




Help I'm Hosting a (virtual) Seder!

Next Year in Person

You Know What - This is Gonna be Kind of Fun



Every year as we go through the seder, we are meant to relive the ancient Israelites' journey from slavery to freedom, and we are encouraged to think about how the story relates to modern times and our own lives. Well, the events of the past few months have felt not unlike an ever-escalating series of plagues, and like Moses, we are all getting a sacred call to work towards liberation, whether we feel ready or not..

The part I love most about the Passover story is how unprepared [Moses](#) believes he is — that there's someone else God must be looking for. But there isn't — it's him, and it's us, flaws and all. As I talk to friends, family, and loved ones these past few days, it's clear that so many of us are feeling a deep sense of anxious unreadiness and fear. And yet, it is helpful to remember that this feeling is not new for so many of us ...

This story is about Jewish connection to all struggles against injustice, and this moment is about how inextricable we are from one another — how our sorrows and our freedom are and have always been deeply collective. We can use this time to make rituals that honor and, no matter where we are, connect us to the people we love. - Annie Weinberg



Passover: A Refresher

Pesach, known as Passover in English, is a major Jewish spring festival, commemorating the Exodus from Egypt over 3,000 years ago. The ritual observance of this holiday centers around a special home service called the seder (meaning "order") and a festive meal; the prohibition of *chametz* (leaven); and the eating of *matzah* (an unleavened bread). On the fifteenth day of Nisan in the Hebrew calendar, Jews gather with family and friends in the evening to read from a book called the *haggadah*, meaning "telling," which contains the order of prayers, rituals, readings, and songs for the Passover seder. Today, the holiday is a celebration of freedom and family.



From The Torah:

¹⁴ This day shall be to you one of remembrance: you shall celebrate it as a festival to Adonai throughout the ages; you shall celebrate it as an institution for all time. ¹⁵ Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; on the very first day you shall remove leaven from your houses, for whoever eats leavened bread from the first day to the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. ¹⁶ You shall celebrate a sacred occasion on the first day, and a sacred occasion on the seventh day; no work at all shall be done on them; only what every person is to eat, that alone may be prepared for you. ¹⁷ You shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your ranks out of the land of Egypt; you shall observe this day throughout the ages as an institution for all time. *Exodus 12*



Let's Talk The Haggadah

The Haggadah which means “telling” in Hebrew, is a written guide to the Passover Seder which commemorates the Israelites’ Exodus from Egypt. The Haggadah includes various prayers, blessings, rituals, fables, songs and information for how the seder should be performed. Although modern Haggadot (the plural of Haggadah) can vary widely, the tradition of reading a book to guide the seder dates back to the Middle Ages, and some of the elements that make up contemporary Haggadot were used 2,000 years ago.



The Seder Plate!

During the seder, we don't just tell the story of the Exodus, we see, smell, feel, and taste liberation. Many of the elements of this sensory experience appear on the seder plate, which serves as the centerpiece of the seder table. The seder plate traditionally holds five or six items, each of which symbolizes a part (or multiple parts) of the Passover story.

- Karpas - (A green vegetable, often Parsley)
- Maror - (Bitter Herb, horseradish)
- Beitzah - A roasted or hard boiled egg
- Zero'a - A shankbone
- Haroset - A mixture of Fruit and Nuts
- Hazeret - Bitter lettuce
- Matzah - Matzah

Non traditional additions to the seder plate:

- Orange
- Olive
- Fair Trade Chocolate
- Add your own...



Pre-Passover Activities

- Make Your Own Matzah
(<https://pjlibrary.org/beyond-books/pjblog/april-2019/how-to-make-your-own-matzah>)
- Chametz Hunts - Clean Your Pantry!
- Water Color Seder Plates (kids and adults)
- Books and Stories and Podcasts about Passover
- Cooking, Cooking and Cooking (just in smaller sizes)



Prep Your Guests!

- Invite Now! Send a nice e-card! Figure out your streaming now and send a link!
- Encourage people to plan their menu! (If you live close, cook now and drop off)
- Create a cheat sheet of what each household will need and send soon
 - (matzah, wine, parsley, eggs, horseradish, etc..)
- Mail “to be opened on seder night” readings, toys, word-searches, etc...
- Send copies of the compiled/haggadah
- Encourage people to use computers not phones
- Practice! At least with a few people, to work out the tech kinks. (find a co-host)



Prep Your Guests - More!

- Assign each individual/household a part of the seder. Ask them to do some homework about enriching their part of the seder (Four Children, Four Questions, Dayenu)
- Have a talented guests? Put them to work. Ask them to learn a song.
- Ask someone to make an afikomen word search to be texted or emailed
- Have someone write up a Passover quiz (doesn't even have to be about Passover)



Plan Your Haggadah

CCAR - Haggadah - To Order Before Pasover! Or Flipbooks to be downloaded

PJ Library - Good For Kids

Kveller - Good for families

One Table - (also has some resources for Solo Seder)

18 doors - (Interfaith Family)

Haggadot.com (Mix and match your own)



During The Seder

- It's okay and important to talk about COVID-19! But don't let that be the only thing you talk about!
- Consider some short meditations or visioning exercises
 - “Put our hand on our hearts, close our eyes, and imagine we are in the same room. Now hug yourselves, and open your eyes and send that hug around.”
- Plan some questions you want everyone to answer:
 - What's a question you would have liked to ask your grandmother, great-grandfather?, What else should be on our seder plate? What should the 5th question be?
- Allow other to ask questions: What are some questions you're asking tonight?
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During the Seder continued....

- Scavenger Hunt (great for kids) Find something in your house apartment that most symbolizes _____. Present and share! (Spring, Freedom, Bitterness)
- Quality over quantity!
- Go with the flow - We are all figuring this out together!
- Be Flexible with what is working and what isn't working!
- Create New Rituals! (pour cup of elijah together....)
- Secular readings, songs are great...



CoronaVirus Thoughts

A few places to think of where our current milieu could be relevant:

- Additions to the seder plate? Something to thank healthcare workers?
- Hand Washing Urchatz!
- Has the virus changed our relationship to the ten plagues?
- How has social distancing or being in quarantine refined our understanding of being “enslaved” in a specific space?
- Opening the door for Elijah
- Next Year in Jerusalem; what does this actually mean? Next year with in person? Next Year with others?



CoronaVirus Thoughts

- Ask people to share how this experience is impacting them
- Remind everyone that this virtual gathering is essential - Pikuach Nefesh
 - To save a life is to save the whole world! We are doing our part!
- Mention/Commit to organizations that might be most essential at this time (Food Banks, Hospitals, Mazon, etc...)

Reframe! Made by Rebekah!

- **what might be even *better* about this year's seder?** *(my answer: the chance to celebrate with my entire family, even the relatives who live out-of-state and don't normally join us for seder.)*
- **what might be even *more* memorable about this year's seder?** *(my answer: the whole thing! how could we ever forget a passover in quarantine? these memories will quite literally last a lifetime—and then some.)*



Resources:

CCAR - Central Conference of American Rabbis

https://www.ccarnet.org/publications/ccar-press-passover-resources/?fbclid=IwAR2SOfWXBgKi6NTrIX3Sx9xBQlpQMh9D_Jp3QDGqTzU1gGECoclr7qdEpRs

Reform Judaism

[-https://urj.org/blog/2020/03/26/digital-content-enliven-years-virtual-seder?fbclid=IwAR2agLSN_YYfqm9Whyq04-C87SGdygABIIRULmUFFP5i4daj262DCEWW25w](https://urj.org/blog/2020/03/26/digital-content-enliven-years-virtual-seder?fbclid=IwAR2agLSN_YYfqm9Whyq04-C87SGdygABIIRULmUFFP5i4daj262DCEWW25w)

Next Year in Person (Made by Rebekah) - <https://madebyrebekah.com/category/next-year-in-person/>

18 Doors - https://18doors.org/additional_passover_resources/

PJ Library - <https://pjlibrary.org/haggadah>



More Resources:

A DIY place for your Haggadah or Haggadah Supplements:

<https://www.haggadot.com/>

Additions to the Seder Plate:

<https://reformjudaism.org/modern-additions-seder-plate>

A Refugee Awareness Haggadah:

<https://www.hias.org/passover>

Haggadah for Kids and Families (download or order)

<https://www.kveller.com/haggadah/>

Supplemental Social Justice Readings

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/supplementary-seder-readings/>

Deeper Passover and Haggadah Learning

<https://www.sefaria.org/topics>

Passover Pinterest Page

<https://www.pinterest.com/pjlibrarydc/passover/?lp=true>

Hamilton Haggadah

<https://www.facebook.com/hamiltonhaggadah/>

Passover Recipe Round-Up



Where's Waldo Afikomen Page

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/xzg5isxyrqfxp8t/Where%27s%20the%20Afikomen.pdf?dl=0&fbclid=IwAR21T8Mq5BJGf13FgcD1tuQs6DEyd37tEgYyqdds3lqOsOGk3x7B1fAQweY>

Four Children Coronavirus Reading: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1v2pYMZ-JLrqoqtYFt8N9hfWw79Gw9nLp/view>