

March 24, 2007 Miriam's Seder, Fort Worth  
Nissan 5, 5767

In the interest of community harmony, this year's Miriam's Seder was scheduled on Shabbat to avoid conflicting with other major events on the Tarrant County Jewish calendar.

Traditionally, a Seder on Saturday night includes an extended Kiddush at the beginning that incorporates Havdalah blessings. Because this is a "model Seder" and it is not Passover, we look upon this evening's ceremony as a lesson rather than the actual ritual. We have elected to bless the candles near the start of the Seder and conclude the evening with a traditional Havdalah service to mark the end of Shabbat.

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Catering by Dianne Nass Young

The Women's Seder Committee:

Chair: Marcy Paul

Subcommittee leaders: Elizabeth Cooper, Linda Elsenbaumer, Eileen House,  
Rebecca Isgur, Diane Kleinman, Hollace Weiner  
Committee members: Batya Brand, Amy Cooper, Corrine Jacobson, Fran Levy,  
Dolores Schneider, Danielle Snailer, Shirley Spitzberg

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Rabbi Ralph D. Mecklenburger for his unwavering support,  
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Myra Andrade, and Sandra Adriano,  
and to Beth-El's Women of Reform Judaism/Sisterhood for spearheading this  
annual celebration.

## WHY IS THIS NIGHT DIFFERENT? . . .

### Together:

Why is this night different from all other nights?

On this night, we gather together to prepare for Passover in a way our foremothers could never have imagined.

On this night we gather as an extended family of women.

We break through the glass "Mechitza," the curtain confining women to a separate sphere.

What do we celebrate tonight?

Women's stories long relegated to a minor place in the Haggadah.

What do we discard?

The echo of exclusionary language.

Let us enter into this Seder as if the ancient rabbis had always asked and valued the opinions of women.

Surely God never meant for women to be passed over.

Passover begins on the full moon in the month of Nissan. And so it is fitting that we invoke the memories of our matriarchs—Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Leah, Bilhah, and Zilpah—who measured time from month to month. During the new moon at this season we commemorate the deliverance from Egypt of the Children of Israel. Israel means "one who wrestles with God." In each generation we must wrestle with the same questions and find new meaning.

We remember earlier years, the years when we were younger, when we were the simple daughters who did not know what to ask. Some of us recall years when we did not want to be with the family, when we asked the same angry question the wicked daughter asks, "What does this have to do with me?" And perhaps there were other years when the story became our story, when we told it in a new way or listened in a different way.

The traditional Haggadah is a dialogue between fathers and sons. It was developed in an era when women were not taught to read. For centuries, the men told the story, explained the symbols on the plate, and reclined while the women served the meal. Women's Seders began in 1976 when female rabbinical students in Jerusalem and feminist writers in New York conducted Seders emphasizing the role of women in the Passover story. The focus turned from four symbolic sons to four symbolic daughters. The emphasis shifted away from Moses to his mother Yocheved, his sister Miriam, and to Pharaoh's daughter Batya, whose name is not mentioned in the book of *Exodus*, although it does appear in the *Chronicles*. Tonight we tell the story from mother-to-daughter and friend-to-friend. Tonight we affirm that we were all in the land of Egypt and together journeyed forth to freedom.

**All:** We are together.

**Reader:**

*My brother and I were at Sinai  
He kept a journal of what he saw, what he heard, of what it meant to him.  
I wish I had such a record.  
Every time I want to write, I cannot.  
I am always holding a baby  
One of my own  
Or one for a friend,  
So my hands are never free  
To write things down.*

*And then, as time passes,  
The particulars, the hard data  
The who, what, when, where, and why  
Slip away and all I am left with is  
The feeling . . .*

*My brother is so sure of what he heard.  
After all he's got a record of it.  
If we remembered it together  
We could recreate a holy time*

By Merle Feld

The Haggadah was created so that Jews who have been silent or silenced by tradition might add their questions and insights to the timeless tale of freedom from bondage. This Haggadah reflects a commitment to an evolving Judaism that celebrates the matriarchs' contributions to the rich life of our people. Tonight we honor sisters, mothers, daughters, and aunts overlooked by scholars, left nameless by the liturgy, and downplayed by those who traditionally tell and retell the story of our people. Seders affirm Jewish tradition and transform it.

### *Matrilineal Descent*

We recall the lineage of Serach, daughter of Asher and granddaughter of the matriarch Leah. The sages compare Serach's holiness to the prophet Elijah. She journeyed to Egypt with her family, endured forced labor, taught her people to survive by preserving their tribal language and names, and spiritually survived to see their redemption. Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb recounts the legend that when the entire nation of Israel hesitated before the Red Sea, wondering how to go forward, Serach transformed herself into an eagle. Soaring heavenward, she sang her freedom song as a liberated soul. As she beat her wings, the waters parted.

Serach described the crossing thusly: "As we rushed toward freedom we turned our heads to one side and saw all the generations that came before us reflected in the waves. Then, we turned our heads to the other side and saw all the generations to come, staring back at us from the sea. At that moment, in the mirror of the waters, we understood the true meaning of our liberation. Both the past and the future will be redeemed when we, the living, risk our lives for freedom." Since that time, Serach wanders the earth to see what the Children of Israel are doing, especially during Passover.

Pesikta de Rab Kahana 11:13

**Together:** As we celebrate our liberation from Egypt and our role as women in the Exodus, we hope to achieve spiritual bonding. We honor all those women who have come before us: The Israelite women who suffered the indignities of slavery, who trudged through the desert carrying their infants, and who dreamed of new lives in the Promised Land. We further honor those women who have come before us by introducing ourselves.

**Introduce yourself at your table. Say your given name (in English and Hebrew if you can) followed by the name of your mother and grandmother. Go back as many generations as you can. You may want to add a sentence about the meaning of those names or the meaning of those women.**

I am \_\_\_\_\_, *bat* (daughter of) \_\_\_\_\_, *bat* \_\_\_\_\_.

We stated our names. Now we discuss the name of the Creator. No one knows the name of the Almighty. Our tradition tells us that God reflects humanity, that we are made in the image of the Divine. The word *Shekhinah* is a kabalistic concept that describes God's female aspect. *Shekhinah* is similar to the Hebrew word "shikoon" for neighborhood and "shekhena" for neighbor—"she who dwells in our midst." God is envisioned in the feminine when we welcome the Sabbath Bride, when we pray on Sukkot, and upon the arrival of new moon. Often, the feminine form of God is addressed during the Grace After Meals and when we pray to God in gratitude and blessing. Our eyes and ears are becoming more accustomed to God the *Shekhinah*.

Tonight, Miriam dwells in our midst. For in Exodus [15:20], she is described as "Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron." It was Miriam who kept an eye on her baby brother as he floated down the Nile in a reed basket. It was Miriam who arranged for her mother, Yocheved, to become the baby's wet nurse. It was Miriam, who, after the Children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, "took a timbrel in her hand" to celebrate with song and dance.

Tonight, we add to our Seder table Miriam's Cup, *Kos Miryam*. Legend tells of a mysterious well filled with living waters, *mayim hayyim*, a magical source of water that sustained the Israelites so long as Miriam was alive as they wandered in the desert. She offered hope and renewal at all stages of the journey. Miriam's goblet becomes a counterweight to Elijah's cup. Elijah's cup is a symbol of the coming messiah. Miriam's Cup symbolizes redemption in our present lives. Miriam's cup is a sign of the peace and satisfaction that the Psalmist described when writing, "My cup runneth over." If Miriam were present tonight, surely she would say, "May your cup runneth over."

We pass Miriam's cup around the table and each pour into it some drops of water. Just as each one pours water into Miriam's Cup, so too, the presence of each person adds something unique to the Seder.

**Together:** May the cup of Miriam refresh and inspire us as we embark on our journey through the Haggadah. *Amen*.

### *Kindling the Candles – Hadlakat Neivot*

And God said, "Let there be light."  
 It all begins with light.  
 It begins with a spark  
 That quivers like a candle  
 But will not be blown away.  
 Light erupts from the black Earth  
 Light is kindled with a NO to pharaoh in his palace,  
 These candles symbolize NO to evil, NO to bondage, a NO to genocide.

**Together:**

**B'rukha at ha'Shekhinah Malkat Ha'olam asher kid'shanu  
 b'mitzvotah, v'tzi vanu le'ha'd lik ner, shel yom tov.**

Blessed art thou our God, Queen of the World, who sanctified us with the commandment to light the holiday candles and to converse about our departure from Egypt.

As we light the candles, we recall the poetry and idealism of Hannah Senesch. As a teenager, she left her family in Budapest to become a pioneer for Zionism in *Eretz Yisrael*. When the Nazis occupied Central Europe, she enlisted in the military and was among a small cadre of soldiers from the Promised Land who parachuted behind Nazi lines to gather intelligence and rescue Jews. She was captured and tortured. Before her execution on November 7, 1944, the twenty-three-year-old soldier wrote these lines:

**Together:** Blessed is the match consumed in kindling flame.  
 Blessed is the flame that burns in the secret recesses of the heart.  
 Blessed is the heart with strength to stop its beating for honor's sake.  
 Blessed is the match consumed in kindling flame.

### *Four*

The number **4** resonates throughout the Haggadah: **4** questions, **4** cups, **4** sons – although tonight we discuss **4** daughters. Our history tells us that God made five promises of redemption and freedom and that **4** were fulfilled. The fifth promise that all Jews would return to Israel is symbolized with the cup of Elijah, from which we do not drink. The **4** cups of wine that we do imbibe help us to recall each promise. Tonight we link each cup to Jewish women who have acted as God's partners fulfilling the divine promises of redemption and freedom.

On this night we drink the first cup of wine in remembrance of two righteous women who played a major role in that birth—the midwives Shifra and Pu'ah. The biblical text is ambiguous. According to the classical commentators, it is believed that Shifra and Puah, the midwives who risked their lives and defied Pharaoh, were Yocheved and Miriam. They were rewarded for their bravery. Yocheved became the matriarch of the priests, because her oldest son, Aaron, became the high priest of the Tribes of Israel. Miriam married into the Tribe of Judah and she became the matriarch of the rulers of Israel. These two women delivered our people from possible extinction. Pharaoh commanded midwives to kill newborn Jewish males and report the birth of Jewish girls so they could be raised as prostitutes. But the midwives did not follow orders. They told Pharaoh that Jewish women were so strong and healthy they gave birth before a midwife could arrive. The midwives' acts of civil disobedience were the first stirrings of resistance among the Hebrew slaves.

Thus Yocheved and Miriam were not only midwives to the children they delivered, but also to the Hebrew nation in its deliverance from bondage. In every generation we stand with the defiant midwives. When Pharaoh chose death, they chose life.

**Together:** Our sages affirmed this when they wrote in the Babylonian Talmud, "The Jews were redeemed from Egypt because of the righteous women of that generation." [Talmud, Sotah 9B].

We raise our wine goblets to honor the midwives, the first to resist Pharaoh.

**Together: B'rukha at ha'Shekhinah Malkat Ha'olam boray p'ri hagafen.**  
 Blessed art thou, our God, Queen of the world, who creates the fruit of the vine.

(Drink first cup of wine.)

### *Urechatz—Washing Hands Together*

#### **Together:**

Now we celebrate water.  
 In addition to the water of Miriam's Well,  
 We remember the women who carried water from the wells.  
 Rebecca offered water to travelers and to their animals.  
 Rachel met Jacob at the Well.  
 Moses is delivered from the birth waters of his mother's womb  
 To the waters of the Nile.  
 Batya, the daughter of Pharaoh, immerses herself in the river.  
 From beneath the current she hears a faint persistent cry.  
 She emerges.  
 She spots the basket adrift in the bulrushes.  
 She is not the only one in the water seeking renewal.  
 The daughter of Pharaoh reaches out to Moses and cradles him in her arms.

Jethro's seven daughters met Moses at the well  
 Where they had come at day's end to water their sheep.  
 They had no brothers, so they fulfilled the traditionally male role of tending sheep.  
 Every day when they stopped at the well, men pushed them away from the water and  
 stole their place in line.  
 When Moses saw the injustice, he fought off the bullies.  
 Jethro's daughters repaid him with cool water to parch his thirst and insure his  
 survival.

May the water we offer each other now bring us closer to Rebecca, Rachel,  
 Batya, and Tzipporah, the daughter of Jethro who became the wife of Moses.  
 We welcome one another with the ancient greeting of washing one another's  
 hands.  
 We wash in silence, without a blessing.

*[Dip fingers in water bowls at the table.]*

### *Karpas—Greens . . . and Salt Water*

Passover celebrates springtime with its new growth, rebirth, love, and freedom.  
*Karpas*, the green vegetables from the earth, are for renewal, for our ability to  
 reach beyond what we thought possible. It reminds us that each generation  
 must repair and renew the world.

They say salt water is for the tears of our ancestors in bondage.  
 We say it is also for the sea that spawned all life.  
 Tonight we bring together the joy of new life

With the salt-sweet tears of giving birth to that life.

*[Each person takes some greens and dips them into salt water]*

**Together: B'rukha at ha'Shekhinah Malkat Ha'olam Haolam boray p'ri ha-adamah.**

Blessed art thou our God, Queen of the World, who brings forth fruit from the earth. [Eat the greens]

As the women rose up against Pharaoh, so the flowers rise up against the winter.

We pass the flowers around the table. Each person takes a petal or a blossom as we next turn our attention to the Matzoh . . . .

### *Yachatz—Breaking the Middle Matzoh*

Now we break the middle matzoh and hide one half as the Afikoman.

Later, when it is found, we will share it as our dessert.

We save the best for last.

The last taste in our mouth will be this precious matzoh.

It symbolizes the forgotten women whose memories we revive tonight.

How sweet that is.

The Afikoman is to us a sign that although some Biblical heroines have been nearly forgotten, we can savor accomplishments.

What has been broken off is not really lost

As long as our daughters search for it.

What is broken off is not lost to our people

As long as we remember and search.

Lo! This is the bread of affliction,

That our foremothers baked in the desert sun

To feed their families as they fled Egypt.

In their haste, they did not let the yeast rise.

They rolled the dough flat for the journey.

Let all who are hungry come and eat.

Let all who hunger for spiritual sustenance share this celebration,

And let us rediscover and renew our heritage together.

This year many women throughout the world remain oppressed by the veil,

By the burkha,

By the domestic violence in their households.

We live in a world in which irrational forces carry out evil against people,

Against the helpless, against women, against Mother Earth.

Next year may we all be free. May we be living in a Reign of Peace.



*— 4 Questions —*

Any question is a way in. Every question is an act of freedom. So let us ask new questions, our own questions.

***1. Why is this night different from all other nights? Why do we celebrate a women's Seder?***

Traditionally we tell the story of our people as it was written by men, as seen through their eyes. Tonight we include words written by women, words chosen to help tell our version of the past, to ask our questions, to express what often has gone unexpressed.

***2. Why do we eat only matzoh?***

Our mothers in their flight from bondage in Egypt did not have time to let the dough rise, so they baked flat bread called Matzoh. In memory of this, we eat only matzoh, no bread, during Passover.

***3. Why have our mothers been bitter? Why is this night both bitter and sweet?***

Our foremothers were bitter because of opportunities denied due to their gender as well as their religion. Yet the beauty of Judaism sustained them. Tonight we eat bitter herbs to remind us of the burdens women have endured in ancient times and in our own day. The story of women is sometimes bitter. The searching together is sweet.

***4. Why on this night do we find it so difficult to lean back and relax during the meal? When shall we lean back comfortably?***

At this Seder, all women may recline, all women may savor the joy of freedom, freedom to be Jews in a multitude of ways, to define womanhood, to be ourselves in all our infinite variety.

Why do we recline? We recline for the unhurried telling of the legacy of Miriam. We dip into the wine of history to retell our story.

*The 4 Daughters*

Four times the Torah bids us to tell our offspring about the Exodus from Egypt. From this our tradition infers that there are four kinds of children who appear in various guises throughout history and in our daily lives. Their attitudes must be pondered and answers sought. The traditional Haggadah tells the father how to instruct four sons. But what do our daughters ask? Tonight we turn to our daughters and describe the phases they go through.

***The wise daughter*** is searching for the relevancy of her Jewish roots, learning from study and experience about her heritage. She asks: "Mother, what has God, the *Shekhinah* commanded us on this night?"

Her mother responds by telling of the Matriarchs' role in the Exodus. The wise daughter asks another question: "Mother, how is Jewish womanhood important to our struggles today in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?" It is our obligation to provide her with the rich treasures of our heritage, to deepen her consciousness and strengthen her commitment to justice and Judaism.

Her questions continue.

She is eager to overturn old customs.

She fills your heart with fear for her safety.

She will be your teacher.

***The alienated daughter*** is negative about Jewish life. She asks, "What can this chauvinistic tribal religion possibly say to me?"

The alienated daughter distances herself from our people and her sisters.

Although she turns her back on Judaism, we should confront her directly and say: "What benefits do you derive from separating yourself from your people in our joyful celebrations? Don't you know you will still be identified as a daughter of Israel in times of suffering and anti-Semitism? By excluding yourself from our community of women, you weaken us and ignore what Miriam did for all of us.

The alienated daughter tears at your pain and mocks it

Believing she was not made like other Jewish women.

She disparages her ancestors.

The sustenance you offer never suffices.

She thinks she can cross the desert alone.

How can you teach her?

She needs every woman present to make the journey with her.

***The superficial daughter*** goes through the motions at synagogue and wears a "chai" around her neck. Her understanding and identification stop there. She has no conflict over Judaism because it is marginal to her life. She asks: "What is all this about anyway? Why become a committed Jew?"

We must seize this opportunity to explain that what passes for Jewishness in America is often diluted and trivialized. It is no wonder she relegates Judaism to her jewelry box and little more. This derives from assimilation. The Seder is an attempt to counter assimilation – to incorporate Judaism into our lives.

Each day you must give this daughter

A little less than she demands,

Letting her weave the missing strands herself.

*The fourth daughter, the insecure, inhibited, daughter*, is so invisible and shy that she is afraid to ask a question. It is up to us to reach out to this young daughter with open arms and involve her in joyful experiences like this Seder so she will begin to feel that her voice is important to the expression of Judaism.

Lead her to the table.

Give her a place of honor.

Draw her out of her invisibility.

Ask her questions

Give her time to find her voice.

Without this fourth daughter, the Seder would not be complete and the Children of Israel cannot be free.

**Together:**

**Let us all be wise tonight and full of questions.**

Everything in the Seder has multiple meanings. It is incumbent upon us to dip into the wine of history, to recount the Exodus from Egypt, and to re-examine the events for new insights.

### *Maggid—Telling the Story*

Once we were slaves unto Pharaoh in Egypt. And the *Shekhinah* brought us out from Egypt with an almighty hand and an outstretched arm. We tell this story annually because after a few generations, we were conquered by the Assyrians, then the Greeks, then the Romans. Then came the Inquisition, then the pogroms, then Hitler. Each time the legend of our deliverance sustained us and gave us the courage to outlast our oppressors. Therefore, it is incumbent to tell our children the story of each Exodus, to guide them when they embark on their own journeys.

Each year, the Miriam's Seder re-examines the story through the eyes of the women in ancient Egypt, as interpreted by our teacher, Batya Brand.

Let her begin . . . .

### *The 10 Plagues of Egypt*

God, who is embodied in the heavens above and in Mother Earth below, sent supernatural plagues upon Egypt. As we read the plagues aloud, we remember the upheaval that follows oppression. For each plague mentioned, we dip a finger into the wine and shake off a drop onto our plates. This reminds us that our freedom means tragedy to others, even our enemies.

**Together: The Biblical plagues were . . .**

- A river of blood
- Frogs that overran the land
- Lice that itched bodies and scalps
- Wild beasts that roamed the capital
- Diseases that killed their livestock
- Boils that hurt their skin
- Hail that destroyed their homes
- Locusts that devoured the crops
- Darkness that blocked out the day
- And the slaying of the first-born son.

In our age, as women have emerged from obscurity; we recite 10 accomplishments that Jewish women have brought to society to balance the plagues of our past. We must be hopeful.

*[Each woman dips a finger in the water and puts a drop on her plate as the accomplishments of Jewish women are described]*

1. Our ancestors would rejoice in the knowledge that we gather tonight for a Miriam's Seder and dance to Miriam's song.
2. The Biblical matriarchs would be astonished that there is no longer a "red tent," except in literature.
3. They would be proud that women have reclaimed Rosh Chodesh as an observance that speaks to their gender.
4. The women of the Bible would be honored to learn that the world's leading Zionist/humanitarian organization is called Hadassah—the Hebrew name for Esther.
5. The matriarchs would be proud that our daughters celebrate the Bat Mitzvah,
6. That women are counted in minyans for Reform and Conservative worship services,
7. That women study to become rabbis and cantors,
8. That Jewish women have won Olympic medals in swimming, track & field, fencing, gymnastics, and countless other athletic endeavors.
9. Our foremothers would be surprised at the existence of a flourishing Jewish Women's Archive in Brookline, Massachusetts.
10. Our foremothers would be proud that a woman, Golda Meier, has served as prime minister of Israel and that a Jewish woman, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, serves on the United States Supreme Court.

*[Lift second cup of wine but do not drink]*

**Together:** Through our accomplishments we move toward full freedom and social equality.

*[Second cup of wine is returned to table]*

When the Children of Israel reached the other shore of the Red Sea, Miriam led her people in song and dance to celebrate the escape from slavery. The House of Israel sang a song of freedom to the sound of Miriam's tambourine. "And Miriam the prophetess, sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam sang unto them." [Exodus 15:20-21]

*Miriam's Song*

By Debbie Friedman

*CHORUS:* And the women dancing with their timbrels  
Followed Miriam as she sang her song.  
Sing a song to the One whom we've exalted.  
Miriam and the women danced and danced the whole nightlong.

And Miriam was a weaver of unique variety,  
The tapestry she wove was one which sang our history,  
With every string and every thread she crafted her delight  
A woman touched with spirit, she dances toward the light.

*CHORUS*

When Miriam stood upon the shores and gazed across the Sea  
The wonder of this miracle she soon came to believe,  
Whoever thought the Sea would part with an outstretched hand,  
And we would pass to freedom and march to the Promised Land?

*CHORUS*

And Miriam the prophet took her timbrel in her hand,  
And all the women followed her just as she had planned,  
And Miriam raised her voice in song  
She sang with praise and might,  
We've just lived through a miracle, we're going to dance tonight.

*CHORUS*

### *Second Cup of Wine*

As we sing of the departure from Egypt, we recall that in other generations it was necessary to seek freedom. And as God promised in the Book of Exodus, "I will deliver you from their bondage."

We drink our second cup of wine in memory of Emma Lazarus, a poet who, like Moses, grew up knowing little of her people. Born in New York City in 1849, the daughter of an Ashkenazic mother and a Sephardic father whose families had been in America since colonial times, she was comfortable with her American identity. She corresponded with the poet Ralph Waldo Emerson, who praised her works. Yet when he edited an anthology of America's best poems, he omitted her verses because of her gender. When victims of Czarist pogroms began pouring onto America's shores, Emma Lazarus was moved by their plight. She wrote poetry with Jewish themes and essays challenging Americans to reject anti-Semitism. She became a Zionist. She helped immigrants arriving at the port in Castle Gardens. And she wrote "The New Colossus," the poem that gives voice to the Statue of Liberty, personifying the statue as a Mother of Exiles who proclaims:

**Together:**

*"Give me your tired, your poor  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*

We identify with Emma Lazarus as an American, a Jew, and a woman as we bless the second cup of wine: (raise wine cups)

**Together: B'rukha at ha'Shekhinah Malkat Ha'olam boray p'ri hagafen.**

Blessed art thou, our God, Queen of the world, who creates the fruit of the vine.

### *Seder Plate Symbols – Roasted Egg*

**Traditionally, the roasted egg represented the sacrifices in the Temple of old.**

An egg is also a symbol of life and rebirth, the endless beginning of life, Rich round of creation.

The egg comes from woman. It poses unanswerable questions.

Which came first?

Did woman come from the rib?

Or did man come from the womb?

### *Matzi Matzoh—Matzoh Blessing*

We take the half piece of matzoh from the middle and pass it around to everyone.

**Together: B'rukha at ha'Shekhinah Malkat Ha'olam al a'chelat matzoh.**

**Blessed art though Oh God, queen of the world, who commanded us to eat matzoh.**

### *Maror—Bitter Herbs*

What is the meaning of these bitter herbs?  
Why have our mothers on this night been bitter?  
Because they supervised the preparation but not the ritual  
They did the serving but not the conducting.

Miriam's name includes the root word meaning bitter  
Her name reminds us of the bitterness of slavery.  
Her life ended bitterly.  
She and her brother Aaron challenged Moses' authority [Numbers 12:1–15]  
"Has God indeed spoken only through Moses?" she declared.  
"Has God not spoken also with us?"  
Fearless in her rebukes,  
Miriam was punished, but Aaron was not.  
She was stricken with leprosy  
And ordered to "hide in shame seven days."  
Moses beseeched God on his sister's behalf  
And she healed.  
The next mention of Miriam is upon her death. [Numbers 20:1]  
After her death, "there was no water for the congregation,"  
For the well that followed Miriam dried up.  
Micah the prophet later recalls Miriam, saying that she, Moses, and Aaron were  
the trio that led Israel out of Egypt [Micah 6:4]  
In remembrance of Miriam's unending struggles, we taste the bitter herbs.  
And we say together:

**Together: B'rukha at ha'Shekhinah Malkat Ha'olam asher kid'shatnu b'mitzvotot v'tzivanu al achilat maror.**

Blessed art though, our God, Queen of the World, who makes us holy through the commandments and who has commanded us to eat bitter herbs.

[Eat bitter herbs on matzoh]

### *Third Cup of Wine*

As we recall bitterness in the past, we prepare to drink our third cup of wine. This cup is in remembrance of Henrietta Szold, born in Baltimore in 1860, the daughter of a rabbi. She attended rabbinical school at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America but was barred from ordination. She wrote articles on Jewish life that were published under a pen name, Shulamit. She was the primary editor of the *American Jewish Year Book* but never attained the title of editor-in-chief. The glass *mechitza* that kept women of valor like Henrietta Szold from entering masculine professions could not repress her talents and vision. She founded Hadassah, the Zionist organization that brings medical care to all people in Israel. Later in life, Henrietta Szold directed a youth *aliyah* that helped to save and resettle in the Promised Land 50,000 Jewish children from Nazi-occupied Europe.

In honor of Henrietta Szold, a modern day prophet of the Jewish people, we raise the third cup of wine and say,

**Together:**

**B'rukha at ha'Shekhinah Malkat Ha'olam boray p'ri ha'gafen.**

Blessed art thou Oh God, queen of the world, who created the fruit of the vine.

### *Charoses, Bitter Herbs, and Beruriah's Sandwich*

Charoses is made from chopped apples, nuts, and mixed with wine. It is the fruit of our labor in the vineyard and orchard. Taste it, for it is sweet. This is the mortar we made for Pharaoh. These are the Torah covers, embroidered by women. Tonight we feast on our own fruit. Our tradition instructs us to combine Charoses and Maror into a sandwich, to remember the bitter and the sweet, the full spectrum of life.

We remember Beruriah,

A woman of wit and wisdom and a survivor of harsh times.

Her father was martyred. Her sister was forced into a brothel.

Her husband, a rabbi, was called "master of miracles."

Beruriah is the only female mentioned by name in the *Gemara*.

Her opinions are recorded in the Talmud.

When her two sons died suddenly from sickness, she tempered the tragic news by informing her husband:

"Some time ago a treasure was left with me for safe-keeping,

And now the owner has come to claim it. Must I return it?"

She led him by the hand to their sons' bodies and reminded him of the lessons of Job:



"The almighty giveth and the almighty taketh away."  
The sandwich is Charosis and Maror reminds us of Beruriah's life and legacy.

### *Roasted Shank Bone*

The shank bone symbolizes the blood of the lamb that was painted over the doorpost of the homes of the Children of Israel so that the Angel of Death would pass over their dwellings. In ancient days, the shank bone stood for sacrifices brought to the temple. We also see it as a symbol of women's sacrifices . . .

Everything on the Seder plate has multiple meanings.

### *The Orange*

Six items traditionally adorn the Seder plate.

Some have roots in ancient Egypt.

Some have roots in a time before nations, in the turning of the seasons and the harvest.

Once we lived among Persians whose New Year falls at the spring equinox. Persians place six items on a special cloth and eat eggs and greens to celebrate. It is hard to discern which customs we borrowed from our neighbors and which they adapted from us.

The newest symbol on the Seder plate is the Orange.

In our own time, the scholar Susannah Heschel, daughter of the sage Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, instituted this custom as a means of inclusion. She asked everyone at her Passover table to take a segment of the orange, make the blessing over fruit, and eat it as a gesture of solidarity with those who are who are marginalized within the Jewish community, in particular, widows, gay men and women, and those suffering Alzheimer's and dementia.

Just as the orange has segments, so too do our people.

The orange symbolizes the fruitfulness for all Jews

When each and everyone contribute to Jewish life.

*Together we each take an orange segment and recite:*

**B'rukha at ha'Shekhinah Malkat Ha'olam boray p'ri ha-aytz.  
Blessed art thou Our God, queen of the world, who createst the  
fruit of the tree. Amen**

*— Shalichar Oreikk: The Meal is Served —*

## *Afikoman*

We find the halved matzoh that dropped from our lives.  
 With the Afikoman  
 What is broken shall be made whole.  
 What is shattered shall be restored.  
 Our hope is to restore and elevate our experiences.  
 As we share the Afikoman, let us consider the many divisions between Jews and  
 how they can some day be healed.  
 We look forward to the day when the stories of women and men are told  
 together.

## *Grace After Meals . . .*

### *Open Door for the Prophet Miriam –*

*Miryam Han'vi'a*

[Sing to the tune of *Eliyahu Hanavi*]

Miriam, your wisdom's strong,  
 In your hands you hold our song.  
 Miriam, come dance among us,  
 Teach us healing on our journey long.  
     Speedily in our own days  
     Guide us through the waterways  
     To the wells of liberation,  
     As we work toward transformation.

Mir'yam, ha' n' vi'a,  
 Oz v'zimra b'yada.  
 Miriam, tirkod itanu,  
 L'hagdil zimrat olam.  
     Bim'herah, v'yameynu, he t'vi' einu  
     El' mey, ha'y'shua, El' mey, ha'y'shua.

By Rabbi Leila Gag Berner, Translation by Arthur Waskow, Adapted by Sue  
 Levi Elwell

*Fourth Cup of Wine*

For the final cup of wine,  
 We remember Anne Frank, the brave young girl, hiding in an Amsterdam attic,  
 who recorded her inner thoughts and left a poignant coming-of-age story that  
 touched the world. The words of this daughter of Israel dramatically and tenderly  
 continue to convey our people's oppression in the twentieth century.

*Psalm 150 – Hallelujah*

Haleluhu, Haleluhu b'tzil – tzi – lei sha - ma,

Haleluhu, Haleluhu b'tzil – tzi – lei tru'a.

Kol ha-ne' sha-ma t' – ha – leil - yah

Haleluyah, Haleluyah

Kol ha-ne' sha-ma t' – ha – leil - yah

Haleluyah, Haleluyah

**LEADER . . .**

Mourner's *Kaddish*

Tonight we have created a space. Within this space we have created a women's Seder and rejoiced in the stories of our matriarchs. Although, for now, it has come to an end, the space has been created and it has been rich with questioning, creating, healing, and discovering. In all their myriad forms, women's Seders are the fruits of something new: women's communal, sustained, and authentic embrace of Jewish tradition. Take a moment and look around at your friends, your sisters. In our created space we have brought together women from all over the Tarrant County Jewish community. Together, *b'Yachad*, we celebrate, we learn, we pray, and we sing. Embrace your womanhood and your Judaism. Celebrate your Jewish womanhood.

Together: *Amen*

***HAVDALAH SERVICE***

*Passover songs and recipes are on the final pages  
 of this Haggadah*

*Festival Songs of Praise . . .**Women's Dayenu*

"But what is dayenu? What is sufficient for us?" asks the Wise Daughter.

**If Eve had been created in the image of God and not as helper to Adam,  
It would have sufficed. Dayenu !**

**If she had been created as Adam's equal and not as temptress,  
Dayenu !**

**If Eve were the first woman to eat from the Tree of Knowledge  
and had brought learning to us, rather than banishment. Dayenu!**

**If Lot's wife had been honored, not mocked,  
when she turned her head as the city swallowed her children,  
and not turned into a pillar of salt for her sadness and concern,  
Dayenu!**

**If our fathers had not pitted our mothers against each other,  
Like Abraham with Sarah and Hagar,  
or Jacob with Leah and Rachel,  
or Elkanah with Hannah and Penina, Dayenu!**

**If Miriam were given her prophet's chair or the priesthood, Dayenu!**

**If, Shifrah and Pu'ah, the midwives in Egypt who caused our  
redemption, had been given sufficient recognition. Dayenu!**

**If women bonding, like Ruth and Naomi,  
were the tradition and not the exception, Dayenu!**

**If the women had sat on the Tribal Council and decided the laws that  
dealt with women's natural cycles, Dayenu!**

**If women had been the writers of Talmud,  
interpreters of our past, Dayenu!**

**If women had written the Haggadah  
and brought our mothers forth, Dayenu!**

**If every generation of women, together with every generation of men  
Would continue, spiritually, to go out of Egypt,  
Dayenu! Dayenu!**

*Lo Dayenu*

If the Shekhinah had brought us forth from bondage  
And had not educated us,  
It would not have sufficed us.

If she had educated us  
And not given us the opportunity to work,  
It would not have sufficed us.

If we were allowed to advance at work but had to perform housewifely  
duties as well,  
It would not have sufficed us

If we were aided by rabbinical decree and treated with dignity,  
It would suffice us.

*Echad Mi Yo' Daga - Who Knows One?*

*New words by Rayna Gellman*

**WHO KNOWS ONE?**

**I KNOW ONE.** Eve, one loving mother for all.

**Who Knows Two?**

**I know two,** Two midwives, Shifra and Pu'ah, who refused to do  
Pharaoh's bidding if it meant harming a child. [Exodus 2:2]

**Who knows three?**

**I know three.** Three women of courage: Yocheved, Miriam and  
Pharaoh's daughter. They gave birth, guarded, and raised Moses.  
[Exodus 2:2]

**Who knows four?**

**I know four,** Four matriarchs of Israel: Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and  
Leah. [Genesis, 11:29]

**Who knows 5?**

**I know 5.** Five daughters of Zelophehad: Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah,  
Milcah, and Noah who obtained the right for women to inherit  
property. [Numbers 27:1-11, Numbers 36:10-12]

**Who knows 6?**

**I know 6. Six are the days of the week in which women work at every kind of job: at home, at careers, as volunteers.**

**Who knows 7?**

**I know 7. Zipporah and her sisters, 7 daughters of Jethro.** [Exodus 2:16-22, 4:24-26, 18:2-5]

**Who knows 8?**

**I know 8. Eight are the days of Passover, the time to welcome the spiritual dimensions of freedom.**

**Who knows 9?**

**I know 9. Nine are the months of birthing.**

**Who knows 10?**

**I know 10. Ten are the women in a minyan.**

**Who knows 11?**

**I know 11. Eleven are the women of valor: Two Tamars and Dina, Deborah, Yael, Hulda, Rizpa, Michal, Naomi, Ruth, and Esther.**

[Tamar in Genesis 38:1-29 & 2 Samuel 13:1-29; Dina in Genesis 34; Deborah in Judges 4:4-5:31; Yael in Judges 4:17-21, 5:24-27; Hulda in 2 Kings 22:12-20; Rizpa in 2 Samuel 18:20, 19:11-14; Book of Ruth; Megillah Esther]

**Who knows 12?**

**I know 12. Twelve are the new moons in a year, a symbol of renewal in every woman's life.**

**Who knows 13?**

**I know 13. Thirteen are the years to Bat Mitzvah and the acceptance of responsibility to continue the chain of Jewish life.**

*A Web of Women*

© 1990 Rabbi Jack Gabriel

Chorus:

It was a web of Women, a web of  
Women,  
That kept the Hebrew children alive.  
It was a web of Women, a web of  
Women,  
That helped the Hebrew children to  
survive . . .

Long ago, on Egyptian soil  
The Hebrew children multiplied.  
The Hebrew children toiled.  
Nasty Pharaoh, he made a lot of noise.  
He told Shifra and Pu'ah  
To kill the baby boys! . . .  
CHORUS

Shifra and Pu'ah  
Ignored Pharaoh's scorn.  
They were loving midwives,  
They helped life be born.  
Pharaoh was a madman,  
A monster through and through,  
But women have the power  
To do what they must do.  
CHORUS . .

The Hebrew women, In those dark  
years,  
They kept having babies,  
They pushed past their fears.  
Yocheved had a baby,  
Moses was his name,  
And he would lead his people  
To freedom once again. CHORUS. . .

Yocheved had a baby  
she hid him on the Nile,  
Miriam his sister  
Watched him all the while,  
'Til Pharaoh's kindly daughter  
Rescued him, so brave--  
Without these holy women  
We might still be slaves. CHORUS . . .

Shifra and Pu'ah  
Yocheved, Miriam,  
Pharaoh's daughter--  
The list goes on and on...  
Long ago, as the Torah states:  
Women made the difference,  
Women kept the faith. CHORUS

## *Recipe Section*

### *PASSOVER POPOVERS*

Hollace Weiner's mother obtained this recipe from the old Hoffberg's Deli in Washington, D.C.

Combine:

2 ½ Cups Matzoh Meal  
1 tsp salt  
1 TBS sugar

Combine in separate container:

2 Cups boiling water  
½ Cup oil

Add the liquid to the dry ingredients.

Break 4 eggs—one at a time—and add, mixing well after breaking each egg.

Let mixture stand for 15 minutes

Form patties on a greased sheet.

Bake at 375 degrees for 50 minutes. Makes 1 dozen

### *PASSOVER GRANOLA*

Crunchy snack from the kitchen of Marcia Kurtz

Ingredients

- |                                    |                           |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. 5 Cups Matzoh Farfel            | 6. ½ Cup brown sugar      |
| 2. 2 Cups Angel Flakes Coconut     | 7. ½ Cup honey            |
| 3. 2 Cups chopped blanched almonds | 8. ½ Cup orange marmalade |
| 4. 1½ Cups pecan halves            | 9. 1 tsp. cinnamon        |
| 5. 2/3 Cup butter or margarine     | 10. 1 Cup raisins         |

Mix and toss items #1-4 into a well-greased large cookie sheet with sides. Bake 15 to 20 minutes at 325 degrees

In large pot melt margarine/butter (item #5) and add items #6-9. Simmer and stir constantly for 2 minutes. Bake again on cookie sheet for 15 to 20 minutes at 350 degrees until brown.

Fold in the Farfel mix and stir until well coated. Add and stir raisins (item #10) When cool, store in closed container.



*FROZEN STRAWBERRY TORTE*

Going beyond macaroons. From the kitchen of Barbara Rubin.

Crust

1 cup pecan meal (finely ground pecans)  
 1 cup crushed macaroons  
 ½ stick butter or margarine, melted

Melt margarine. Combine with crumbs. Press into the bottom of a 10" X 3" spring-form pan. Bake at 375 degrees 7 to 10 minutes or until golden. Cool.

Filling

2 egg whites at room temperature  
 1 Cup sugar  
 2 Cups sliced strawberries  
 1 Tbsp lemon juice  
 1 tsp vanilla

In the large bowl of an electric mixer, place egg whites, sugar, sliced strawberries, vanilla, and lemon juice. Beat on low speed to blend. Increase to high speed and beat until firm peaks form when beaters are lifted, about 15 minutes. Spoon into the cool crust. Cover and freeze until firm, at least 6 hours.

Strawberry Sauce (enough for two pies)

10-ounce package frozen sliced strawberries  
 3 Tbsp. frozen undiluted orange juice concentrate  
 1 Tbsp. currant jelly  
 1 Cup fresh strawberries, sliced

Slightly defrost strawberries and orange juice concentrate. Puree strawberries and OJ concentrate in blender. Stir in jelly. Spoon into a bowl and stir in fresh berries. Serve cold.

Serve torte directly from the freezer, as it will not be frozen solid (and it doesn't hold long at room temperature). Cut in wedges and serve with the strawberry sauce. (Serves 12)

### *PASSOVER FARFEL KUGEL*

A new twist on a traditional dish, from the kitchen of Eileen House

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

#### Ingredients

3 Cups Matzoh farfel  
 5 eggs (beaten)  
 ½ Cup melted butter  
 1 tsp. salt  
 2 Cups applesauce  
 1 Cup crushed pineapple (drained)  
 1 tsp. cinnamon  
 4 Tbs. sugar

Pour boiling water over farfel. Let stand one minute then drain. Add beaten eggs, butter, salt, applesauce, pineapple. Mix well.

Pour into 9 X 13 greased pan. Top with cinnamon/sugar mixture. Bake at 350 degrees for 40 to 45 minutes

### *Seven-Fruit Charoset from Sarinam*

Linda Levy Elsenbaumer's favorite from Joan Nathan's *Jewish Holiday Kitchen*

#### Ingredients

8 oz. unsweetened coconut  
 8 oz. walnuts, chopped, or almonds , grated  
 ¼ cup sugar  
 1 Tbs. cinnamon  
 8 oz raisins  
 8 oz. dried apples  
 8 oz. prunes  
 8 oz. dried apricots  
 8 oz. dried pears  
 4 oz. cherry jam  
 Sweet red wine like a Manischewitz

1. Combine everything except the jam and wine in a large, heavy pot. Add water to cover. Simmer over low heat, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon.
2. Add small amounts of water periodically, so that the mixture does not stick to the pot. Continue stirring.
3. Cook for 60 to 90 minutes. When all ingredients have come together, stir in the cherry jam. Let stand until cool.
4. Add enough sweet wine to be absorbed by the *charoset* mixture.
5. Refrigerate. Makes around 5 cups.

## *FLOUNDER AND SALMON TERRINE*

An upscale gefilte fish that Linda Levy Elsenbaumer discovered in *Shabbat Shalom: Recipes and Menus for the Sabbath* by Susan R. Friedland

### Ingredients

Vegetable oil  
 2 lbs. flounder or halibut fillets  
 1 lb. salmon fillets  
 4 large onions  
 4 large eggs  
 6 Tbs. matzo meal  
 Salt  
 Freshly ground white pepper  
 2 Tbs. lemon juice  
 2 carrots, grated  
 Parsley  
 Dill sprigs  
 Horseradish

1. Preheat oven to 325. Lightly oil a 2-quart loaf pan.
2. Skin and cube the fish, removing any small bones you feel. In batches, for about 10 seconds each, grind the fish in a food processor. The fish should be finely ground but not a puree.
3. Put the fish in the mixing bowl of a standing electric mixer or other large bowl. Cut the onion in eighths and mince them in the food processor. You should have about 3 cups.
4. Add the onions, eggs, matzo meal, salt, pepper, and lemon juice to the mixing bowl. Beat at medium speed for 5 to 8 minutes. You can do this with a hand beater if you don't have a standing mixer. Add the grated carrots. Combine well.
5. Place the fish mixture in the prepared loaf pan. Cover with foil. Place loaf pan in a larger pan filled with hot water; the water should come halfway up the sides of the loaf pan.
6. Bake the fish for about 1 hour – the terrine should be firm. Let it cool for 10 minutes. Run a knife around the edge of the pan before inverting the terrine on a serving plate
7. Refrigerate several hours or overnight. Serve, sliced, garnished with parsley and dill springs. Serve with horseradish. As a first course, serves 12 to 14 diners.