וְאֶת־עֵשָׂו

וְאַתְּן לְעֵשָׂו אֶת־הַר שְׂעִיר

לְרַשְׁתָּוֹתָו

וַיַּעֲקֹב וּבָנָיו יָרְדוּ מִצְרָיִם

Mit'chila ovdei avoda zara

hayu avoteinu.

Ve'achshav kervanu haMakom
la'avodato.

Shene'amar:

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
who keeps God's promise to Israel,
blessed is God!
For the Holy One whom we bless
planned the end of *our slavery*
and fulfilled the promise made
to our ancestor Abraham
in the Treaty Between the Sections.¹

As the Torah says,

Gen 15:13-14 God told Abram: “Be sure of this:

Your descendants will be foreigners
in a land that isn't theirs.

*Your descendants will be slaves
and their owners will treat them harshly
for 400 years.*²

But the people whom they serve—
I'll judge them;
and after that, *your descendants*
will come out with great wealth.”

ברוך Baruch
שומר הבטחתו לישראל shomer havtachato leYisra'el,
ברוך הוא baruch hu;
שהקדוש ברוך הוא shehaKadosh baruch hu
חשב את-הקץ chishev et haketz
לעשות כמה שאמור la'asot kema she'amar
לאברהם אבינו le'Avraham avinu
בברית בין הבתרים biv'rit bein hab'tarim.
שנה אמר Shene' emar:
ונאמר לאברהם ור' ערך Vayomer le'Avram: “Yado'a teda
כיהר וויתה ורעה ki ger yih'ye zar'acha
בארץ לא להם be'eretz lo lahem,
ונעבדום va'avadum,
ועני אתם ve'inu otam
ארבע מאות שנה arba me'ot shana.
ונם את-הנוין אשר יעבדו Vegam et hagoi asher ya'avodu
הן אוכי dan anochi.
ונחורי-כן ve'acharei chen
יצא ברכש נדול 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, **וַיְהִי אֲשֶׁר עָמַדְתָּ**
Stood by us and our parents, (2) **לְאָבוֹתֵינוּ וּלְנוּ**

When one foe after another **שֶׁלֹּא אָחָד בְּלִבְדֵּךְ**

Sought liquidation for our whole nation. (2) **עָמַד עַלְיָנוּ לְכָלּוֹתֵנוּ**

Not just once but in every age **אֵלָא שֶׁבְּכָל-דֹּור וּדֹר**

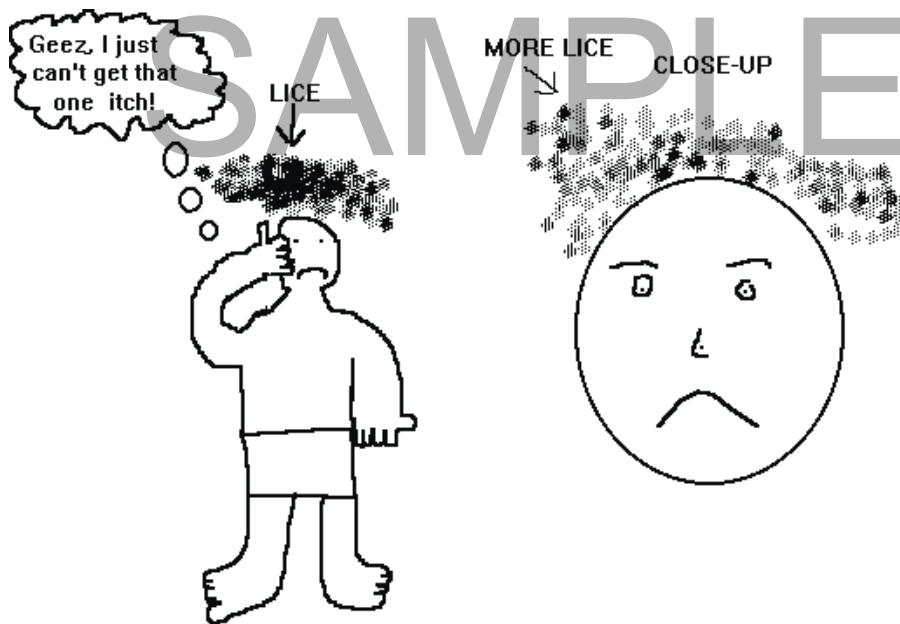
They seek liquidation for our nation, (2) **עוֹמְדִים עַלְיָנוּ לְכָלּוֹתֵנוּ**

And the Holy, blessed One— **וְהַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא**

God snatches us from their hands. (2) **מַצִּילָנוּ מִיָּדָם**

..... *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

what Laban¹ the Aramean tried
to do to Ya'akov our father.

Pharaoh banned only the boys,

but Laban tried to destroy all the children.²

As the Torah says,

צָא וְלִמְדֹד

מַה־בָּקָשׁ לְבָנָן הָאֲרָמִי

לְעִשּׂוֹת לִיעַקְבּ אָבִינוּ

שְׁפָרָעָה לֹא גָּזַר אֶלָּא עַל־הָזְכָרִים

וְלֹבֶן בָּקָשׁ לְעַקְוֹר אֶת־הַכֶּל

שָׁנָאָמֵר

Tzeh ul'mad

ma bikesh Lavan ha'Arami

la'asot leYa'akov avinu;

sheParo lo gazar ela al haz'charim,.

veLavan bikesh la'akor et hakol

Shene'amar:

Deut 26:5 An Aramean tried to destroy my father,³

so he went down to Egypt

and stayed there with his small family;

there he became

a great people, strong and numerous.

אֲרָמִי אָבָד אָבָד

וַיָּרֶד מִצְרָיָם

וַיַּגַּר שָׁם בְּמִתְּנִי מַעַט

וַיַּרְאֶשֶׁם

לְנִי גָּדוֹל עַצְוִים וּרְבָּים

Arami oved avi

vayered Mitzraymah,

vayagar sham bim'tei me'at.

Vayehi sham

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.

וַיָּרֶד מִצְרַיָּהוּ
וְאָנוֹס עַל-פִּי הַדָּבָר
וַיַּגַּר שָׁם
מִלְמָד שֶׁלֹּא יָרֶד
לְהַשְׁתַּקְעַ בְּמִצְרָיִם
אֲלֹא לְגֹרֶשׁ
שְׁנָאָמָר
וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים
לְנוּר בָּאָרֶץ בְּאָנָּנוּ
כִּי-אֵין מִרְעוֹת לְצַאן
אֲשֶׁר לְעַבְדָּךְ
כִּי-כָּבֵד הַרְעֵב בָּאָרֶץ כֹּעֲן
וְעַתָּה יִשְׁבְּרִינָא עַבְדִּיךְ
בָּאָרֶץ נָשֹׁן

Vayered Mitzrayma:
Anus al pi hadibur.
Vayagar sham:
Melamed shelo yarad
lehishtake'a beMitzrayim
ela lagur sham.
Shene'amar,
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."

בִּמְתֵה מַעַט
כִּמְהָ שְׁנָאָמָר
בְּשַׁבְּעִים נֶפֶשׁ
וְרַדוּ אֶבְרִיךְ מִצְרָיִם
וְעַתָּה שְׁמָךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִיךְ
כְּכָכְבֵּי הַשְׁמָיִם לְרַבָּ

Bimtei me'at:
Kema shene'amar,
Beshiv'im nefesh
yardu avotecha Mitzrayma
ve'ata sam'cha Adonai Elohecha
kechoch'vei hashamayim larov.

וַיְהִי-שָׁם לְנוּי
מִלְמָד שֶׁהָיו יִשְׁרָאֵל
מִצְּנִים 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 became *teeming* hordes, overwhelming, more and more: the land was full of them!²

גָדוֹל עֲצִים**כִּמְהָ שְׁנָאָמֵר****וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל פָּרוּ בַּיִשְׁרָצָיו****וְנִירְבּוּ בְּעַצְמָוֹ****בְּמַאֲדָ מַאֲדָ****וְתִמְלָא הָאָרֶץ אַתָּה**

Gadol, atzum:

Kema shene'amar:

Uvnei Yisra'el paru vayishretzu

vayirbu vaya'atzmu

bim'od me'od

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**וּרְבָּה****כִּמְהָ שְׁנָאָמֵר****רְכָבָה כִּצְמָה הַשְׁרָה****בְּתִחְיָה****וְתָרְבִּי וְתָנְדִּלִי****וְתָבָאֵי בְּעָדֵי עֲדִים****שָׁדָיִם נָכָנוֹ****וְשָׁעַרְךָ צָמָח****וְאַתָּה עָלָם וְעָרָה****וְאַעֲבָר עַלְוָה נָאָרָה****מִתְבּוּסֶת בְּרִמֵּיה****וְאָמֵר לְךָ****בְּרִמֵּיה חַיִּי****וְאָמֵר לְךָ****בְּרִמֵּיה חַיִּי**

Varav:

Kema shene'amar:

Revavah katzemach hasadeh

netatich

vatirbi vatigdeli

vatavoi ba'adi adayim.

Shadayim nachonu

use'arech tzime'ach,

ve'at erom ve'eryah.

Va'e'evor alayich va'erech

mitboseset bedamayich,

va'omar lach,

“Bedamayich chayi,”

va'omar lach,

“Bedamayich chayi.”

¹ “Were fruitful and swarmed/crept”; the root **רִשְׁת** 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

Deut 26:6 The Egyptians treated us badly,
they oppressed us,
and they put us to forced labor.

וַיַּרְאָנוּ אֶתְנָוּ הַמִּצְרִים
וַיַּעֲבֹנוּ
וַיַּרְאָנוּ עַלְנוּ עֲבָדָה קָשָׁה

Vayare'u otanu haMitzrim,
vay'anunu,
vayitnu alenu avoda kasha.

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

וַיַּרְאָנוּ אֶתְנָוּ הַמִּצְרִים
כִּי
הַבָּה
פָּנָרְבָּה
וְהִיא
וְנֹסֶף
וְגַלְחָם-בָּנָי
וְעַלְהָ מִן-הָאָרֶץ

Vayare'u otanu haMitzrim:
Kema shene'amar,
“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.

וַיַּעֲבֹנוּ
כִּי
וַיִּשְׁמֹוּ
לְמַעַן
וַיַּבְנֵוּ
אֶת-בָּהָם וְאֶת-עַמָּסָס

Vay'anunu:
Kema shene'amar,
Vayasimu alav sarei misim
lema'an anoto besivlotam,
vayiven arei miskenot 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.

וַיַּרְאָנוּ עַלְנוּ עֲבָדָה קָשָׁה
כִּי
וַיַּעֲבֹרוּ
אֶת-בָּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּפַרְעָה

Vayitnu alenu avoda kasha:
Kema shene'amar,
Vaya'avdu 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

Deut 26:7 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.

וְנִצְעַק אֶל־יְהֹוָה
 אֶל־תְּתִינָנוּ
 וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהֹוָה אֶת־קְלִנָּנוּ
 וַיַּרְא אֶת־עֲנָנוּ וְאֶת־עַמְלָנוּ
 וְאֶת־לְחִצָּנוּ

Vanitzak el Adonai
 Elohei avoteinu,
 vayishma Adonai et koleinu,
 vayar et onyenu ve'et amalenu
 ve'et lachatzenu.

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.

וְנִצְעַק אֶל־יְהֹוָה

אֶל־תְּתִינָנוּ

כִּמְהָ שְׁנָאָמָר
 וַיַּהַי בְּיָמֵינוּ הָרָבִים הָהֵם

וַיִּמְלֹא מֶלֶךְ מִצְרָיִם

וַיַּאֲחַזֵּוּ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל

מִן־הָעָבֵדָה

וַיַּעֲזֹקּוּ

וְנִשְׁלַׁחֲ שְׁוּעָתָם אֲלֵהֶלְלָהֶם

מִן־הָעָבֵדָה

Vanitzak el Adonai

Elohei avoteinu,

Kema shene'amar,

Vayehi vayamim harabim hahem

vayamat melech Mitzrayim

vaye'anchu Venci Yisrael

min ha'avodah

vayiz'aku

vata'al shav'atam el haElohim

min ha'avodah.

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 יְהֹוָה אֶת־קְלִנָּנוּ

כִּמְהָ שְׁנָאָמָר

וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נָאָקָתָם

וַיַּזְכֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־בְּרִיתָוּ

אֶת־אָבָרָהָם אֶת־יִצְחָק

וְאֶת־יַעֲקֹב

Vayishma Adonai et kolenu

Kema shene'amar,

Vayishma Elohim et na'akatam;

vayizkor Elohim et berito

et Avraham, et Yitzchak

ve'et Ya'akov.

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, נירא אליהם אתה בני ישראל and God knew. נידע אליהם

וירא אתה ענונו

זו פרישות דרך ארץ

כמה שנאמר

נירא אליהם אתה בני ישראל

nidu alahim

Vayar et onyenu:

Zo ferishut derech eretz.

Kema shene'amar,

Vayar Elohim et B'nei Yisra'el, 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, throw it into the river; but let all the girls live.”

ואת עמלנו

אלו הבנים

כמה שנאמר

כל הבן הילוד

היאר חשליכו

וככל הבקת תחינו

Ve'et amalenu:

Elu habanim,

Kema shene'amar,

Kol haben hayilod

hay'orah tashlichuhu

vechol habat techayun.

And our oppression:

This is the slavedriving,

As the Torah says,

Ex 3:9 “And I've seen the oppression with which Egypt pressures them.”

ואת לחצנו

זה הדרך

כמה שנאמר

ונגד ראיית אתה הדרך

אשר מצרים לחצים אתם

Ve'et lachatzenu:

Zeh hadochak,

Kema shene'amar,

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 with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and with great terror, and signs and wonders.	וַיֹּוֹצִיאָנוּ יְהוָה מִמִּצְרָיִם בַּיָּד חִזְקָה וּבָגּוּרָעַ נְטוּיָה וּבָמָרָא גָּדוֹל וּבְאֲתֹתָּה וּבְמִפְתִּיחָה	Vayotzi'enu Adonai miMitzrayim beyad chazakah uvizro'ah netuya uv'morah gadol, uve'otot, uvemoftim.
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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.”

וַיֹּוֹצִיאָנוּ יְהוָה מִמִּצְרָיִם

לֹא-עַל-יְדֵי מְלָאָךְ

וְלֹא-עַל-יְדֵי שָׂרָף

וְלֹא-עַל-יְדֵי שְׁלֵיחָה

אֶלָּא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא

בְּכָבוֹדׁ וּבְעָצָמוֹ

שְׁנָאָמֵר

וּשְׁבָרְכֵי בָּאָרֶץ-מִצְרָיִם

בְּלִילָה הַזֹּהֵב

וְחַפְּתִּיחָה כָּל-בְּכָורָה

בָּאָרֶץ מִצְרָיִם

מְאָדָם וְעַד-בָּהֶםְהָה

וּבְכָל-אֱלֹהִי מִצְרָיִם

אֲנָשָׁה שְׁפָטִים אָנָּי 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'amar,

“Ve'avarti ve'eretz Mitzrayim

balaylah hazeh,

vehiketi chol bechor

be'eretz Mitzrayim

me'adam ve'ad behemah

uvechol elohei Mitzrayim

e'eseh 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,”

וְעַבְרָתִי בְּאֶרְצֵי מִצְרָיִם
בְּכָלְלָה הַזֹּהֶה

I, and not a messenger.

אָנִי וְלֹא מְלָאך

“And I shall strike every firstborn in the land of Egypt,”

וְהִכַּתִּי כָּל-בָּכֹול
בְּאֶרְצֵי מִצְרָיִם

I, and not a seraph.

אָנִי וְלֹא שָׂרָף

“And upon all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements.”

וּבְכָל-אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרָיִם
אֲשֶׁר שְׁפָטִים

I, and not a representative.

אָנִי וְלֹא שְׁלִיחַ

“I am the Ruler.”

אָנִי יְהֹוָה

It is I and no other.

אָנִי הוּא וְלֹא אַחֲרֵי

.....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.”

בַּיד חִזְקָה

Beyad chazakah:

זֶה הַדָּבָר

Zu hadever,

כַּמָּה שְׁנָאָמַר

Kema shene'amar,

הַנָּה יָד־יְהֹוָה הַזֹּהֶה

“Hineh yad Adonai hoyah

בְּמִקְנֵךְ אֲשֶׁר בְּשָׂדֶה

bemiknecha asher basadeh

בְּסֻסִים בְּחַמְרִים בְּגַמְלִים

basusim, bachamorim, bag'malim

בְּבָקָר וּבְאַזְן

babakar uvatzon,

דְּבָרָכְךָ 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.

וּבָרָע נְטוּיָה

Beyad chazakah:

זֶה הַחֲרֵב

Zu hacherev,

כַּמָּה שְׁנָאָמַר

Kema shene'amar,

וְחַרְבוֹ שְׁלֹפֶה בִּידֵךְ

Vecharbo shelufah beyado

נְטוּיָה עַל־יְרוּשָׁלָם

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?

ובְּמָרָא גָּדוֹל
זֹה גִּלְוִי שְׁכִינָה
כְּמָה שָׁנְאָמָר
אָיו הַנֶּסֶת אֱלֹהִים לְבָוָא
לְקַחְתָּ לְוָנוֹ
מִקְרָב נָנוֹ
בְּמִסְתָּחָבָאָתָה
וּבְמִפְתִּיחָה וּבְמִלְחָמָה
וּבְרִיךְ חִזְקָה וּבְנִרוּעַ נְטוּיָה
וּבְמִזְרָאִים גָּדוֹלִים
כָּל אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה לְכֶם
יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם
בְּמִצְרָיִם לְעִינֵיכֶם

Uvemora gadol:
Zu gilui shechinah,
Kema shene'amar,
O hanisa Elohim lavo
lakachat lo goy
mikerev goy,
bemasot beotot
uvemoftim 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."

וּבְאֹתָותָה
זֶה הַמְפֻטָּה
כְּמָה שָׁנְאָמָר
וְאַתְּ הַמְפֻטָּה הַזֶּה
תִּקְחֶה בְּיַדְךָ
אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה בָּךְ אַתְּ הַאֲתָה

Uve'otot:
Zeh hamateh,
kemah shene'amar:
Ve'et hamateh hazeh
tikach beyadecha,
asher ta'aesh 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...

וּבְמִפְתִּיחָה
זֶה הַדָּם
כְּמָה שָׁנְאָמָר
וּנְתָתִי מִזְבְּחָה
בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ

Uvemoftim:
Zeh hadam,
kemah shene'amar:
Venatati moftim
bashamayim uva'aretz...

...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. **דָם וְאֵשׁ וְתִימָרוֹת עַשְׁנִין** ...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 אַחֲרֵי בֵּין חִזְקָה שְׁתִים וּבָזְרָע נְטוּה שְׁתִים וּבָמְרָא גָּדָל שְׁתִים וּבָאֲחֹתָה שְׁתִים וּבָמְפָרָחָם שְׁתִים אֶלָּו עֲשֵׂר מִכְוֹת שְׁהִבְיא הַקָּדוֹש בָּרוּךְ הוּא עַל-הַמִּצְרָיִם בְּמִצְרָיִם וְאַלְיָהּ

Davar acher: beyad chazakah shtayim uvizro'ah netuyah shtayim uvemorah gadol shtayim uve'otot shtayim uvemoftim shtayim. Elu eser makot shehevi haKadosh baruch hu al haMitzrim beMitzrayim, ve'elu hen

עֲשֵׂר הַמִּכְוֹת (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.

דָּם צְפָרְדֵּעַ כְּנִים עַרְבָּוֹן
 דָּבָר שְׁחִינָה בְּרֵד אַרְבָּה
 דָּמָשׂ קַillִין' first-born chillun'—
 Ten conniptions for the Egyptians
 BuFfeL, BuBbuB and HoLiDuK (2)

חֹשֶׁךְ מִכְתַ-בְּכוֹרוֹת

Dam tzfarde'ah kinim arov
 Dever sh'chin barad arbeh
 Choshech macat bechorot—
 Elu eser hamakot,
 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
 used to make a mnemonic:
 BuFfel, BuBbuB and HoLiDuK.

רַבִּי יְהוּדָה
 הַיָּה נוֹתֵן בְּהֵם סִמְנִים
 דָּצָךְ עַד שָׁבָאַחַב

Rabi Yehudah
 haya noten bahem simanim
 DeTZaCH, AdaSH, BeAChA V.

.....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.

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, **לוֹ קַו עֲשָׂר מִכּוֹת**
but on the sea they suffered fifty blows. **וּעַל-הַיּוֹם לְקַו חַמְשִׁים מִכּוֹת**

How Bad Was It?¹

רַבִּי יוֹסֵי הַגְּלִילִי אָוֹמֵר

מִנֵּין אַתָּה אָוֹמֵר

שֶׁלְקָו הַמִּצְרִים בְּמִצְרָיִם

עָשָׂר מִכּוֹת

וּעַל-הַיּוֹם

לְקַו חַמְשִׁים מִכּוֹת

בְּמִצְרָיִם מַה הַוָּא אָוֹמֵר

וַיֹּאמֶר קַחְרְטָמִים אֶל-פְּרֻשָּׁה

אַצְבָּע אֱלֹהִים הַוָּא

וּעַל-הַיּוֹם מַה-הַוָּא אָוֹמֵר

וַיֹּירֶא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-הַנֶּגֶד חַנְדָּה

אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה בְּמִצְרָיִם

נִירְאָוֶה הַעַם אֶת-יְהוָה

וְאָמַנְיוּ בַּיְהֹוָה

וּבְמִשְׁתָּה עֲבָדָוּ

כִּמְהָ לְקַו בְּאַצְבָּע

עָשָׂר מִכּוֹת

אֲמֹר מִעְתָּה

בְּמִצְרָיִם לְקַו עֲשָׂר מִכּוֹת

וּעַל-הַיּוֹם לְקַו חַמְשִׁים מִכּוֹת

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 hagadolah

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 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,

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.

רבי אליעזר אומר
מִנִּין שְׁכָל-מִקָּה וּמִקָּה
שְׁהִבְיא הַקָּדוֹש בָּרוּךְ הוּא
עַל-הַמִּצְרִים בְּמִצְרִים
הִיתָּה שֶׁל אַרְבָּע מִפּוֹת
שֶׁנָּאָמָר

ישלַׁח-בָם חָרֹן אֲפֹו
עַבְרָה וְזָעַם וְצָרָה
מִשְׁלָחָת מְלָאֵכִי רְעִים
עַבְרָה אַחַת
זָעַם שְׁתַיִם
צָרָה שְׁלֹש
מִשְׁלָחָת מְלָאֵכִי רְעִים אַרְבָּע
אַמְוֹר מְעַתָּה
בְּמִצְרִים לְקֹו אַרְבָּעִים מִפּוֹת
וְעַל-הַיִם לְקֹו מִאָתִים מִפּוֹת

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

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'atoh,
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 Bandaid. 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

רבי עקיבא אומר
מנין שקל-מקה ומכה
שהביא הקדוש ברוך הוא
על-המצרים במצרים
היתה של חמיש מכות
שנאמר
ישלחם חרון אף
עבירה זעם וצרה
משלחת מלacky רעים
חרון אף אחת
עבירה שתיים
זעם שלוש
צרה ארבע
משלחת מלacky רעים
חמיש
אמור מעתה
במצרים לקו חמישים מכות
על-הים
לקו חמישים ומאתים מכות
בכמה מעלוות טובות
למקום עליינו

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!)¹

Had God saved us, saved us, saved us,	אָלוּ הַוְצִיאָנוּ מִמִּצְרָיִם	Dayenu
Saved us from the nasty 'Gyptians	וְלֹא עָשָׂה בָּהֶם שְׁפָטִים	Dayenu
Without giving them conniptions,	דָּיְנוּ	
<i>Dayenu</i>		
Had God given those Egyptians	אָלוּ עָשָׂה בָּהֶם שְׁפָטִים	Dayenu
Unforgettable conniptions,	וְלֹא עָשָׂה דִין בְּאֱלֹהִים	Dayenu
Without smashing all their idols,	דָּיְנוּ	
<i>Dayenu</i>		
Had God smashed up all their idols—	אָלוּ עָשָׂה דִין בְּאֱלֹהִים	Dayenu
Pulverized those gal- and guy-dolls	וְלֹא הָרַג בְּכֹורֵיכֶם	Dayenu
—Without killing all their first-born,	דָּיְנוּ	
<i>Dayenu</i>		
Had God killed all their first-born	אָלוּ הָרַג בְּכֹורֵיכֶם	Dayenu
(Made families high and low forlorn)	וְלֹא נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת-מְמוֹנָם	Dayenu
But hadn't given us their riches,	דָּיְנוּ	
<i>Dayenu</i>		
Had God given us their riches—	אָלוּ נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת-מְמוֹנָם	Dayenu
Pharaoh's treasures now are Mitch's—	וְלֹא קָרַע לָנוּ אֶת-הַיִם	Dayenu
But hadn't split the sea in two,	דָּיְנוּ	
<i>Dayenu</i>		
Had God split the sea in two—	אָלוּ קָרַע לָנוּ אֶת-הַיִם	Dayenu
We strolled across, I next to you—	וְלֹא הָעִבַּרְנוּ	
But hadn't dried the path across it,	בְּתֹוכוּ בְּחַרְבָּה	
<i>Dayenu</i>	דָּיְנוּ	

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 God dried the path across it,
Left no mud, no dripping faucet,
But hadn't sunk our troubles¹ in it,

Dayenu

Had God sunk our troubles in it
Without watching us each minute,
Forty years of wandering guided,

Dayenu

Had God years of wandering guided,
Soothed our troubles, cared and chided,
Without feeding us with manna,

Dayenu

Had God fed us all that manna—
Eat as much of it as you wanna—
But had kept the Shabbat from us,

Dayenu

Had God not kept Shabbat from us
(A day of rest and not of commerce)
But not brought us to the Mountain,

Dayenu

Had God brought us to the Mountain
(Blessings enough we had for countin')
Without giving us the Torah,

Dayenu

Had God given us our law,
A way to live and love and more,
But left us on the banks of Jordan,²

Dayenu

אלו האבירנו בתוכו בחרבה
ולא שקע צרינו בתוכו
דיינו

אלו שקע צרינו בתוכו
ולא ספק צרכנו
במדבר ארבעים שנה
דיינו

אלו ספק צרכנו
במדבר ארבעים שנה
ולא האיכילנו את-המן
דיינו

אלו האיכילנו את-המן
ולא-נתן לנו את-השבת
דיינו

אלו נתן לנו את-השבת
ולא קרבענו לפנוי הר סיני
דיינו

אלו קרבענו לפנוי הר סיני
ולא נתן לנו את-התורה
דיינו

אלו נתן לנו את-התורה
ולא היכניסנו לאرض ישראל
דיינו

Illu he'eviranu vетоcho becharavah
Velo shikah tzarenu betоcho (2)
Dayenu

Illu shikah tzarenu betоcho
Velo sipek tzorkenu
bamidbar arba'im shanah (2)
Dayenu

Illu sipek tzorkenu
bamidbar arba'im shanah
Velo he'echilanu et haman (2)
Dayenu

Illu he'echilanu et haman
Velo natan lanu et haShabat (2)
Dayenu

Illu natan lanu et haShabat
Velo kervanu lifnei Har Sinai (2)
Dayenu

Illu kervanu lifnei Har Sinai
Velo natan lanu et haTorah (2)
Dayenu

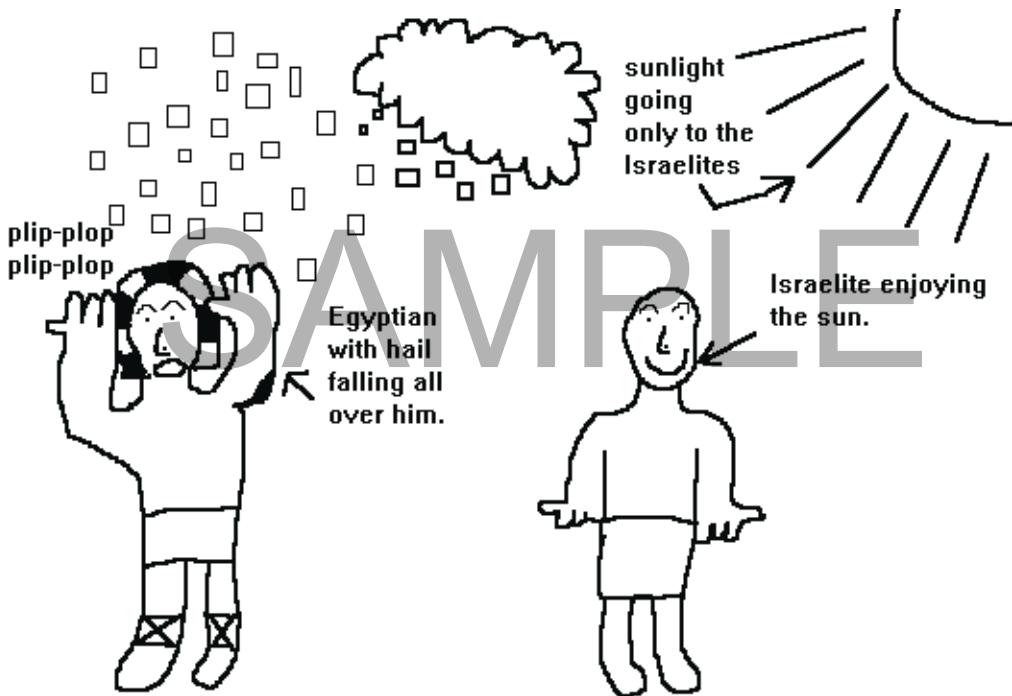
¹ Or “our oppressors.”

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

Had God brought us o'er the Jordan **אֲלֹו הַכְּנִיסָנוּ לְאָרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל**
 (A kindness which **וְלֹא בָּנָה לָנוּ**
 who could ask more than?) **אֲתָּה בֵּית הַבְּחִירָה**
 Without building us the Temple, **דָּיְנוּ**
Dayenu

Illu hichnisanu le'eretz Yisrael
 Velo vanah lanu
 et beit hab'chirah (2)
 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.

על אחת כפָּה וְכַפָּה
 טוֹבָה כְּפֹולָה וּמְכֹפָּלָת
 לְמָקוֹם עַלְיָנוּ
 שְׁחוֹצִיאָנוּ מִמְּצָרִים
 וּעֲשָׂה בָּהֶם שְׁפָטִים
 וּעֲשָׂה דָּין בְּאֱלֹהִים
 וּהְרָג בְּכָרִים
 וּנְתַנֵּן לְנוּ אַתְ-מָמוֹנָם
 וּקְרַע לְנוּ אַתְ-הַיִם
 וְהַעֲבִרְנוּ בְּתוֹכוֹ בְּחַרְבָּה
 וּשְׁקַע צְרִינוּ בְּתוֹכוֹ
 וּסְפַק צְרָבָנוּ בְּמִדְבָּר
 אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה
 וְהַאֲכִילָנוּ אַתְ הַמּוֹן
 וּנְתַנֵּן לְנוּ אַתְ הַשְּׁבָתָה
 וּקְרַבָּנוּ לִפְנֵי הַר סִינַי
 וּנְתַנֵּן לְנוּ אַתְ הַתּוֹרָה
 וְהַכְּנִיסָנוּ לְאָרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל
 וּבָנָה לְנוּ אַתְ-בֵּית הַבְּחִירָה
 לְכִפֵּר 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 “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.

פסח מצה ומרור Pesach, Matzah, and Maror

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

Rabbi Gamliel used to say,
Anyone who doesn't speak
about these three things on Pesach
has not fulfilled his duty.
And these are the three:
the Passover sacrifice, matzah, and maror.

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

The Passover sacrifice
which our ancestors used to eat
in the time when the Temple
was standing—what was it for?
Because God passed over—
the Holy, Blessed One—
the houses of our ancestors in Egypt
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.”

רָבָן גַּמְלִיאֵל הָיָה אָמֵר
כָּל-שְׁלָא אָמֵר
שֶׁלְשָׁה דְּבָרִים אֲלֹו בְּפַסְחָה
לֹא יֵצֵא יְדֵי חֹבֶתּוֹ
וְאֲלֹו הַן

פסח מצה ומרור

Raban Gamliel haya omer,
kol shelo amar
sheloshah devarim elu baPesach
lo yatza yedei chovato.
Ve'elu hen:
Pesach, matzah, umaror.

פֶּסַח שְׁהַיּוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אָוְכְלִים
בִּזְמָן שְׁבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ
הָיָה קָיָם עַל-שָׁוֹם מָה
עַל-שָׁוֹם שְׁפָסָח
הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא
עַל-בָּתִּי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּמִצְרָיִם

Pesach
shehayu avoteinu ochlim
bizman shebeit hamikdash
haya kayam—al shum mah?
al shum shepasach
haKadosh baruch hu
al batei avoteinu beMitzrayim.

שְׁנֶגֶג אָמֵר
וְאָמַרְתֶּם
זֶבֶח־פֶּסַח הָוֹא לִיהְנָה
אֲשֶׁר פָּסַח עַל־בָּתִּי
בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִצְרָיִם
בְּנֵגֶפֶן אֶת־מִצְרָיִם
וְאֶת־בָּתִּינוּ הַצִּיל
וַיַּקְדַּשׁ הָעָם וַיַּשְׁתַּחַווּ

Shene' emar,
Va'amartem,
“Zevach pesach hu l'Adonai
asher pasach al batei
Venei Yisra'el beMitzrayim
benogpo et Mitzrayim
ve'et bateinu hitzil
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—
What is it for?
Because there wasn't time
for our ancestors' dough
to become leavened
before the Ruler of the rulers of rulers,
the Holy One (whom we bless),
was revealed to them and saved them.

As the Torah says,

Ex 12:39 And they baked the dough
which they had brought from Egypt
into unleavened cakes, because it didn't rise,
because they were thrust out of Egypt,
and they couldn't dawdle,
and they didn't even get food ready.

.....Put down the matzah, and hold up the maror for
This maror that we eat—
what is it for?
It's because the Egyptians made our
ancestors' lives bitter
in Egypt,
As the Torah says,
Ex 1:14 And they made their lives bitter
with hard labor,
with clay and bricks,
and with all the work in the field;
all that labor
at which they made them toil with rigor.

מַצָּה זוֹ שָׁאנוּ אָוְכְלִים
עַל-שֻׁוּם מָה
עַל-שֻׁוּם שֶׁלָּא הַסְּפִיק
בְּצֶקְמָן שֶׁל-אָבוֹתֵינוּ
לְהַחְמִימָן
עַד-שְׁנִיגָּלָה עַלְיָהֶם
מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמֶּלֶכִים
הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא וָגָלָם
שָׁנָאָמֵר
וַיָּאֹבֵו אֶת-הַבָּצָק
אֲשֶׁר הָזִיאוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם
עַתְּ מַצּוֹת קַיְלָא חַמֵּץ
כִּירְדְּשִׁי מִמִּצְרַיִם
וְלֹא יָכֹל לְהַתְמִמָּה
וְנַמְצֵדָה לְאָשָׁוּ לָהֶם
מְרוֹרָה זוֹ שָׁאנוּ אָוְכְלִים
עַל-שֻׁוּם מָה
עַל-שֻׁוּם שֶׁמְרָרוּ הַמִּצְרַיִם
אֲתִ-חַיִי אָבוֹתֵינוּ
בְּמִצְרַיִם
שָׁנָאָמֵר
וַיָּמְרָרוּ אֶת-חַיִלֵּם
בְּעֲבֹדָה קָשָׁה
בְּחַמֵּר וּבְלַבְנִים
וּבְכָל-עֲבֹדָה בְּשָׁדָה
אֲתָה כָּל-עֲבֹדָתָם
אֲשֶׁר עָבְדוּ בָּהֶם בְּפֶרַךְ

Matzah zo she'anu ochlim
al shum mah?
al shum shelo hispik
betzekam shel avoteinu
lehachamitz
ad shenigla alehem
melech malchei hamlachim
haKadosh baruch hu uge' alam.
Shene' emar,
Vayofu et habatzek
asher hotzi'u miMitzrayim
ugot matzot ki lo chametz
ki gorshu miMitzrayim
velo yachlu lehitmame'a
vegam tzeda lo asu lahem.
all to see

Maror zeh she'anu ochlim
al shum mah?
Al shum shemer'ru haMitzrim
et chayey avoteinu
beMitzrayim.
Shene' emar,
Vayemar'ru et chayehem
ba'avodah kasha
bechomer uvilvenim
uvechol avodah basadeh
et kol avodatam
asher avdu vahem befarech.

.....Put down the Maror.....

This is the central injunction to experience the redemption personally.

As time cycles round	בְּכָל-דָּוָר וְדָוָר	Bechol dor vador
Each person ¹ is bound	חַיֵּב אָדָם	chayav adam
Himself (herself) to view	לִרְאוֹת אַתְּ-עַצְמָוּ	lirot et atzmo
As if he (she) too	כִּאֵלּוּ הוּא	ke'ilu hu
Was among those led from Egypt (2)	יָצָא מִמִּצְרָיִם	yatza miMitzrayim

As it is said (16)

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.”²

Not just our ancestors did God save (holy and blessed), but us too, *God* saved us with them.

As the Torah says,

Deut 6:23 And us, *God* led us out of there, so as to take us and give us the land *God* promised to our ancestors.

שְׁנֶאָמָר
וְהִגִּידְתָּ לְבָנֶךָ
בַּיּוֹם הַהִוא לְאָמֵר
בַּעֲבוּר זֶה עֲשָׂה יְהָנָה לְךָ
בְּצִאתֵינוּ מִמִּצְרָיִם

Shene’emar
“Vehigadta levincha
bayom hahu lemor,
‘Ba’avur ze asa Adonai li
betzeti miMitzrayim.”

לֹא אַתְּ-אָבֹתֵינוּ בַּלְבָד
גָּעֵל הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא
אֵלָא אָף אָתֵנוּ גַּאֲלַעַמְּה
שְׁנֶאָמָר
וְאָתֵנוּ הַזִּצְיָא מִשָּׁם
לִפְנֵן הַבָּיא אָתֵנוּ
לִתְחַת לְנֵלָא תְּחַרְצֵן
אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְאָבֹתֵינוּ

Lo et avoteinu bilvad
ga’al haKadosh baruch hu
ela af otanu ga’al imahem.
Shene’emar,
Ve’otanu hotzi misham
Lema’an havi otanu
latet lanu et ha’aretz
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
to thank, hail, praise,
glorify, exalt, honor,
bless, acclaim, and salute
the One who did—
for our ancestors and for us—
all these miracles.

*God led us from slavery to freedom,
from sorrow to joy,
from mourning to festival,
from darkness to bright light,
and from bondage to redemption.*

Now let us raise

Our voices in songs of praise.¹
Halleluyah!

..... *Put your cup down and uncover the matzot.*

Hallel comes next; it begins before the meal and continues after it.

לפייך אנחנו חייכים
להודות להלל לשבח
לפאר לרוםם להדר
לברך לעלה ולקלנס
למי שעששה
לאבותינו וلنנו
את-כל-הנסים האלו
הוציאנו מעבדות לחירות
מיגון לשמחה
מאבל ליום טוב
ומאפלה לאור גдол
ומשבובד לגאלה
ונאמר לפניו
שירת חדש
הalleluya

Lefichach anachnu chayavim
lehodot lehallel leshabe'ach
lefa'er leromem lehader
levarech le'aleh ul'kaless
lemi she'asa
la'avoteinu velanu
et kol hanisim ha'elu
hotzi'anu me'avdut lecherut
miyagon lesimcha
me'evel leyom tov
ume'afela le'or gadol
umishibud lig'ula.
Venomar lefanav
shira chadasha
halleluyah!

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)

Moshivi: Psalm 113²

¹ Halleluyah,
God's servants, give praise!
Praise God's reputation!
² Now and forevermore
God's name be blessed.
³ From where the sun begins its course,
Until at last it comes to rest,
God's name be praised.
⁴ Above all peoples God is high,
God's glory soars above the sky.
⁵ Who is like our sovereign God,
whose throne is high above the sky,
⁶ who deigns to peer
on us down here?³
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
⁹ God makes the childless woman
a joyful mother of children; Halleluyah!

הַלְלִי הַלְלִי עַבְרִי יְהוָה
הַלְלִי אֶת-שֵׁם יְהוָה
יְהִי שֵׁם יְהוָה מְבָרֵךְ
מַעַתָּה וְעַד-עוֹלָם
מִמִּזְרָח-שֵׁמֶשׁ
עַד-מְבוֹאֹ
מִזְהָלֵל שֵׁם יְהוָה
רַם עַל-כָּל-גּוֹיִם יְהוָה
עַל הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּבוֹדְךָ
מַיְּכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
הַמְּגַבֵּה יְהוָה לְשָׁבֵת
בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ
מַקְיָמֵי מַעֲפֵר דָּל
מַאֲשָׁפֵת יְרִים אֶבְיוֹן
לְהַשְׁׁוּבֵי עַם-נְדִיבִים
עַם נְדִיבֵי עַמּוֹ
מוֹשִׁיבֵי עַקְרַת הַבַּיִת
אַם-הַבָּנִים שְׁמַחַת הַלְלִיָּה

Halleluyah
Hallelu avdei Adonai
hallelu et shem Adonai,
yehi shem Adonai mevorach
me'ata ve'ad olam;
mimizrach shemesh
ad mevo'o
mehulal shem Adonai.
Ram al kol goyim Adonai,
al hashamayim kevodo;
mi kAdonai Eloheinu,
hamagbibi lashavet,
hamashpili lir'ot
bashamayim uva'aretz.
Mekimi me'afar dal,
me'ashpot yarim evyon
lehoshivi im nedivim,
im nedivei amo.
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.” A **דִּיבָר** 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

**בְּצִאתְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרָיִם
בֵּיתְךָ יַעֲקֹב מִעַם לְעֵז**

Betzeit Yisra'el miMitzrayim,
beit Ya'akov me'am lo'ez,

**הַיּוֹתָה יְהוּדָה לְקָדְשׁוֹ
יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמְּשֶׁלֶתְּחַיָּיו**

hayta Yehudah lekodshoh,
Yisrael mamshelotav;

**חַיִם רָאָה וַיָּנוֹס
הַיְרָדֵן יַסֵּב לְאַחֲרָה
הַהֲרִים רַקְדָּוּ בְּאַיִלִים
גְּבֻעֹת כְּבָנֵי-צָאן**

hayam ra'ah vayanos,
haYarden yisov le'achor;
heharim rakdu che'eilim
geva'ot kivnei tzon.

**מַה-לְכָה חַיִם
כִּי תָנוֹס
הַיְרָדֵן
תַּסֵּב לְאַחֲרָה
הַהֲרִים
תַּرְקְדוּ בְּאַיִלִים
גְּבֻעֹת
כְּבָנֵי-צָאן**

Mah lecha hayam
ki tanoos,
haYarden
tisov le'achor?
Heharim
tirkedu che'eilim
geva'ot
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”

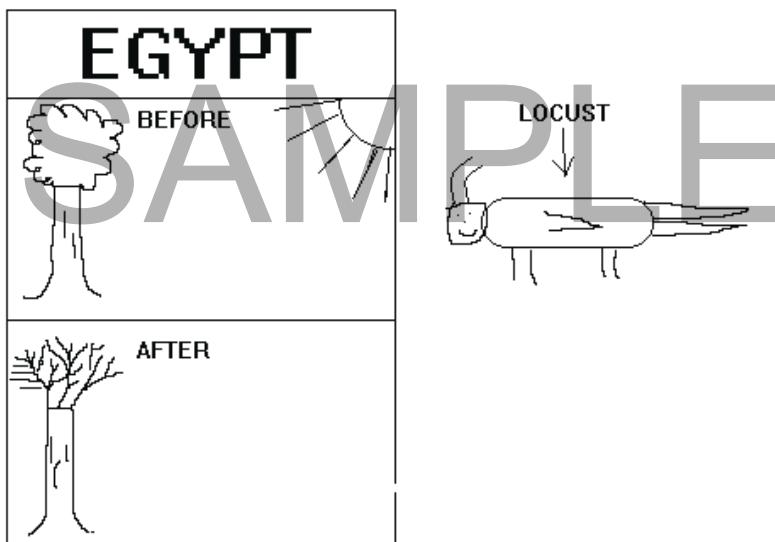
⁴ Literally, “When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob out of a people who spoke a strange language, Judah became God's holy thing, Israel God's possession. The sea saw it and fled; the Jordan ran backwards. The mountains danced like rams, the hills like lambs.”

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

מִלְפְּנֵי אֲדֹון Milifnei Adon
 חַוְלֵי אָרֶץ chuli aretz,
 מִלְפְּנֵי milifnei
 אֵלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב Elo'ah Ya'akov—
 הַהֲפֵכִי הַצּוֹר Ha'hofchi hatzur
 אֲגָם-מַיִם agam mayim,
 חַלְמָשִׁים Chalamish
 לְמַעַיְנוֹ-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
 Ruler of the universe,
 who saved us
 and saved our ancestors
 from Egypt,
 and brought us on this night
 to eat matzah and maror.
 Just so, ruling God
 and God of our ancestors,
 bring us to other holidays
 and foot-festivals
 (may they come to us in peace!),
 glad to be building your city
 and happy in your service.

And there we shall eat
 from the sacrifices and Pesach offerings—
 their blood will reach
 the sides of your altar for your delight—
 and we'll thank you with a new song
 for setting us free and saving our souls.
 Blessed are you, Ruler, who saved Israel.
 We bless you, Sovereign God
 Who rules eternal space and time,
 Creator of the grapevine's fruit,
 From which we make this wine.

ברוך אתה ייְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
 אשר גָּאַלָּנוּ וּגָאַל אֶת-אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֶת-אָמוֹתֵינוּ
 מִפְּנָצָרִים
 וְהַגִּיעַנוּ הַלִּילָה הַזֶּה
 לְאַכְלָל-בּוּ מַצָּה וּמַרְורָה
 כָּן ייְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֶלְהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאָמוֹתֵינוּ
 הַגִּיעַנוּ לְמוֹעָדִים
 וּלְרִגְלִים אֲחֶרִים
 הַבָּאִים לְקַרְאָתֵנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם
 שְׁמָחִים בְּבָנֵינוּ עִירָךְ
 וּשְׁשִׁים בַּעֲבָדָתֶךָ
 וְנוֹאכֵל שָׁם
 מִן הַזְּבָחִים וּמִן הַפֵּסֶחִים
 אֲשֶׁר יָגַע דָּם
 עַל-קִרְבָּן מִזְבֵּחַ לְרָצֹן
 וּנוֹדֵה לְךָ שִׁיר חֶדֶש
 עַל-גָּאַלָּתֵנוּ וְעַל פְּדוּת נִפְשָׁנוּ
 ברוך אתה ייְהוָה יְגָאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל
 ברוך אתה ייְהוָה
 אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
 בּוֹרֵא פַּרְיִ הַגָּפָן

Baruch ata Adonai
 Eloheinu melech ha'olam
 asher ge'alanu
 vega'al et avoteinu ve'et imoteinu
 miMitzrayim
 vehigianu halayla hazeh
 le'echol-bo matzah umaror.
 Ken Adonai Eloheinu
 vElohei avoteinu ve'imoteinu
 hagi'enu lemo'adim
 velirgalim acherim
 haba'im likratenu leshalom,
 semechim bevinyan irecha
 vesasim ba'avodatecha.
 Venochal sham
 min hazvachim umin haPesachim
 asher yagi'a damam
 al kir mizbach'cha leratzon,
 venodeh lecha shir chadash
 al ge'ulatenu ve'al pedut nafshenu.
 Baruch ata Adonai ga'al Yisra'el.
 Baruch ata Adonai
 Eloheinu melech ha'olam
 Boreh peri hagafen.

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

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,
Ruler of endless lands
Who made us holy with your rules
And said, "Go wash your hands!"

ברוך אתה יי' אליהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וצונו על נטילת ידים

Baruch ata Adonai
Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
asher kidshanu bemitzvotav
vetzivanu al netilat yadayim.

מוציא

.....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,
Ruler of this endless spread,
Who brings out of the ground
All of our food, especially bread.

ברוך אתה יי' אליהינו מלך העולם המוציא לחם מן הארץ

Baruch ata Adonai
Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
Hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz.

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.)

מץח

.....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
Who guides this infinite continuum,
You made us holy with your rules
and said "Eat lotsa matzah!" Yum.

ברוך אתה יי' אליהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וצונו על אכילת מצח

Baruch ata Adonai
Eloheinu melech ha'olam
asher kidshanu bemitzvotav
vetzivanu al achilat matzah.

.....Now recline and eat your matzah.....

מָרוֹר

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
Who rules eternal time and space,
Who made us holy with the rules
About this bitter taste.

ברוך אתה ייְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
אֲשֶׁר קָדְשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו
וַצְּוֹנוּ עַל-אֲכִילַת מָרוֹר

Baruch ata Adonai
Eloheinu melech ha'olam
Asher kidshnu bemitzvotav
vetzivanu al achilat maror.

כּוֹרֵךְ

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.

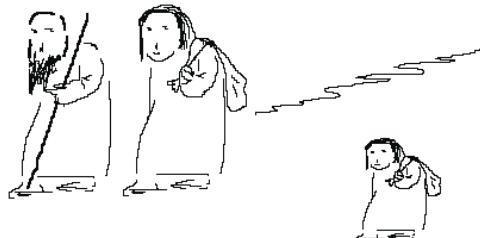
Stick it on the matzah and chow down.

Let's think about the Temple,
and Hillel's practice follow.
The Pesach meal in Temple days,
so Hillel used to eat it:
He'd put some Maror on the meat;
with matzah he would swallow.
The rule ^{Num 9:11} "Eat meat with bread and herbs,"
so Hillel did complete it.

זֶכֶר לִמְקָדֵשׁ כְּהַלְל
כִּן עַשְׂהָ הַלְל בְּזַמָּנוּ
שְׁבִיתָה הַמִּקְדָּשׁ הִיה קִים
הִיה כּוֹרֵךְ
פָּסָח מַצָּה וּמָרוֹר
וְאוֹכֵל בַּיּוֹחָד
לְקִים מָה שָׁגָא מָר
עַל-מִצּוֹת וּמְרָרִים יַאֲכִילָה

Zecher lemikdash keHillel:
Ken asa Hillel bizman
sheBet Hamikdash haya kayam.
Haya corech
Pesach matzah umaror
ve'ochel beyachad,
lekayem mah shene'amar:
"al matzot um'roram 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.



虬ַחַן עֹזֶךְ Eat the Meal

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."¹

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."

צְפּוֹן Afikomen

..... 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 ἀπίκεομαι), 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. אַפִּיקוֹמָן: 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 ἐπί κομόν, "epi komon"—ἐπί (upon/extra, a preposition that can take the accusative case) and κομόν (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): שֶׁלֶא יָהָא עוֹמֵד מְחֻבָּרָה זוֹ וְכָנֵס לְחֶבּוּרָה אַחֲרָה, "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 אַפִּיקוֹ מְנֻעָן on Pesachim 119b, "Let's move on (to another party)," or "Bring out the goodies (Did you pick up your Chocolate Oblivion?)."

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

Ps. 145:21 **In praise of God my mouth will speak,** תְהִלָּת יְהוָה יְדָבֵר־פִּי Tehillat Adonia yedaber pi
And every living thing will bless וַיְבָרֶךְ כָּל־בָּשָׂר vivarech kol basar
God's holy name for evermore. שֵׁם קָדוֹשׁ לְעוֹלָם וְעַד sham kodsho le'olam va'ed.

Ps. 115:18 **And as for us, we shall bless God** וְאַנְחָנוּ נְבָרֶךְ יְהָה מַעַתָּה Va'anachnu nevarech Yah
From now for ever. Halleluyah! וְעַד־עוֹלָם הַלְלָיוּתָה me'atah ve'ad olam, halleluyah!

Ps. 115:1 **Thank our God, for God is good,** הָדוּ לְיְהוָה קְיָתּוֹב Hodu l'Adonai ki tov
God's kindness forever stays. כִּי לְעוֹלָם חָסְדוֹ ki le'olam chasdo.

Ps. 106:2 **Who can tell God's mighty deeds,** מִי יִמְלָל גְּבוּרוֹת יְהוָה Mi yemalel gevurot Adonai,
Or set to words all of God's praise? וַיִּשְׁמַע כָּל־תְּהִלָּתָה 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!

חֲבָרִי נְבָרֶךְ Chaverai, nevarech!

Friends respond, and the leader repeats

Ps. 113:2 May God's name be blessed
now and forever.

יְהִי שֵׁם יְהוָה מַבָּרֶךְ
מַעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם

Yehi shem Adonai mevorach
me'atah ve'ad olam.

The leader continues (add "Eloheinu" if 10 or more Jewish adults are at the table)

With the approval of my friends,
let's bless our God, **the one**
who provides our food.

בְּרִשׁוֹת חֲבָרִי
נְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִינוּ
שָׁאַכְלָנּוּ מִשְׁלֹו

Bir'shot chaverai,
nevarech Eloheinu
she'achalnu mishelo.

Friends respond, and the leader repeats (add "Eloheinu" when 10 Jewish adults gather)

Bless our God, **the one**
who provides our food,
and by whose goodness we live.

בָּרוּךְ אֱלֹהִינוּ
שָׁאַכְלָנּוּ מִשְׁלֹו
וּבְטוּבוֹ חַיָּנוּ

Baruch Eloheinu
she'achalnu mishelo
uv'tuvo chayinu.

All together

Blessed is God, blessed is God's name!

בָּרוּךְ הוּא וּבָרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ

Baruch hu uvaruch shemo!

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 ייָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הָזֶן אֱתָה הָעָלָם בְּטוּבוֹ בְּחִסְדֵּךְ וּבְרָחָמִים הָוָא נָתַן לְךָם לְכָל-בָּשָׂר כִּי לְעוֹלָם תְּסַדֵּה וּבְטוּבוֹ הָגָדוֹל תָּמִיד לֹא-חִסְר לְנוּ וְאֶל יְחִסְר לְנוּ מִזְוֹן לְעוֹלָם וְעַד בְּעַבְור שְׁמוֹ הָגָדוֹל כִּי הָוָא אֵל זֶן וּמְפְרָגָס לְפָל וּמְלִיב לְפָל וּמְכִין מִזְוֹן לְכָל בְּרִיאוֹתָיו אָשֵׁר בָּרָא בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ייָ הָזֶן אֱתָה הָפָל

Baruch ata Adonai
 Elohenu melech ha'olam,
 hazan et ha'olam kulo betovo
 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,
because you willed¹
to our ancestors
a land pleasant, good, and spacious,
and because you brought us out
(Sovereign God)
from the land of Egypt
and saved us from the house of slaves
and because of the contract
which you sealed in our flesh²
and because of the Torah
which you taught us
and because of the statutes
which you made known to us
and because of the life
of grace and love
which you granted us
and because of the eating of food
through which you nourish
and sustain us forever—
Every day, at every time,
and in every hour.

נוֹדָה לְךָ יְהוָה
עַל שְׁהִנְחַלָּת
לְאָבוֹתֵינוּ וּלְאָמוֹתֵינוּ
אָרֶץ חַמְדָה טוֹבָה וָרְחַבָּה
וְעַל שְׁהַזְּכָרָתֵנוּ
יְהוָה יְהוָה
מְאָרֶץ מִצְרָיִם
וּפְדִיתֵנוּ מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים
וְעַל בְּרִיתְךָ
שְׁחַתָּמָת בְּבָשָׂרֵינוּ
וְעַל תּוֹרַתְךָ
שְׁלִמְדָתֵנוּ
וְעַל חֻקָּיךָ
שְׁהַזְּדָעָתֵנוּ
וְעַל חַיִם
חַן וְחִסְדָּךְ
שְׁחַוּנוֹתֵנוּ
וְעַל אֲכִילַת מִזּוֹן
שָׁאַתָּה זָן
וּמְפָרֵגִים אֹתָנוּ תִּמְיד
בְּכָל-יּוֹם וּבְכָל-עַת
וּבְכָל-שָׁעָה

Nodeh lecha Adonai Eloheinu
al shehin'chalta
la'avoteinu ule'imoteinu
eretz chemda tova ur'chava
ve'al shehotzetanu
Adonai Elohenu
me'eretz Mitzrayim
ufeditanu mibet avadim
ve'al berit'cha
shechatahta bivsareinu
ve'al Torat'cha
shelimadtanu
ve'al chukecha
shehodatastu
ve'al chayim
chen vachesed
shechonantstu
ve'al achilat mazon
sha'ata zan
umfarnes otanu tamid—
Bechol yom, uv'chol et,
uvechol sha'ah.

¹ “Gave as an inheritance.”

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

And for all this, Sovereign God,
We thank you
and bless you—
let every living thing bless your name
always and forever—

Your people Israel, God—take pity
On them and on your holy city
Jerusalem. Cast a kindly eye on
The dwelling of your glory, Zion
The reign of David,
your anointed,
The great and holy house appointed
To bear your name—
O our God, our source of being,
Be our shepherd and our feeder
Our support and our sustainer
And our keeper—
Keep our troubles, God, far away
Don't delay—

וְעַל הַכְלִי יְאַלְהֵינוּ
 אָנָחָנוּ מָודִים לְךָ
 וּמְבָרְכִים אֹתוֹתָךָ
 יַתְבִּרְךָ שְׁמֶךָ בְּפִי כָּל-חַיִּים
 תִּמְדִיד לְעוֹלָם וְעַד
 כְּכַתּוֹב וְאַכְלָה
 וּשְׁבָעָת וּבְרָכָת
 אֲתִיהָנוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 עַל הָאָרֶץ הַטְּבָה
 אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לְךָ
 בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ
 עַל הָאָרֶץ וְעַל הַמִּזְוֹן

Ve'al hakol Adonai Elohenu
 anachnu modim lach
 umvar'chim otach—
 yitbarach shimcha befi chol chay
 tamid le'olam va'ed—
 Kakatu: ve'achalta
 vesavata uverachta
 et Adonai Elohecha
 al ha'aretz hatova
 asher natan lach.
 Baruch ata Adonai
 al ha'aretz ve'al hamazon.

3. Have Mercy

in the third blessing we offer prayer; we ask God's mercy for Jerusalem, for Zion and for ourselves.

רְחֵם יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמְּךָ
וּעַל-יְרוּשָׁלָם עִירְךָ
וּעַל-צִיּוֹן מִשְׁפָּנָן כְּבוֹדְךָ
וּעַל-מְלָכִיּוֹת בֵּית דָוִד
מֶשִּׁיחָךְ
וּעַל-הַבַּיִת הַגָּדוֹל וְהַקָּדוֹשׁ
שְׁנִקְרָא שֵׁםךְ עַלְיוֹן
אֱלֹהֵינוּ אָבִינוּ
רְעֵנוּ זָנוֹנוּ
פָּרְנֵסָנוּ וּכְלַכְלָנוּ
וּהְרִיחָנוּ
וּהְרוֹחַ-לָנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
מִהָּרָה מִכְּלָ-צָרוֹתֵינוּ

Rachem Adonai Eloheinu
al Yisra'el amecha
ve'al Yerushalayim irecha
ve'al Tziyon mishkan kevodecha
ve'al malchut beit David
meshichecha
ve'al habayit hagadol vehakadosh
shenikra shimcha alav—
Eloheinu avinu
re'einu zunenu
parneseinu vechalkeleinu
veharvichenu,
veharvach lanu Adonai Elohenu
meheira mikol tzaroteinu.

¹ Written in Deut. 8:10—Moses' words to the Israelites.

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.

וְנָא אֶל-תָּצְרִיכָנוּ
 ייְהִינּוּ
 לֹא לִידִי
מִפְנַת בָּשָׂר וְדָם
וְלֹא לִידִי הַלּוֹאָתָם
כִּי אָם לִזְךָ
הַמְּמֻלָּא הַפְּטוּחָה
הַקְדּוֹשָׁה וְהַרְחָבָה
שֶׁלָּא נְבוֹשׁ
וְלֹא נְכַלֵּם
לְעוֹלָם וְעַד

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.

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

רֵצֶה וְמְחַלִּיכָנוּ
 ייְהִינּוּ בְמִצְוֹתֶךָ
 וּבְמִצְוֹת יוֹם הַשְׁבִיעִי
הַשְׁבָּת הַגָּדוֹל וְהַקְדּוֹשׁ הַזֶּה
כִּי יוֹם זֶה גָּדוֹל
וְקָדֹשׁ הַוָּא לְפָנֶיךָ
לְשִׁבְתַּ-בּו וְלִנְוֹחַ בּוּ
בְּאַהֲבָה כְּמִצּוֹת רְצָוֹנָה
וּבְרְצָוֹנָךְ הַנִּיחַ לְנוּ
ייְהִינּוּ
שֶׁלָּא תָהַצֵּרָה וַיְגַזֵּן וְאַנְחָה
בַּיּוֹם מְנוּחָתֵנוּ
וְהִרְאָנוּ ייְהִינּוּ
בְּנִיחָמָת צִיּוֹן עִירָךְ
וּבְבְנֵינוּ יְרוּשָׁלָם
עִיר קָדְשָׁךְ כִּי אַתָּה הַוָּא
בַּעַל הַיְשׁוּעָה וּבַעַל הַנְּחָמָה

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.

אלָהִינוּ וְאֲלֹהִי
Elohenu velohei
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֶמֶתֵּינוּ
avoteinu ve'imoteinu,
יָעַלְהָ וְיָבָא וְיָגַע
ya'aleh veyavo veyagi'a
וַיָּרַאֲהָ וַיְרַצֵּחָ וַיִּשְׁמַע
veyera'eh veyeratzeh veyishama
וַיִּפְקַד וַיִּזְכֶּר
veyipaked veyizacher
זְכָרֹנוּ וַיִּפְקַדְנוּ
zichronu ufikdonu,
וְזָכָרּוֹן אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֶמֶתֵּינוּ
vezichron avoteinu ve'imoteinu,
וְזָכָרּוֹן מֶשִׁיחָ
vezichron Mashiach
בֶּן דָּוִיד עֲבָדָךְ
ben David avdecha,
וְזָכָרּוֹן יְרוּשָׁלָיִם
vezichron Yerushalayim
עִיר קָדְשָׁךְ
ir kodshecha,
וְזָכָרּוֹן כָּל־עָמָךְ
vezichron kol amcha
בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְפָנֶיךָ
bet Yisra'el lefanecha
לְפָלִיטָה לְטוֹבָה
lifleita letova
לְחַנּוּ וְלִחְסֵד וּלְרָחָמִים
lechen ul'chesed ul'rachamim
לְחַיִּים וּלְשָׁלוֹם
lechayim ul'shalom,
בַּיּוֹם חַג הַמְּצֹזֹת הַזֶּה
beyom chag hamatzot hazeh.
זְכָרְנוּ יְיָ אֲלֹהִינוּ
Zochrenu Adonai Eloheinu
בָּו לְטוֹבָה
bo letovah;
וַפְקַדְנוּ בָּו לְבָרְכָה
ufokdenu vo livracha;
וְהַשְׁעִינוּ בָּו לְחַיִּים
vehoshi'enu vo lechayim.
וּבְדָבָר יְשֻׁעָה וּרְחָמִים
Uvidvar yeshuah verachamim
חֹסֵס וְחַנְנוּ
chus vechanenu
וּרְחָם עַלְינוּ וְהַשְׁעִינוּ
verachem alenu vehoshi'enu,
כִּי אֶלְיךָ עִינֵינוּ
ki elecha enenu,
כִּי אֶל מֶלֶךְ
ki el melech
חָנָנוּ וּרְחֹם אַתָּה
chanun verachum ata.

Rebuild Jerusalem

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

Build Jerusalem the holy city up again (2)	ובָנָה יְרוּשָׁלָם	Uv'nei Yerushalayim ir hakodesh (2)
You will build, you will build,	עִיר הַקָּדָשׁ	Uv'nei uv'nei
you will build Jerusale-em.	בָּמְהֻרָה בִּימֵינוּ	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 ייְהוָה	Baruch ata Adonai
Who in mercy builds Jerusalem.	בָּוֹנָה בְּרָחָמָיו יְרוּשָׁלָם	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 ייְהוָה	Baruch ata Adonai,
God who rules forever,	אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
Source of life, our God who rules us,	הָאָלָה אָבִינוּ מֶלֶכְנוּ	Ha'El avinu malkenu
Our great leader and creator,	אֲדִירֵנוּ בּוֹרָאנוּ	adirenu bor'enu
Our redeemer, you who school us,	גָּאֲלֵנוּ יוֹצֵרֵנוּ	go'alenu yotzrenu
Holy to Jacob and holy to us,	קָדוֹשֶׁנּוּ קָדוֹשׁ יַעֲקֹב	kedoshenu kedosh Ya'akov
Shepherd of Israel and us,	רֹועֵנוּ רֹועֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל	ro'enu ro'eh Yisrael
The good ruler	הַמֶּלֶךְ הַטוֹּב	hamelech hatov
with goodness for all,	וְהַמְּטִיב לְכָל	vehametiv lakol
Who in every day—	שְׁבָכֶל יוֹם וַיּוֹם	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.

הוּא הַטִּיב הַזֶּה מְטוּב
הוּא יִתְּיִבְּלָנוּ
הוּא גִּמְלָנוּ
הוּא גּוֹמְלָנוּ לְעֵד
לְחֵן לְחַסֵּד וּלְרָחָםִים
וּלְרוּחַ הַצְּלָה וּהַצְּלָחָה
בְּרָכָה וִישׁוּעָה נְחָמָה
פְּרָגָשָׁה וּכְלָקָלה
וּרְחָמִים וְחַיִּים וְשָׁלוֹם
וּכְלַטּוֹב
וּמְכַלְּטּוֹב
אֶל יְחִשְׁרָנוּ

Hu hetiv hu metiv
hu yetiv lanu
hu g'malanu
hu gomlenu
hu yigmelenu la'ad,
lechen lechesed ul'rachamim
ul'revach hatzala vehatzlacha
beracha vishua nechama
parnasa vechalkala,
verachamim vechayim veshalom
vechol tov
umikol tov
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.

הַרְחָמָן הוּא יִמְלֹךְ עֲלֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וְעַד
הַרְחָמָן הוּא יִתְבָּרַךְ בְּשָׁמִים וּבָאָרֶץ
הַרְחָמָן
הוּא יִשְׁתַּבְּחַה לְדוֹר דּוֹרִים
וַיִּתְפָּאַר
בָּנוּ לְעֵד וּלְנַצְחָה נְצָחִים
וַיִּתְהַדֵּר
בָּנוּ לְעֵד וּלְעוֹלָמִים עֲוָלָמִים
הַרְחָמָן הוּא יִפְרָנֵסֵנוּ בְּכָבוֹד
הַרְחָמָן הוּא יִשְׁבּוֹר
עַלְנוּ מַעַל צְוָאָרֵנוּ
וְהַוְּא יוֹלִיכָנוּ
קוּמִמִּוֹת לְאָרְצֵנוּ

Harachaman hu
yimloch aleinu le'olam va'ed;
Harachaman hu
yitbarach bashamayim uva'aretz.
Harachaman
hu yishtabach ledor dorim;
Veyitpa'ar
banu la'ad ul'netzach netzachim,
Veyit'hadar
banu la'ad ul'ol'mei olamim.
Harachaman, hu
yefarnesenu bechavod.
Harachaman, hu yishbor
ulenu me'al tzavarenu
vehu yolichenu
kom'miyut le'artzenu.

Continue here; some omit the references to the Matriarchs

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

אָוֹתָנוּ וְאַתָּה-כָּל-אָשָׁר לְנוּ

...otanu ve'et kol asher lanu

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

כְּמוֹ שְׁנִתְבְּרָכָו

kemo shenitbar'chu

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.

אַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה

Avraham veSarah

יִצְחָק וּרְבָּקָה

Yitzchak veRivkah

וַיַּעֲקֹב וּרְשָׁלָל וְלָאָהָה

veYa'akov veRachel veLe'ah

בְּכָל מְפָלָל

bakol mikol kol...

כִּן יָבֹרֶךְ אָוֹתָנוּ

Ken yevarech otanu

כָּלָנוּ יְחָד

kulanu yachad

בְּבִרְכָּה שְׁלָמָה

bivracha shelema,

וּנוֹאָמֵן

venomar, "Amen."

בְּמָרוֹם יְלָמְדָו

Bamarom yelamdu

עַלְيָהָם וְעַלְيָנוּ

aleihem ve'aleinu

זְכִוָּת שְׁתַהָּא

Z'chut shet'heh

לִמְשִׁמְרָת שָׁלוֹם

le mishmeret shalom,

וּנְשָׂא בָּרְכָה מֵאָתָּה יִ

Venisah verachah me'et Adonai

וְאַדְקָה מֵאֱלֹהִי יִשְׁעָנוּ

Utz'dakah me'Elohei yisheinu,

With sense and grace,
God and human race—
May they show us favor!

וּנְמִצָּא-חָן וּשְׁכָל טֹב

Venimtzah chen vesechel tov

בְּעֵינֵי אֱלֹהִים וְאַדְםָ

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.

הַרְחָמָן הוּא יְנִיחֵלֵנוּ

Harachaman hu yan'chilenu

יּוֹם שְׁכָלָו שְׁבָת וּמִנּוֹחָה

yom shekulo Shabbat um'nucha

לְחֵי הַעוֹלָמִים

lechayey ha'olamim.

.....For Pesach.....

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

הַרְחָמָן הוּא

Harachaman hu

יְנִיחֵלֵנוּ יוֹם

yan'chilenu yom

שְׁכָלָו טֹב

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
the State of Israel,
first sign of our coming redemption.
May the merciful one bestow friendship
between the descendants
of Yitzchak and Yishma'el.
May the merciful one bless
all who are given over
to pain and misery,
and bring them from darkness to light.

We pray that we may merit the arrival of the Messianic Era.
May the merciful one make us worthy
of the Messianic Era
and the life of the world to come.

2 Sam 22:51 A tower of salvation for God's king;¹
Gracious actions does God bring
To David and his royal line for endless time.
The One who makes peace on high,
will make peace
for us and for all Israel.
Now you say, "That's right."

הָרָחָםָן הוּא יָבֹרֶךְ
אֶת-מִדִּינַת יִשְׂרָאֵל
רָאשִׁית צְמִיחַת גָּלְתָּנוּ
הָרָחָםָן הוּא יִתְּנוּ אַחֲרָה
בֵּין בָּנֵי יִצְחָק
וּבֵין בָּנֵי יִשְׁמָעוֹל
הָרָחָםָן הוּא יָבֹרֶךְ
אֶת-כָּל הַנְּטוּנִים
בְּצִדְקָה וְאַנְחָה
וַיּוֹצִיאָם מִאָפָלָה לְאוֹרָה.

הָרָחָםָן הוּא יַזְקִיןּוּ
לִימּוֹת הַמְּשִׁיחָה
וְלֹחַיִם הַעוֹלָם הַבָּא
מִגְדָּול יְשׁוּעָת מַלְכֵנוּ
וּעֲשָׂה-חִסְדָּךְ לְמַשִּׁיחָה
לְרוֹד וְלֹזַרְעוֹ עַד-עוֹלָם
עֲשָׂה שָׁלוֹם בְּמִרְומָיו
הָוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם
עַלְינוּ וְעַל כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְאָמַרְוּ אָמֵן

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.

Cup 4: Hallel Continues הַלְּלִי

*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.*

שְׁפֹךְ חַמְתָּךְ Spill Your Anger¹

*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*

שְׁפֹךְ חַמְתָּךְ אֶל־הָגוֹיִם
asher lo yeda'ucha
וְעַל מַמְלָכוֹת אֲשֶׁר
beshimcha lo kara'u
כִּי אָכַל אֶת־יַעֲקֹב
ve'et navehu heshamu.
שְׁפֹךְ־עַלְيָהֶם זָעַם
vacharon ap'cha yasigem;
תִּרְדֹּף בְּאָף וְתִשְׁמִיד
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,
but for the sake of your name give glory,
for the sake of your kindness and truth.

² Why should the other nations say *of us*,
“Where is their God?”

³ When our God is in heaven
doing whatever God wishes?

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

⁴ Their idols are fashioned by man;³
they’re not made by God—

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

⁵ They have a mouth but cannot speak;
eyes, but they cannot see.

⁶ They have ears, but they can’t hear;
a nose, but they can’t smell—

לֹא לְנוּ יְהוָה לֹא לְנוּ
כִּי רְשִׁמְךָ תֵּן כָּבוֹד
עַל חִזְקָדָךְ עַל אַמְתָּךְ
לְפָהָה יָמְרוּ הָגּוּם
אִיָּהָנָא אַלְתִּיחָהָם
וְאַלְתִּינוּ בְּשָׁמְמָם
כָּל אַשְׁר-חִפֵּץ עֲשָׂה

Lo lanu, Adonai, lo lanu
ki leshimcha ten kavod
al chasd’cha al amitecha
lama yomru hagoyim,
“Ayeh na eloheihem?”
vEloheinu vashamayim,
kol asher chafetz asah.

עַצְבִּיכֶם פְּסַף וַיְחַבֵּב
מַעֲשֶׂה יְדֵי אָדָם

Atzabayhem kesef vezahav,
Ma’aseh yedei adam.

Chorus of Atzabayhem

פֶּה-לְּלָהֶם וְלֹא יְדַבֵּרּוּ
עִינִים לְהָם וְלֹא יַרְאָוּ
אָזְנוֹנִים לְהָם וְלֹא יִשְׁמַעְוּ
אָף לְהָם וְלֹא יַרְחַוּ

Peh lahem velo yedaberu,
einayim lahem velo yir’u.
Oznayim lahem velo yishma’u,
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.

יְדֵיכֶם וְלֹא יִמְשֻׁן
רְגִלֵּיכֶם וְלֹא יַהֲלֹךְ
לְאַרְיָהֶנוּ בְּגִרּוֹנָם

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

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

כִּמְעוֹדָם יְהֹוָה עֲשֵׂהָם
כָּל אֲשֶׁר-בָּטַח בָּהָם

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

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

יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּטַח בִּיהוָה
עֹזֶרֶם וּמְגַנֵּם הוּא

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

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

Chorus of Atzabayhem

בֵּית אַהֲרֹן בְּטַח בִּיהוָה
עֹזֶרֶם וּמְגַנֵּם הוּא

Beit Aharon bit'chu bAdonai,
ezram umaginam hu.

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

וּרְאֵי יְהֹוָה בְּטַח בִּיהוָה
עֹזֶרֶם וּמְגַנֵּם 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,

יְהֹהָה זְכָרָנוּ יְבָרֵךְ
יְבָרֵךְ אַתָּבִית וִשְׁרָאֵל
יְבָרֵךְ אַתָּבִית 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 יְרָאֵי יְהֹהָה
הַקְּדוּשִׁים עַם-הַגּוֹלִים

yevarech yir'ei Adonai,
haktanim im hagdolim.

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

יְסֻף יְהֹוָה עַלְכֶם
עַלְכֶם וּעַל-בְּנֵיכֶם

Yosef Adonai aleichem,
aleichem ve'al beneichem.

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

בָּרוּכִים אַתָּם לְיהֹהָה
עָשָׂה שָׁמָיִם וְאָرֶץ

Beruchim atem lAdonai,
oseh shamayim va'aretz.

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

הַשְׁמָיִם שָׁמָיִם לְיהֹהָה
וְהָאָרֶץ נָתָן לְבָנֵי-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!

לֹא חַמְתִּים יְהָלְלִיהָ
וְלֹא כָּלְיָרְדִּי דֻּמָּה
וְאָנָּחָנוּ נְבָרֵךְ יְהָ
מְעַתָּה וְעַד עַזְוָלָם הֶלְלִיהָ

Lo hametim yehal'lu Yah,
velo kol yordei dumah.
Va'anachnu nevarech 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.

אָהָבַתִּי כִּי־יִשְׁמָעֵ יְהָוָה
אַתְּ־קָולִי תְּחִנּוּנִי
כִּי־הָתָה אָנוֹ לִי
וּבִימֵי אֶקְרָא
אֲפָפָנוּ חַבְלִידָנוּת
וּמְצָרֵי שָׁאָל מִצְאָנוּ
צָרָה וְגַנּוֹן אָמְצָא
וּבְשִׁמְדִירָה אֶקְרָא
אָנוּ יְהָוָה מְלָתָה נַפְשִׁי
חָפָן יְהָוָה וִצְדִּיקָה
וְאַלְהֵינוּ מִרְחָםָה
שָׁמֵר פְּתָאִים יְהָוָה
דָּלָותִי וְלִי יְהֹוּשִׁיעַ
שָׁובֵן נַפְשִׁי לְמִנְחָחִיכִי
כִּי־יְהָוָה גָּמֵל עֲלֵיכִי
כִּי חִלְצָתִ נַפְשִׁי מִמְּפֹעָה
אַתְּ־עִנֵּנִי מִרְדָּמָעָה
אַתְּ־רָגְלִי מִדְחָה
אַתְּ־הַלֵּךְ לְפָנֵי יְהָוָה
בָּאָרֶצֶת הַחַיִם

Ahavti ki yishma Adonai
et koli tachanunai,
ki hita ozno li
uv'ymai ekra.
Afafuni chevlei mavet,
um'tzarei She'ol m'tza'uni.
tzara veyagon emtza.
Uv'shem Adonai ekra,
“Ana Adonai, malta nafshi!”
Chanun Adonai vetzadik,
v'Eloheinu 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

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!

הָאמְנוֹתִי כִּי אָדָבֵר
אָנָּי עֲנִיתִי מָאָדָר
אָנָּי אִמְרָתִי בְּחַפְּצִי
כָּל־דָּאָדָם כָּזָבֶן

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

Psalm 116: 12-19²

מִה־אָשִׁיב לִיהְוָה
כָּל־תָּגְמֻלּוּהָ עַלִּי
כּוֹסִיְשֻׁוּתָה אֲשָׁא
וּבְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֱקָרָא
נְדָרֵי לִיהְוָה אֲשָׁלָם
נְגַדְּה־נָא לְכָל־עַמּוֹ
יִקָּרֵב עַנְיִן יְהוָה
הַפּוֹתָה לְחַסִּידָה
אָנָּה יְהוָה כִּי־אָנָּי עַבְדָּךְ
אָנָּה עַבְדָּךְ בְּנוֹ אַמְתָּךְ
בְּתַחְתָּךְ לְמוֹסְרָי
לְכָדְאָזְבָּח זְבַח תּוֹדָה
וּבְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֱקָרָא
נְדָרֵי לִיהְוָה אֲשָׁלָם
נְגַדְּה־נָא לְכָל־עַמּוֹ
בְּתַחְצְרוֹת בֵּית יְהוָה
בְּתוֹכֵיכִי יְרוּשָׁלָם
הַלְלָיִת

Mah ashiv lAdonai
kol tagmulohi alay?
Kos yeshu’ot esah
uv’shem Adonai ekra.
Nedarai lAdonai ashalem
negda na lechol amo.
Yakar be’unei 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.

הַלְלוּ אֱלֹהָה כָּל-גּוֹיִם
שְׁבַחוּהוּ כָּל-עָמִים
כִּי גָּבָר עֶלְיוֹן חֶסֶד
וְאֶתְהָדִיחָה לְעוֹלָם הַלְלִיָּה

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.

הָדוּ לִיהְוָה כִּי-טוֹב
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד
יָמְרָנָא יִשְׁרָאֵל
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד
יָמְרָנָא בֵּית-אַהֲרֹן
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד
יָמְרָנָא יְרָאֵי יְהָוָה
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד

Psalm 118: 5

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

מִן-הַמְּצָר קָרָאֵת יְהָוָה
עֲנָנִי בְּמִרְחָב יְהָוָה

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.

יְהָוָה לִי לֹא אִירָא
מַה-יָּעַשְׂה לִי אָדָם
יְהָוָה לִי בְּעֹזְרִי
נָאַנְיָ אָרָאֵה בְּשָׁנָאֵי
טוֹב לְחִסּוֹת בִּיהְוָה
מִבְּטָח בְּאָדָם
טוֹב לְחִסּוֹת בִּיהְוָה
מִבְּטָח בְּנִידִיבִים
כָּל-גּוֹיִם סְבָבּוֹנִי
בְּשֵׁם יְהָוָה כִּי אֲמִילָם
סְבָבּוֹנִי גַּם-סְבָבּוֹנִי
בְּשֵׁם יְהָוָה כִּי אֲמִילָם

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.

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.

סַבּוּנִי כְּרָבּוּרִים
דָּעַכְוּ בְּאֵשׁ קֹצְבִּים
בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אָמִילָם
דָּחָה דְּחִתָּנִי לִנְפָלֶל
וְיְהוָה עֹזָרַנִּי
עָזִי וּזְמָרַת יְהָה
וְהַרְיָלִי לִישְׁוֹעָה

Sabuni chidvorim;
do'achu ke'esh kotzim;
beshem Adonai ki amilam.
Dacho d'chitani linpol,
vAdonai azarani.
Ozi vezimrat Yah,
vay'hi li lishu'ah.

Psalm 118: 15-20

קֹלֶל רָפָה וַיְשֻׁהָה
בְּאַהֲלֵי צָדִיקִים
יָמִינִי יְהוָה עָשָׂה חַיֵּל
יָמִינִי יְהוָה רָומָה
יָמִינִי יְהוָה עָשָׂה חַיֵּל
לֹא אָמֹות כִּי אָחִיה
וְאָסְפֶר מַעַשֵּׂי יְהָה
יִסְרָר יְסְרַנִּי יְהָה
וְלִמְפֹתָה לֹא נַתְנָנִי
פִּתְחָה-וְלִי שַׁעֲרֵי-צְדָקָה
אָבָּא-כֶּם אָוֹרָה יְהָה
זֶה-הַשְׁעָר לִיהוָה
צָדִיקִים יָבֹא בָּו

Kol rina viyshu'ah
be'oholei 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.
²² That block—it's now the keystone—
was rejected by the mason.
²³ This success has come from God;
to us, it seems miraculous.
²⁴ This is the day that God has made,
a day of joy and happiness!

אָזְךָ כִּי עֲנִירָנִי
וַתְּהִלֵּלִי לִישְׁעָה
אָבִן מְאָסָה הַבּוֹנִים
הַיּוֹתָה לְرָאשׁ פָּנָה
מְאָתָה יְהוָה הַיּוֹתָה זֹאת
הַיּוֹם נְפָלָת בְּעִינֵינוּ
זֶה-יָמָם עָשָׂה יְהוָה
נָגִילָה וְנִשְׁמְמָה בָּו

Od'cha ki anitani
vat'hi li li'shu'ah.
Even ma'asu habonim
haytah lerosh pinah.
Me'et Adonai haytah zot;
hi niflat be'eineinu.
Zeh hayom asah Adonai;
nagilah venismechah vo.

Psalm 118: 25

²⁵ Please, God, save us;
Please, God, grant us success.

אָנָּא יְהוָה הַוְשִׁיעָה נָּא
אָנָּא יְהוָה הַצְּלִיכָה נָּא

Ana Adonai hoshiah na;
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.
²⁷ God is the ruler who shines light upon us;
bind the festive sacrifice with ropes³
to the horns of the altar.
²⁸ You are my God and I will thank you,
my ruler and I will exalt you.
²⁹ Thank God, for God is good,
for God's kindness lasts forever.

בָּרוּךְ הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה
בְּרָכָנּוּכָם מִבֵּית יְהוָה
אֶל יְהוָה וַיָּאֶרְלָנָה
אִסְרוֹדָהָן בְּעַבְרִים
עֲדָקָרְנוֹת הַפְּנִים
אֶלְיָאָהָה וְאֶזְרָךְ
אֶלְהָיָ אֲרוֹמְמָהָן
הַזּוֹדָה לְיְהוָה כִּיטּוֹב
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חָסְדוֹ

Baruch haba beshem Adonay;
berachnuchem mibet Adonay.
El Adonay vaya'er lanu;
isru chag ba'avotim
ad karnot hamizbe'ach.
Eli ata ve'odekah,
Elohai arom'mekah.
Hodu lAdonai 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 ^{בָּרוּךְ הַבָּא} 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.

יְהִלּוֹךְ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
כָּל-מַעֲשֵׂיךְ וְחַסְדֵּיךְ
צְדִיקִים עוֹשִׂי רְצׁוֹנֶךְ
וְכָל-עַמֶּךְ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
בָּרְכָה יְדוֹ וִיבְרָכוּ
וַיְשַׁבְּחוּ וַיְפָאָרוּ
וַיִּרְׁומְמוּ וַיִּעֲרִיצוּ
וַיִּקְדִּישׁוּ וַיִּמְלִיכוּ
אֶת-שְׁמָךְ מֶלֶכְנוּ
כִּי לְךָ טוֹב לְהִזְדֹּות
וְלִשְׁמָךְ נָאָה לְזִמְרָה
כִּי מְעוֹלָם עַד עַוְלָם
אַתָּה אֵל
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ
מֶלֶךְ מְהֻלָּל בְּתַשְׁבָחוֹת

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

SAMPLE

Psalm 136¹

¹ Thank God for being good,
(God's kindness lasts forever);

² Thank the God of gods
(God's kindness lasts forever);

³ Thank the Ruler of rulers
(God's kindness lasts forever);

⁴ Who has done great wonders alone
(God's kindness lasts forever).

⁵ Who made heaven with insight
(God's kindness lasts forever)

⁶ And spread earth on water
(God's kindness lasts forever),

⁷ Who made great lights—
(God's kindness lasts forever),

⁸ The sun to rule by day
(God's kindness lasts forever),

⁹ The moon and stars
to rule at night
(God's kindness lasts forever);

¹⁰ Who struck Egypt through their first-born
(God's kindness lasts forever)

¹¹ And led Israel from their midst
(God's kindness lasts forever)

¹² With a strong hand and outstretched arm
(God's kindness lasts forever),

¹³ Who cut the Reed Sea in parts
(God's kindness lasts forever)

הָדוּ לִיהְוָה כִּי־תּוֹב
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חָסֶדוֹ

הָדוּ לְאֱלֹהִי הָאֱלֹהִים
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חָסֶדוֹ

הָדוּ לְאָדָונִי הָאָדָנים
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חָסֶדוֹ

לְעֵשָׂה נִפְלָאוֹת גְּדוּלֹת לְבָדוֹ
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חָסֶדוֹ

לְעֵשָׂה הַשְׁמִים בְּתִבְנָה
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חָסֶדוֹ

לְרֹקֵעַ הָאָרֶץ עַל־הַמִּםְמִים
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חָסֶדוֹ

לְעֵשָׂה אָוָרִים גְּדוּלִים
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חָסֶדוֹ

אַתְּ־הַשְׁמֵשׁ לְמִמְשֵׁלָת בַּיּוֹם
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חָסֶדוֹ

אַתְּ־הַיְרָחַ וְכָכָבִים
לְמִמְשֵׁלָות בְּלִילָה
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חָסֶדוֹ

לְמִכְהָ מִצְרָיִם בְּבָכָרֵיהֶם
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חָסֶדוֹ

וַיַּצֵּא יִשְׂרָאֵל מִתֹּזְכָּם
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חָסֶדוֹ

בַּיד חִזְקָה וּבָרוּעַ נְטוּיָה
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חָסֶדוֹ

לְגִזְעָר יָמָסָפֶת לְגִזְאָרִים
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חָסֶדוֹ

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.

¹⁴ And brought Israel through the middle
(God's kindness lasts forever)

¹⁵ And tumbled Pharaoh and his forces
into the Reed Sea
(God's kindness lasts forever);

¹⁶ Who guided our people in the desert
(God's kindness lasts forever),
¹⁷ Who struck down great kings
(God's kindness lasts forever)

¹⁸ And killed mighty kings
(God's kindness lasts forever)—

¹⁹ Sihon, the Amorites' king
(God's kindness lasts forever)

²⁰ And Og, king of Bashan
(God's kindness lasts forever)

²¹ And gave their land as an inheritance,
(God's kindness lasts forever)

²² Inheritance to God's servant Israel
(God's kindness lasts forever);

²³ Who remembered us when we were down
(God's kindness lasts forever)

²⁴ And got us out of trouble
(God's kindness lasts forever).

²⁵ God gives food to every creature
(God's kindness lasts forever);

²⁶ Thank the God of heaven
(God's kindness lasts forever).

וְהַעֲבֵיר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתוֹךְ
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד
וְגַעַר פְּרֻעָה וְתִילָּוּ
בְּיָמָם-סָוִף
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד
לְמוֹלִיךְ עַמּוֹ בְּמִדְבָּר
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד
לְמַכָּה מֶלֶכִים גָּדְלִים
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד
וַיַּהַרְגֵּן מֶלֶכִים אֲדִירִים
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד
לְסִיחָן מֶלֶךְ הָאָמָרִי
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד
וְלַעֲזָג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׂן
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד
וְנַתַּן אַרְצָם לְנַחֲלָה
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד
נַחֲלָה לִיְשָׁרָאֵל עָבָדָה
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד
שְׁבָשְׁפִּלְנוּ זָכָר לָנוּ
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד
וַיִּפְרְקָנוּ מַצְרָנוּ
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד
נָתַן לָהּם לְכָל-בָּשָׂר
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד
הָדוּ לְאָלָה הַשָּׁמֶן
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד

Vehe'evir Yisra'el betocho
(ki le'olam chasdo)
Veni'er Par'oh vecheilo
veyam suf
(ki le'olam chasdo);
Lemolich amo bamidbar
(ki le'olam chasdo),
Lemakeh melachim gedolim
(ki le'olam chasdo)
Vayaharog melachim adirim
(ki le'olam chasdo)—
LeSichon melech haEmori
(ki le'olam chasdo)
UleOg melech haBashan
(ki le'olam chasdo)
Venatan artzam lenachalah,
(ki le'olam chasdo)
Nachalah leYisra'el avdo
(ki le'olam chasdo);
Shebshiflenu zachar lanu
(ki le'olam chasdo)
Vayifrekenu mitzarenu
(ki le'olam chasdo).
Noten lechem lechol basar
(ki le'olam chasdo);
Hodu le'El hashamayim
(ki le'olam chasdo).

The Life Force...¹

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.

נִשְׁמַת כָּל-חַי
תָּבֹרֶךְ אֶת-שְׁמֶךָ
יְאֱלֹהֵינוּ
רוּחַ כָּל-בָּשָׂר
תִּפְאֵר וְתִרְוָם
זִכְּרָה מַלְכֵנוּ תָּמִיד
מִן-הָעוֹלָם וְעַד-הָעוֹלָם
אַתָּה אֵל
וּמְבָלָדֵךְ אֵין לְנוּ מֶלֶךְ
גּוֹאֵל וּמוֹשִׁיעֵל
פּוֹדֵה וּמַצִּיל
וּמְפָרֵגָס וּמַרְחָם
בְּכָל-עַת צָרָה וַצּוֹקָה
אֵין-לְנוּ מֶלֶךְ אֶלָּא אַתָּה
אֱלֹהֵי הָרָאשׁוֹנִים וְהָאַחֲרׁוֹנִים
אֱלֹהָה כָּל-בְּרִיות
אָדוֹן כָּל-תּוֹלְדוֹת
הַמְּהֻלָּל בָּרְבּ הַתְּשִׁבְחוֹת
הַמְּנַהָּג עוֹלָמוֹ בְּחִסְד
וּבְרִיאוֹתָיו בְּרָחְמִים

Nishmat kol chai
 tevarech et shimcha
 Adonai Eloheinu,
 veru'ach kol basar
 tefa'er ut'romem
 zichrecha malkenu tamid.
 Min ha'olam ve'ad ha'olam
 ata El,
 umibaladecha ein lanu melech,
 go'el umoshi'a,
 podeh umatzil,
 um'farnes um'rachem
 bechol et tzara vetzuka.
 Ein lanu melech ela ata
 Elohei harishonim veha'acharonim
 Elo'ah kol b'riyot
 adon kol tolidot
 hamhulal berov hatishbachot
 ham'naheg olamo bechesed
 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.

וַיְיָ לֹא-יָנֻוֶּם וְלֹא-יִשָּׁן
הַמְעוֹרֵר יְשָׁנִים
וְהַמְקִיץ נְרָדָמִים
וְהַפְשִׁיחַ אֲלָמִים
וְהַמְתִיר אֲסּוּרִים
וְהַסּוֹמֵךְ נּוֹפָלִים
וְהַזּוֹקֵף כְּפּוּפִים
לֹךְ לְבָדֵךְ אַנְחָנוּ מְוּדִים
אַלְוֹ פִּינוּ
מְלֹא שִׁירָה כִּים
וְלִשְׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה
כָּהָמוֹן גָּלִיו
וְשִׁפְתּוֹתֵינוּ שְׁבָח
כְּמֶרְחָבִי רָקִיעַ
וְעַיְנֵינוּ מְאִירֹת
כְּשֵׁמֶשׁ וְכִירָה
וְיַדְנוּ פְּרוּשֹׁת
כְּנִשְׁרֵי שָׁמִים
וּרְגַלְלֵינוּ קָלוֹת כְּאִילּוֹת
אַיִן אַנְחָנוּ מְסֻפִּיקִים
לְהִזְדֹות לְךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאַמּוֹתֵינוּ
וּלְבָרֵךְ אַתְ-שָׁמֶךְ
עַל-אַחַת מְאַלְף אַלְף
אַלְפִי אַלְפִים וּרְבִי רְבּוֹת
פָעָמִים הַטוּבּוֹת שְׁעִשִּׁית
עַם-אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאַמּוֹתֵינוּ וְעַמְנוּ

VAdonai lo yanum velo yishan,
ham'orer y'shenim
vehamekitz nirdamim
vehamesi'ach ilmim
vehamatir asurim
vehasomech noflim
vehazokef kefufim;
lecha levad'cha anachnu modim.
Ilu finu
maleh shirah chayam
ulshonenu rinah
kahamon galav
vesiftoteinu shevach
kemer'chavei rakiah
ve'eneinu me'irot
kashemesh vechayare'ach
veyadeinu ferusot
kenishrei shamayim
veragleinu kalot ka'ayilot—
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'imani.

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,

מִמְצָרִים גָּאַלְתָּנוּ
יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וּמִבִּיאַת עֲבָדִים פִּדְעָתָנוּ
בָּרָעַ זָנָתָנוּ
וּבָשָׁבָעַ כָּלְכָלָתָנוּ
וּמִחְרָבַּת הַצְלָתָנוּ
וּמִדְבָּרַת מְלֹתָנוּ
וּמִחְלָלִים רְעִים
וּנוֹאַמְנִים דְּלִתָּנוּ
עַד-הַבָּהּ עַזְרוֹנוּ רַחֲמָתָךְ
וְלֹא-עַזְבָּנוּ חִסְדָּךְ
וְאַל-תִּתְשַׁנּוּ
יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְנִצָּחָה
עַל-כָּן אָבָרִים שְׁפִילָגָתָ בָּנוּ
וּרוּחָה וּנְשָׁמָה
שְׁנָفָחָת בְּאַפְּנֵינוּ
וּלְשׁוֹן אֲשֶׁר שְׂמַת בְּפַנֵּינוּ

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.

הֵן הֵם יוֹדוֹ וַיְבָרְכוּ
וַיְשַׁבְּחוּ וַיְפַאֲרוּ וַיְרוּמָמוּ
וַיְעִירִצּוּ וַיְקִדְשׁוּ
וַיִּמְלִיכוּ אֶת-שְׁמָךְ מִלְכָנוּ
כִּי כָל-פָּהּ לְךָ יוֹדָה
וְכָל-לְשׁוֹן לְךָ תִּשְׁבַּע
וְכָל-בָּרֶךְ לְךָ תִּכְרֹעַ
וְכָל-קָוָהָה
לְפָנֶיךָ תִּשְׁתַּחַווּ
וְכָל-לְבָבּוֹת יִירָאָךְ
וְכָל-קְרָבָה וְכָלִילָה
יִזְמְרוּ לְשָׁמָךְ

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:

Psalm 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 שְׁכָתוּב
כָּל עַצְמוֹתִי תָּמֵרָנָה

יְהוָה מַיְכָמֹךְ
מַצִּיל עַנִּי מְחַזָּק מִמְּנוּ

וְעַנְיָן וְאַבְיוֹן מִזְלוֹ

מֵי יְדָמָה-לְךָ וּמֵי יִשְׂוָה-לְךָ
וּמֵי יַעֲרָךָ-לְךָ

הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגּוֹבֵר וְהַנּוֹרָא
אֶל עַלְיוֹן קָנָה שָׁמַיִם וְאֶרְץ

נְהַלְלָךְ וּנְשַׁבְּחָךְ
וּנְפַאֲרָךְ

וּנְבָרֵךְ אֶת-שֵׁם קָדְשָׁךְ
כְּאָמָר

לְדוֹדָר

בָּרְכִּי נַפְשִׁי אֶת-יְהוָה
וְכָל-קָרְבִּי אֶת-שֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ

הָאֵל בְּתַעֲצָמוֹת עֵזֶךְ
הַגָּדוֹל בְּכָבוֹד שְׁמֶךְ
הַגּוֹבֵר לְנֶצֶח
וְהַנּוֹרָא בְּנָנוֹרָאֹתֶיךָ

הַמֶּלֶךְ הַיּוֹשֵׁב
עַל-כִּסֵּא רַם וְגַשְׁא

שׁוֹכֵן עַד
מָרוֹם וְקָדוֹשׁ שְׁמוֹ

וּכְתוּב
רָנֶנוּ צְדִיקִים בְּיְהוָה
לִישְׁרִים נָאָה תִּהְלָה

Kadavar shekatuv,

Kol atzmotai tomarna:

‘Adonai, mi chamocha?

Matzil ani mechazak mimenu,
ve’ani ve’evyon migozol.’

Mi yidmeh lach umi yishveh lach
umi ya’aroch lach?

Ha’El hagadol hagibor vahanorah
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 kiseh 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 יְשָׁרִים תִּתְהַלֵּל
וּבְדִבְרֵי צַדִּיקִים תִּתְבָּרַךְ
וּבְלִשׁוֹן חֲסִידִים תִּתְרוּמֶם
וּבְקֶרֶב קָדוֹשִׁים תִּתְקַדְּשֶׁ
וּבְמִקְהָלוֹת רַבְבוֹת
עַמְקָח בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
בָּרוּךְ יִתְפָּאַר שְׁמָךְ מֶלֶכְנוּ
בְּכָל-דָּוָר נָדוֹר
שְׁכָן חֹזֶת כָּל-הַיּוֹרְ�ִים
לְפָנֶיךָ ייְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאַמּוֹתֵינוּ
לְהֻזּוֹת לְהַלֵּל לְשִׁבָּח
לְפָאָר לְרוּמֶם לְהָדֵר
לְבָרָךְ לְעַלְהָ וְלְקַלְסָ
עַל-כָּל-דָּבָר שִׁירֹות וְתִשְׁבָּחוֹת
דָּוָד בֶּן-יִשָּׁי
עַבְדָּךְ מִשְׁיכָה

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,

יִשְׁתַּבְּחֵךְ שְׁמָךְ לְעֵד
מֶלֶכְנוּ
הָאָלָה הַמֶּלֶךְ הַגָּדוֹל וְהַקָּדוֹשָׁ
בְּשָׁמִים וּבְאָרֶץ
כִּי-לְךָ נָאָה ייְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאַמּוֹתֵינוּ
שִׁיר וְשִׁבְחָה
הַלֵּל וּזְמִרָּה
עֹז וּמִמְשָׁלָה
נִצְחָה גָּדוֹלָה וְגִבּוֹרָה

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.

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

תהילה ותפארת
קדשָׁה ומלכָּה
ברכּות וחותּאות
מעתּה ועד עולם
ברוך אתה ייְהוָה
אל מלָך גָּדוֹל בתשׁבּוחות
אל החותּאות אָדוֹן הַנְּפָלוֹת
הבוֹחר בְּשִׁיר זִמְרָה
מלך אל חי הַעוֹלָם

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,
habocher beshirei zimrah:
melech El, chei ha'olamim.

ברוך אתה ייְהוָה ייְהוָה ייְהוָה
אל היְהִינוּ מלָך הַעוֹלָם
בורא פרי הַגָּפָן

Baruch ata Adonai
Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
Boreh peri hagafen.

Recline, and drain the fourth cup

על המלחיה¹

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.

ברוך אתה ייְהוָה ייְהוָה ייְהוָה
אל היְהִינוּ מלָך הַעוֹלָם
על-הַגָּפָן ועל-פרי הַגָּפָן
ועל תְּנוּבַת הַשָּׂדָה
ועל-אֶרֶץ
חַמְדָה טוֹבָה וַרְחַבָּה
שְׁרָצִית וְהַנְּחַלָּת
לְאָבוֹתֵינוּ וּלְאָמוֹתֵינוּ
לְאָכָל מִפְרִיה
ולְשִׁבּוּע מִטוֹבָה

Baruch ata Adonai
Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
al hagafen ve'al peri hagafen
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.

רָחֵם ייְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמְּךָ
וְעַל-יְרוּשָׁלָם עִירְךָ
וְעַל-צִיּוֹן מִשְׁקָן כְּבוֹדְךָ
וְעַל-מִזְבֵּחַ וְעַל-הַיּוֹלֵדָה
וּבְנָה יְרוּשָׁלָם עִיר הַקָּדֵשׁ
בְּכָמֶרֶת בִּימֵינוּ
וְהַעֲלָנוּ לְתוֹכָה
וְשִׁמְחָנוּ בְּבָנִינָה
וּנְאָכֵל מִפְּרִיה
וּנְשַׁבַּע מִטוּבָה
וּנְבָרֶךְ עַלְיהָ
בְּקָדְשָׁה וּבְטוֹרָה

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 vejamenu,
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.

וַיְרַצֵּח וְחַלְילָצֵנוּ
בַּיּוֹם הַשְׁבָּת הַזֶּה
וְשִׁמְחָנוּ בַּיּוֹם
חַג הַמְצֻות הַזֶּה
כִּי-אַתָּה ייְ
טוֹב וּמְטִיב לְפָלֵל
וְנוֹזֵה לְךָ עַל הָאָרֶץ
וְעַל פְּרִי הַגָּפָן
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ייְ
עַל הָאָרֶץ וְעַל פְּרִי הַגָּפָן

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**The service of Pesach**

we've brought to consummation,

With every ritual detail

enjoined upon our nation.

חָסֵל סְדֻר פֶּסַח כְּהַלְכָתָו**כָּכָל-מִשְׁפָּטו וְחַקְתוֹ****כַּאֲשֶׁר זָכִינוּ לְסִדְרָ אָוֹתָו****כִּן נִזְכָּה לְעַשְׂוֹתָו**

Chasal sidur Pesach kehilchato,

Kechol mishpato vechukato;

Ka'asher zachinu lesader oto, (2)

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 *God* you live**זֶה שׁוֹכֵן מְעוֹנָה**

Zach shochen me'onah,

in your holy habitation;

קוֹמֵם קְהַל מֵי מְנָה

Komem ke'hal mi manah,

Take the part

קָרֵב נַהֲלָן נִטְעֵי כְּבָנָה

Karev nahel nit'ey chanah, (2)

of your countless nation;

פְּדֻעִים 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 בִּירוּשָׁלָם Leshana haba'ah biYerushala'im!

שירים Songs

*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.*

וַיְהִי בַּחֲצִי הַלְּילָה Vayehi Bachatzi Halaylah

Back then, you performed lots of miracles at night;
At the beginning of the first watch of this night
You gave victory to the good stranger (Abraham)² when the night was divided for him
And this was at the middle of the night.

You judged the king of Gerar (Avimelech) in a dream by night,³
You frightened the Aramean (Laban)⁴ in the darkness of night,
And Israel (Jacob) struggled with an angel and prevailed at night⁵ /
And this was at the middle of the night.

אוֹ רֹוב נִסִּים Az rov nisim
הַפְּלָאת בְּלִילָה hifleta balayla.
בֶּרֶאשׁ אֲשֶׁר מִרְוָאָה Berosh ashmurot
זֶה הַלְּילָה ze halayla.
גֵּר צְדָקָה נִצְחָתוֹ Ger tzedek nitzachto
כְּנֵחֶלֶק לוֹ לִילָה kenechelak lo layla.
וַיְהִי בַּחֲצִי הַלְּילָה Vayehi bachatzi halayla.

דָּנַת מֶלֶךְ גֵּרָר Danta melech Gerar
בְּחַלּוֹם הַלְּילָה bachalom halayla.
הַפְּחַדְתָּ אֶרְמִי Hifchadta Arami
בְּאֵמֶשׁ לִילָה be'emesh layla.
וַיִּשְׁרָאֵל יָשַׁר לְאָל וַיּוּכֶל לוֹ לִילָה VeYisra'el yashar la'El
וַיְהִי בַּחֲצִי הַלְּילָה vayuchal lo layla.
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

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

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

זֶרַע בְּכֹרֵי פָטְרוֹס
machatzta bachatzi halayla.
מַחֲצָת בַּחֲצִי הַלְּילָה
חֶלְםָם לֹא מִצָּאוּ
בְּקֻומָם בְּלִילָה
טִיסָת נְגִיד חָרוֹשֶת
סְלִילָת בְּכֹכְבֵי לִילָה
וַיְהִי בַּחֲצִי הַלְּילָה
Tisat negid charoshet
silita bechochvei layla.
Vayehi bachatzi halayla.

יעַז מְחַרֵף לְנוֹפָף אֹוִי
Ya'atz mecharef lenofef ivui
הַוּבְשַׁת פְּגָרָבו בְּלִילָה
hovashta fegarav baylayla.
פָּרָעָם בְּלִילָה
Kara Bel umatzavo
בְּאִישׁוֹן לִילָה
be'ishon layla.
לְאִישׁ חָמוֹדוֹת
Le'ish chamudot
נִגְלָה רָז חָזוֹת לִילָה
nigla raz chazut layla.
וַיְהִי בַּחֲצִי הַלְּילָה
Vayehi bachatzi halayla.

מִשְׁתָּכֵר בְּכַלְיִ קָדֵש
Mishtaker bichlei kodesh
נְהֶרֶג בּוֹ בְּלִילָה
neherag bo valayla.
נוֹשָׁע מִבּוֹר אֲרָיוֹת
Nosha mibor arayot
פּוֹתֵר בְּעִתּוֹתִי לִילָה
poter bi'atutei layla.
שְׁנִינָה נְטָר אֲגָגִי
Sin'a natar Agagi
וְכִתְבֵּ סְפָרִים בְּלִילָה
vechatav sefarim baylayla.
וַיְהִי בַּחֲצִי הַלְּילָה
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 שׁ instead of ס. It doesn't seem fair, but Hebrew acrostic poets often do this.

You roused your victory over *Haman*
when slumber fled *from Ahasuerus* at night.
You'll trample the winepress for one who asks
the watchman, *Isa 21:11* "When will the night end?"
He'll shout like a watchman and say,
"Both morning comes and night."
And this was at the middle of the night.¹

Bring near the day that is
neither day nor night.
Exalted *God*, 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

עֹרֶרֶת נַצְחָה עֲלֵינוּ
בְּנִידָד שְׁנִית-לְילָה
פּוֹרָה תְּדַרּוֹךְ
לְשׁוֹמֵר מַה-מִלְּילָה
אַרְחָה פְּשׁוֹמֵר וְשַׁחַת אַתָּא
בְּקָרְבָּן וְגַם-לְילָה
וַיְהִי בַּחָצֵי הַלְּילָה
קָרֵב יוֹם אֲשֶׁר הוּא
לֹא יוֹם וְלֹא לְילָה
רָם הָדוּעַ כִּי-לֹךְ יוֹם
אַפְ-לֹךְ הַלְּילָה
שׁוֹמְרִים הַפְּקַד לְעִירָךְ
כָּל-הַיּוֹם וְכָל-הַלְּילָה
תָּאִיר כָּאֹור יוֹם
חַשְׁכַּת לְילָה
וַיְהִי בַּחָצֵי הַלְּילָה

Orarta nitzchacha alav
beneded shnat layla.
Pura tidroch
leshomer mah milayla..
Tzarach kashomer vesach ata
voker vegam layla.
Vayehi bachatzai halayla

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 bachatzai 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”

..... Sing this on the second night!¹

You showed the strength
of your power at Pesach.

To the position of head of all festivals
you promoted Pesach.

You showed Abraham
the midnight of Pesach.

Everybody say, ^{Ex 12:27} “It’s the Pesach sacrifice!”²

You knocked on Abraham’s tent door
in the midday heat on Pesach.

He served to his radiant visitors
matzah cakes on Pesach.

And he ran to the herd—
to recall the bull offered for Pesach.

Everybody say, ^{Ex 12:27} “It’s the Pesach sacrifice!”³

אָמֵץ גִּבּוֹרֶתִיךְ

הַפְּלָאת בְּפֶסַח

בָּרָאשׁ כָּל-מוֹעֵדֹת

נְשָׂאָת פֶּסַח

גָּלִית לְאָזְרָחִי

חַצּוֹת לִיל פֶּסַח

וְאִמְרָתֶם זֶבַח-פֶּסַח

Ometz g’vuroticha

hifleta baPesach.

Berosh kol mo’adot

niseta Pesach.

Gilita leEzrachi

chatzot leil Pesach.

Va’amar tem, “Zevach Pesach.”

דְּלַתְּיו דָּפָקָת

כְּחֻומָם הַיּוֹם בְּפֶסַח

הַסְּעִיד נוֹצָצִים

עֲגֹוֹת מַצּוֹת בְּפֶסַח

וְאֶל-הַבָּקָר רַץ

זֶכֶר לְשׂוֹר עֲרֵךְ פֶּסַח

וְאִמְרָתֶם זֶבַח-פֶּסַח

Delatav dafakta

kechom hayom baPesach.

His’id notz’tsim

ugot matzot baPesach.

Ve’el habakar ratz

zecher leshor erech Pesach.

Va’amar tem, “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 *God*
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 Nof¹
when you passed through on Pesach
Everybody say, *Ex 12:27* “It’s the Pesach sacrifice!”²

God, you crushed the source of all power³
in the vigil-night of Pesach.
Mighty *God*, your own firstborn
you spared in the blood of Pesach,
and did not let ruin
enter my doors on Pesach.

Everybody say, *Ex 12:27* “It’s the Pesach sacrifice!”

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 Lud⁴ were burned
in the blaze on Pesach

Everybody say, *Ex 12:27* “It’s the Pesach sacrifice!”⁵

זֹעֲמָנוּ סְדוּמִים
וְלוֹהָטוּ בְאֵשׁ בְּפֶסַח
חֻלָּצָה לֹט מְהֻם
וְמִצְוֹת אֲפָה בְּקַצְבָּסַח
טָאַטְאָת אַדְמָת מָוֵף וְנוֹגָף
בְּעַבְרָךְ בְּפֶסַח
וְאִמְרָתֶם זֶבַח-פֶּסַח

Zo’amu Sedomim
velohatu va’esh baPesach.
Chulatz Lot mehem
umatzot afa beketz Pesach.
Titeta admat Mof veNof
be’orecha baPesach.
Va’amarthem, “Zevach Pesach.”

יְהָ רָאשׁ כָּל-אָוֹן מְחַצֵּת
בְּלִיל שְׁמֹור פֶּסַח
כָּבֵיר עַל בֵּן בְּכֹור
פֶּסַחְתְּ בְּדִם-פֶּסַח
לְבִלְתִּי תַּת מְשֻׁחָית
לְבָא בְּפַתְחֵי בְּפֶסַח
וְאִמְרָתֶם זֶבַח-פֶּסַח

Yah rosh kol on machatzta
beleil shimur Pesach.
Kabir al ben bechor
pasachta bedam Pesach.
Levilti tet mashchit
lavo biftachay baPesach.
Va’amarthem, “Zevach Pesach.”

מְסֻגָּרֶת סְגָרָה
בְּעַתּוֹתִי פֶּסַח
נִשְׁמְדָה מִדְיָן בָּצְלִיל
שְׁעֹוֹרִי עַמְרָ פֶּסַח
שׁוֹרָפוּ מִשְׁמָנִי פּוֹל וְלוֹד
בִּיקָּד יְקָוד פֶּסַח
וְאִמְרָתֶם זֶבַח-פֶּסַח

Mesugeret sugarah
be’itotei Pesach.
Nishmedah Midyan bitzil
se’orei Omer Pesach.
Sorafu mashmanei Ful veLud
bikad yekod Pesach.
Va’amarthem, “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.

Sennacherib planned to stop in Nob¹ this day before Pesach time arrived.

A hand wrote the line *which forecast* the uprooting of Tzul² on Pesach, when the watch was set and the table set *for Belshazzar's feast* on Pesach. Everybody say, ^{Ex 12:27} "It's the Pesach sacrifice!"³

Hadassah (Esther) assembled the people for a three-day fast on Pesach.

You slew the head of a wicked family (Haman) on a 50-cubit-high tree on Pesach. You'll bring double trouble to Utzit (Edom) on Pesach. May your hand be strong and lifted up, as *it was* on the night when the feast of Pesach became holy.

Everybody say, ^{Ex 12:27} "It's the Pesach sacrifice!"⁴

עַד הַיּוֹם בְּנוֹב לְעִמּוֹד
עַד גַּעַת עֲוֹנָת פֶּסַח
פֶּסַח יְדָכֶת
לְקַעַקְעַ צוֹל בְּפֶסַח
צָפָה הַצְפִּית
עֲרוֹךְ הַשְׁלָחָן בְּפֶסַח
וְאִמְרָתֶם זֶבַח-פֶּסַח

Od hayom beNov la'amod
ad ga'a onat Pesach.
Pas yad katva
leka'ake'a Tzul baPesach.
Tzafo hatzafit
aroch hashulchan baPesach.
Va'amartem, "Zevach Pesach."

קָהָל כְּנָסָה הַדָּסָה
לְשִׁלְשָׁל צוֹם פֶּסַח

רָאשׁ מִבֵּית רַשְׁעַ מַחְצָת
בְּעֵין חַמִשִּׁים בְּפֶסַח
שְׁתִי אֶלְהָ רִגְעָ
תְּבִיא לְעוֹזִית בְּפֶסַח
תְּעוֹז יְדָךְ תְּרוּם יְמִינָךְ
כָּלֵיל הַתְּקִדְשָׁן חָג פֶּסַח

Kahal kinsa Hadasa
leshalesh tzom baPesach.
Rosh mibet rasha machatzta
be'etz chamishim baPesach.
Shtei eleh rega
tavi leUtzit baPesach.
Ta'oz yadcha tarum yemincha
keleil hitkadesh chag Pesach.

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

An alphabetical acrostic

Mighty Governor,¹

אדיר במלוכה

Choice like our Way,²

בחור Kahalachah;

Bands of angels to God say:

גְּדוּדִיוֹ יָמְרוּ לוֹ

Here's the chorus

לְךָ וְלְךָ לְךָ כִּי לְךָ

To you and to you, to you because you,

Lecha ulecha, lecha ki lecha,

to you just to you,

lecha af lecha

Power, God, belongs to you,

lecha adonai hamamlachah

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

ki lo na'eh, ki lo ya'eh

A banner Governor,
enhanced like our Way,דָּגָול בִּמְלֻכָּה
הָדוּר בִּהְלָכָה

To God veteran followers say:

Vatikav yomru lo

Chorus

Worthy Governor,
robust like our Way,זָקָאי בִּמְלֻכָּה
חָסִין בִּהְלָכָה

To God leading angels say:

Tafserav yomru lo

Chorus

Only Governor,
great like our Way,יְחִיד בִּמְלֻכָּה
כָּבֵר בִּהְלָכָה

To God the disciples say:

Yachid bimlucha,
kabir kahalachahHigh Governor,
awesome like our Way,

לְמַזְדִּיוֹ יָמְרוּ לוֹ

Limudav yomru lo

Chorus

All around God, angels say:

מָרוֹם בִּמְלֻכָּה
נוֹרָא בִּהְלָכָה

Marom bimlucha,

סְבִיבִיוֹ יָמְרוּ לוֹ

norah kahalachah

Chorus

Modest Governor,
a savior like our Wayעֲנָנוֹ בִּמְלֻכָּה
פּוֹדֵה בִּהְלָכָה

Anav bimlucha,

To God the saintly ones all say:

צָדִיקִיוֹ יָמְרוּ לוֹ

podeh kahalachah

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.”

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

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

Chorus

קָדוֹשׁ בָּמְלֻכָּה
רָחוּם כָּהֲלָכָה
שְׁנָאָנוּ יְאָמְרוּ לוֹ

Chorus

תָּקִיף בָּמְלֻכָּה
תוֹמֵךְ כָּהֲלָכָה
תָּמִימִיו יְאָמְרוּ לוֹ

Kadosh bimlucha,

rachum kahalachah

Shin'anav yomru lo

Takif bimlucha,

tomech kahalachah

Temimav yomru lo



They were oppressed ...

אדיר הוּא
Adir Hu

Another alphabetical acrostic

Mighty he¹, mighty he

אדיר הוּא אָדִיר הוּא

Adir hu, Adir hu

Chorus

יבנָה בֵּיתוֹ בְּקָרָוב

Yivneh veito bekarov

בִּמְהֻרָה בִּמְהֻרָה

bim'herah, bim'herah

בִּימְמַנוּ בְּקָרָוב

beyamenu bekarov

אֶל בְּנָה אֶל בְּנָה

El bene, El bene

בְּנָה בֵּיתְךָ בְּקָרָוב

bene vetcha bekarov

Chorus

Choice is he, great is he, chief is he גָּדוֹל הַוָּא גָּדוֹל הַוָּא

bachur hu, gadol hu, dagul hu

Chorus

Fine is he, mature is he, worthy is he זָכָאי הַוָּא זָכָאי הַוָּא

hadur hu, vatik hu, zakai hu

Chorus

Pious is he, pure is he, alone is he צָדִיק הַוָּא טָהוֹר הַוָּא יְחִיד הַוָּא

chasid hu, tahor hu, yachid hu

Chorus

Great is he, learned is he, king is he מֶלֶךְ הַוָּא לִמּוֹד הַוָּא

kabir hu, lamud hu, melech hu

Chorus

Glorious he, mighty he, strong is he עִזּוֹז הַוָּא עִזּוֹז הַוָּא

na'or hu, sagiv hu, izuz hu

Chorus

Savior he, righteous he, holy is he פּוֹדֵה הַוָּא צָדִיק הַוָּא קָדוֹשׁ הַוָּא

podeh hu, tsadik hu, kadosh hu

Chorus

Kind is he, Almighty is he, firm is he רָחִים הַוָּא שָׁדַי הַוָּא תָּקִיף הַוָּא

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." Hmm. Inclusive people, insert the "s," switch "his" to "hers" and everybody sing together!

סִפְרַת הָעֵמֶר Count The Omer

.....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.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
אֲשֶׁר קָדְשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו
וְצִוּנוּ עַל סִפְרַת הָעֵמֶר
הַיּוֹם יוֹם אֶחָד בְּעֶמֶר
יְהִי רָצֵן לְפָנֶיךָ
יְהִי אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאַמּוֹתֵינוּ
שִׁיבְנָה בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ
בְּמִהְרָה בִּימֵינוּ
וְתִּהְלַקְנֹו בְּתוֹרַתְךָ
וְשָׁם נִעְבֹּד בִּרְאָה
כִּיּוֹם וְלִילָּה וְכָשָׁנִים קָדְמָיוֹת
S A M P L E

Who knows a One?
I know a One!
One is our God
In heaven and earth.

Who knows a 2?
I know a 2!
2 are the Tablets of the Covenant
1 is our God
in heaven and earth.

אֶחָד מֵי יְדֹעַ
אֶחָד מֵי יְדֹעַ
אֶחָד אֱנִי יְדֹעַ
אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ
שְׁבָשָׁמִים וּבָאָרֶץ

שְׁנַיִם מֵי יְדֹעַ
שְׁנַיִם אֱנִי יְדֹעַ
שְׁנַיִ לְחוֹת הַבְּרִית
אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ
שְׁבָשָׁמִים וּבָאָרֶץ

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?
 I know a 3!
 3 are the Fathers
 2 are the Tablets of the Covenant
 1 is our God
 in heaven and earth.

Who knows a 4?
 I know a 4!
 4 are the Mothers
 3 are the Fathers
 2 are the Tablets of the Covenant
 1 is our God
 in heaven and earth.

Who knows a 5?
 I know a 5!
 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.

Who knows a 6?
 I know a 6!
 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.

שלשה מי יודע Shelosha mi yode'ah
שלשה אני יודע Shelosha ani yode'ah
שלשה אבות 3 shelosha avot
שני לוחות הברית 2 shnei luchot habrit
אחד אלהינו 1 echad Elohenu
שבשמים ובראץ Shebashamayim uva'aretz.

ארבע מי יודע Arba mi yode'ah
ארבע אני יודע Arba ani yode'ah
ארבע אמהות 4 arba imahot
שלשה אבות 3 shelosha avot
שני לוחות הברית 2 shnei luchot habrit
אחד אלהינו 1 echad Elohenu
שבשמים ובראץ Shebashamayim uva'aretz.

חמשה מי יודע Chamishah mi yode'ah
חמשה אני יודע Chamishah ani yode'ah
חמשה חמשי תורה 5 chamisha chumshei Torah
ארבע אמהות 4 arba imahot
שלשה אבות 3 shelosha avot
שני לוחות הברית 2 shnei luchot habrit
אחד אלהינו 1 echad Elohenu
שבשמים ובראץ Shebashamayim uva'aretz.

שש מי יודע Shishah mi yode'ah
שש אני יודע Shishah ani yode'ah
ששה סדרי משנה 6 shishah sidrei Mishnah
חמשה חמשי תורה 5 chamisha chumshei Torah
ארבע אמהות 4 arba imahot
שלשה אבות 3 shelosha avot
שני לוחות הברית 2 shnei luchot habrit
אחד אלהינו 1 echad Elohenu
שבשמים ובראץ 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.

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.

שְׁבַעַת מֵ יְדָע
שְׁבַעַת אָנִי יְדָע
שְׁבַעַת יְמֵי שְׁבָתָה
שְׁשָׁה סְדָרִי מְשָׁנָה
חַמְשָׁה חֻמְשִׁי תּוֹרָה
אַרְבָּע אַמְּהוֹת
שְׁלִשָּׁה אֲבוֹת
שְׁנַי לְחוֹת הַבְּרִית
אֶחָד אֱלֹהִינוּ
שְׁבַשְׁמִים 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.

שְׁמֻנוֹת מֵ יְדָע
שְׁמֻנוֹת אָנִי יְדָע
שְׁמֻנוֹת יְמֵי מִילָה
שְׁבַעַת יְמֵי שְׁבָתָה
שְׁשָׁה סְדָרִי מְשָׁנָה
חַמְשָׁה חֻמְשִׁי תּוֹרָה
אַרְבָּע אַמְּהוֹת
שְׁלִשָּׁה אֲבוֹת
שְׁנַי לְחוֹת הַבְּרִית
אֶחָד אֱלֹהִינוּ
שְׁבַשְׁמִים 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.

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.

תשעה מי יודע Tish'ah mi yode'ah
תשעה אני יודע Tish'ah ani yode'ah
תשעה ירחי לדה 9 tish'ah yarchei leidah
שמונה ימי מיללה 8 sh'monah yemei milah
שבעה ימי שבתא 7 shiv'ah yemei shabatoh
ששה סדרי משנה 6 shishah sidrei Mishnah
חמשה חמשי תורה 5 chamisha chumshei Torah
ארבע אמהות 4 arba imahot
שלשה אבות 3 shelosha avot
שני לוחות הברית 2 shnei luchot habrit
אחד אלהינו 1 echad Elohenu
שבשמיים ובארץ Shebashamayim uva'aretz.

עשרה מי יודע Asarah mi yode'ah
עשרה אני יודע Asarah ani yode'ah
עשרה דבריא 10 asarah dibrayah
תשעה ירחי לדה 9 tish'ah yarchei leidah
שמונה ימי מיללה 8 sh'monah yemei milah
שבעה ימי שבתא 7 shiv'ah yemei shabatoh
ששה סדרי משנה 6 shishah sidrei Mishnah
חמשה חמשי תורה 5 chamisha chumshei Torah
ארבע אמהות 4 arba imahot
שלשה אבות 3 shelosha avot
שני לוחות הברית 2 shnei luchot habrit
אחד אלהינו 1 echad Elohenu
שבשמיים ובארץ 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.

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.

אחד עשר מי יודע
אחד עשר אני יודע
אחד עשר כוכביה
עשרה דבריא
תשעה ירחי לדה
שמונה ימי מילה
שבעה ימי שבתא
ששה סדרי משנה
חמשה חמשי תורה
ארבע אמהות
שלשה אבות
שני לוחות הברית
אחד אלהינו
שבשמיים ובארץ
שנים עשר מי יודע
שנים עשר אני יודע
שנים עשר שבתיא
אחד עשר כוכביה
עשרה דבריא
תשעה ירחי לדה
שמונה ימי מילה
שבעה ימי שבתא
ששה סדרי משנה
חמשה חמשי תורה
ארבע אמהות
שלשה אבות
שני לוחות הברית
אחד אלהינו
שבשמיים ובארץ

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.

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?
 I know a 13!
 13 are God's attributes
 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.

שֶׁלְשָׁה עָשָׂר מֵי יְדָע
שֶׁלְשָׁה עָשָׂר אָנִי יְדָע
שֶׁלְשָׁה עָשָׂר מִדְיָה
שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר שִׁבְטִיא
אַחַד עָשָׂר כּוֹכְבִּיא
עָשָׂרָה דְּבָרִיא
תִּשְׁעָה יְרָחִי לְדָה
שְׁמֻוֹנָה יְמֵי מִילָה
שְׁבָעָה יְמֵי שְׁבָתָה
שְׁשָׁה סְדָרִי מִשְׁנָה
חַמְשָׁה חֻמְשִׁי תּוֹרָה
אַרְבָּעָ אַמְּהוֹת
שֶׁלְשָׁה אֲבוֹת
שְׁנַיִלְחֹות הַבְּרִית
אַחַד אֱלֹהֵינוּ
שְׁבָשָׁמִים וּבָאָרֶץ

SAMPLE



Chad Gadya

Just a kid, just a kid,
That Dad bought for a couple of pennies;
Just a kid, just a kid.

Along came the cat
And ate up the kid
That Dad bought for a couple of pennies;
Just a kid, just a kid.

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.

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.

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.

חַד גָּדִיא חַד גָּדִיא
דְּזָבִין אָבָא בְּתְּרִי זָזִי
חַד גָּדִיא חַד גָּדִיא

Chad gadya, chad gadya
dezabin abah bitrei zuzei
chad gadya chad gadya.

וְאַתָּא שׁוּנָרָא
וְאַכְלָה לְגָדִיא
דְּזָבִין אָבָא בְּתְּרִי זָזִי
חַד גָּדִיא חַד גָּדִיא

Ve'ata shunra
ve'achla legadya
dezabin aba bitrei zuzei
chad gadya, chad gadya.

וְאַתָּא כְּלָבָא
וְנִשְׁחַךְ לְשׁוּנָרָא
דְּאַכְלָה לְגָדִיא
דְּזָבִין אָבָא בְּתְּרִי זָזִי
חַד גָּדִיא חַד גָּדִיא

Ve'ata chalba
venashach leshunra
de'achla legadya
dezabin aba bitrei zuzei
chad gadya, chad gadya.

וְאַתָּא חֻטְרָא
וְהִקְהָה לְכָלְבָא
דְּנִשְׁחַךְ לְשׁוּנָרָא
דְּאַכְלָה לְגָדִיא
דְּזָבִין אָבָא בְּתְּרִי זָזִי
חַד גָּדִיא חַד גָּדִיא

Ve'ata chutrah
vehikah lechalba
denashach leshunra
de'achla legadya
dezabin aba bitrei zuzei
chad gadya, chad gadya.

וְאַתָּא נּוּרָא
וְשָׁרָף לְחֻטְרָא
דְּהִקָּה לְכָלְבָא
דְּנִשְׁחַךְ לְשׁוּנָרָא
דְּאַכְלָה לְגָדִיא
דְּזָבִין אָבָא בְּתְּרִי זָזִי
חַד גָּדִיא חַד גָּדִיא

Ve'ata nurah
vesaraf lechutrah
dehikah lechalba
denashach leshunra
de'achla legadya
dezabin aba bitrei zuzei
chad gadya, chad gadya.

Along came water
 And 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.

וְאַתָּה מַיָּא
 וְכָבֵה לְנוּרָא
 דְּשָׁרֶף לְחוּטָרָא
 דְּהַפֶּה לְכַלְבָּא
 דְּנַשְׁךָ לְשׁוֹנָרָא
 דְּאַכְלָה לְגָדִיא
 דְּזָבֵן אָבָא בְּתְרֵי זָוִי
חַד גָּדִיא חַד גָּדִיא

Ve'ata hamaya
 vechava lenurah
 desaraf lechutrah
 dehikah lechalba
 denashach leshunra
 de'achla legadya
 dezabin aba bitrei zuzei
 chad gadya, chad gadya.

Along came the ox
 And 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.

וְאַתָּה תּוֹרָא
 וְשְׁתָתָא לְמִיאָ
 דְּכָבֵה לְנוּרָא
 דְּשָׁרֶף לְחוּטָרָא
 דְּהַפֶּה לְכַלְבָּא
 דְּנַשְׁךָ לְשׁוֹנָרָא
 דְּאַכְלָה לְגָדִיא
 דְּזָבֵן אָבָא בְּתְרֵי זָוִי
חַד גָּדִיא חַד גָּדִיא

Ve'ata torah
 veshata lemaya
 dechava lenurah
 desaraf lechutrah
 dehikah lechalba
 denashach leshunra
 de'achla legadya
 dezabin aba bitrei zuzei
 chad gadya, chad gadya.

Along came the butcher
 And 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.

וְאַתָּה הַשׁוֹחֵט
 וְשְׁחַטָּת לְתּוֹרָא
 דְּשְׁתָתָא לְמִיאָ
 דְּכָבֵה לְנוּרָא
 דְּשָׁרֶף לְחוּטָרָא
 דְּהַפֶּה לְכַלְבָּא
 דְּנַשְׁךָ לְשׁוֹנָרָא
 דְּאַכְלָה לְגָדִיא
 דְּזָבֵן אָבָא בְּתְרֵי זָוִי
חַד גָּדִיא חַד גָּדִיא

Ve'ata hashochet
 veshachat 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 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.

וְאַתָּה מֶלֶךְ הַמְּמוֹת
 וְשַׁחַט לְשׁוֹחֵט
 דְּשַׁחַט לְתּוֹרָה
 דְּשַׁתָּא לְמַיָּא
 דְּכַבָּה לְנוּרָא
 דְּשַׁרְף לְחוּטָרָה
 דְּהַכָּה לְכַלְבָּא
 דְּנַשְׁךְ לְשֻׁנָּרָא
 דְּאַכְלָה לְגָדִיא
 דְּזַבְּן אָבָא בְּתֵרִי זָוִי
 חַד גָּדִיא חַד גָּדִיא

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.

וְאַתָּה הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא
 וְשַׁחַט לְמֶלֶךְ הַמְּמוֹת
 דְּשַׁחַט לְשׁוֹחֵט
 דְּשַׁתָּא לְמַיָּא
 דְּכַבָּה לְנוּרָא
 דְּשַׁרְף לְחוּטָרָה
 דְּהַכָּה לְכַלְבָּא
 דְּנַשְׁךְ לְשֻׁנָּרָא
 דְּאַכְלָה לְגָדִיא
 דְּזַבְּן אָבָא בְּתֵרִי זָוִי
 חַד גָּדִיא חַד גָּדִיא

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

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.

כִּשְׁוָשָׁנָה בֵּין הַחֹכְמִים Keshoshana bein hachochim,
כִּן רַעֲשִׁי בֵּין תְּבִנּוֹת Ken ra'ayati bein habanot.
כִּתְפּוֹחַ בְּצִיָּה עִירְכָּן Ke'tapu'ach ba'atzei haya'ar,
דוֹדִי בֵּין הַבָּנִים 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,
Skipping like a ram on the craggy mountain,
Frisky as a lamb by the cool, shady fountain.

קֹל דָּודִי Kol dodi, kol dodi, kol dodi
הַנְּהָרָה בָּאָ hine ze bah. (2)
מְדָלָג אֶל-הַחֲרִים Medaleg al heharim,
מְקַפֵּץ עַל-הַגְּבֻעוֹת 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!

נִצְנָנִים נִרְאָה בָּאָרֶץ Nitzanim nir'u nir'u va-aretz,
עַת זָמִיר הַגִּיעָם Et zamir higi'a, et zamir. (2)
כִּי-הַנָּהָר סְתִּיחַו עַבְרָ Ki hineh, stav avar,
סְתִּיחַו חַלְפַּחַדְלָה לָ Stav chalaf, halach lo;
הַגְּבֻעוֹת סְמִדָּר Hag'fanim semadar
נָתְנוּ רִיחָם Natnu, natnu recham. (2)

Song 2:16 My love is mine, and I am his,
The shepherd among the lilies;

דוֹדִי לִי וְאָנִי לוֹ Dodi li, va'ani lo,

Song 4:9 You have stolen my heart,
my partner, my bride,
you've stolen my heart, my bride.

הַרְוֵה בְּשַׁוְשָׁנִים Ha-roeh bashoshanim;

לִבְבָתִנִי Libavtini,
אַחֲרֵי כָּלָה achoti chalah,
לִבְבָתִנִי כָּלָה 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.

אַתִּי מִלְּבָנוֹן Iti miL'vanon,
אַתִּי כָּלָה תָּבוֹאֵי iti kalah tavo. (2)
מִמְּנֻנוֹת אֲרִיוֹת Mim'onot arayot,
מִרְאֵשׁ שְׂנִיר וְחֶרְמוֹן Merosh S'nir veChermon
הַנֶּקֶד יְפָה רַעֲוֵת הַנֶּקֶד יְפָה Hinach yafa ra'ayati,
עַיִנְקֵךְ יוֹנִים Einayich yonim. (2)
זֶה דָּוְדִי זֶה רְעֵי Ze dodi, ze re'i,
בָּנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלָם זֶה רְעֵי B'not Yerushalayim, ze re'i. (2)

דָּוְדִי דָּוְדִי צָח וְאָדוֹם Dodi, dodi tsach ve'adom,
דָּגָל מְרַבְּבָה : Dagul merevevah. (hei hei!)

אֲנָה חָלָךְ דָּוְדָךְ Ana halach dodech,
הַיְּפָה בְּנָשִׁים hayafah banashim?
אֲנָה פָּנָה דָּוְדָךְ Ana panah dodech?
וּבְקַשְׁנָנוּ עַפְנָךְ un'vakshenu imach. (2)
דָּוְדִי יָרָד לְנָנוּ Dodi yarad legano, yarad legano,
לְעַרְוּנוֹת הַבְּשָׂר la'arugot habosem (2)

הַיוֹשֵׁבֶת בְּגָנִים Hayeshev baganim, (6)
חֶבְרִים מַקְשִׁיבִים לְקֹלְךָ Chaverim makshivim lekolech. (2)
הַשְׁמִיעֵנִי Hashmi'ini (ohs, lais, and claps)
בְּרָחָה דָּוְדִי B'rach dodi, b'rach dodi,
וְדָמָה-לְךָ לְאַבִּי Ud'meh lecha litz'vi,
אוֹ לְעַפְרָה הַאִילִים O le'ofe ha'ayalim
עַל חֶרְרִי בְּשָׁמִים Al harei vesamim. (2)
Hashmi'ini, etc.

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