

# Passover-in-a-Digital-Box: A Journey

Every spring, Jews worldwide gather together with friends, family, and community to tell the story of a great journey that is OUR great journey. In the Mishnah, a collection of writings compiled in the 2nd century, our tradition coined the concept that in every generation each person must view themselves “as though they personally left Egypt.” We are to transport ourselves spiritually, emotionally, and gastronomically to walk a mile- or 40 years- in the shoes of our ancestors.

With the help of this guide, it is our sincere hope that you and your family go forth on a great journey during the next two weeks to create moments of reflection and celebration on this Passover holiday. By pacing yourself and following this guide, you will prepare for and experience Passover in a new light by taking in every moment as if you were on a trip and growing throughout the journey, both individually and collectively.

The format of the guide is simple. There are seven days of preparation with ideas and opportunities to help you make this Passover meaningful and special, followed by seven days in which you will go on your Passover journey. For this journey, we have chronologically highlighted seven moments in the *Maggid* (the Passover story) to help you find a moment of learning and growth every day of the holiday. Each day has an action item or conversation starter to help you put your learning to use.

Thank you so much for registering for our 2022/5782 Passover-in-a-Digital-Box. We hope you have a sweet and meaningful holiday, and we look forward to accompanying you on your journey ahead.

**-The jHUB Team**



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## Your Guide Book



### Passover Story

There are countless ways to tell the Passover Story, and doing so is one of the most important *mitzvot* (sacred obligations) of the Passover holiday. To help us begin our preparation, let's refresh our memories of the story with a few favorites:

[The O.G. Torah.](#)

The Story of Passover from [Michael Rubiner's The Two-Minute Haggadah](#): It's a long time ago. We're slaves in Egypt. Pharaoh is a nightmare. We cry out for help. God brings plagues upon the Egyptians. We escape, bake some *matzot* (*plural for matzah*). God parts the Red Sea. We make it through; the Egyptians aren't so lucky. We wander 40 years in the desert, eat manna, get the Torah, wind up in Israel, get a new Temple, enjoy several years without being persecuted again.

For those who like pictures, there is a great [5-minute video from Temple Sholom](#) in Vancouver.

A [short children's poem](#) with some explanation, translated from the original Hebrew.

Lastly, here's a good millennial throwback [#IYKYK](#).

## The Itinerary: Your Seder Plate



The *seder* plate is the plate used during the celebratory Passover meal that contains symbolic foods. Below are the six traditional items found on the *seder* plate. The Passover *seder* has continued to morph over centuries. Our earliest source for the Passover *seder* is Rabbi Gamliel, who said, “*Whoever has not explained the following three things on Pesach has not fulfilled his duty: Pesach, Matzah and Maror (Pesachim 116a-116b).*” Yet, the *seder* we lead today is very different from the *seder* of the 1st century CE. As the Jewish people’s experience continues to take shape, so has the *seder*. Over time, people have added new customs and rituals.

Following the traditional *seder* plate items, you will find additional items you may choose to add to your plate to enhance your *seder* experience.

- ✓ **Karpas** – Greens symbolize the freshness of spring. These are dipped in saltwater to symbolize the tears of slavery.
- ✓ **Kharoset** – A sweet condiment, often made from apples, wine, nuts, and cinnamon, symbolizing the mortar used by slaves.
- ✓ **Beitza** – A roasted egg symbolizes renewal, spring, and the offering historically made during this season at the time of the Second Temple in Jerusalem.

- ✓ **Maror** – Bitter herbs, such as horseradish, symbolize the bitterness of slavery.
- ✓ **Zeror** – A roasted bone symbolizes the sacrificial Passover lamb and God’s outstretched arm, which led the Jews out of slavery in Egypt.
- ✓ **Khazeret** - A second bitter herb, usually greens such as romaine lettuce. Some people omit this item or use the same food as for *maror*.

# Unique Items to Add to Your Seder Plate



## **jHUB suggests: Trail Mix**

Like trail mix, the Jewish family is a “motley crew” of people from different cultural and faith backgrounds, all races (20% of American Jews are people of color), different political views, and abilities.

We are an inclusive family that welcomes anyone who wishes to sit at our table. As a sign of this welcoming, acknowledging the many different people who make up our Jewish family, we add our own “mix” to our Passover table with dried fruits, nuts, or anything of your choosing.



## **Kveller suggests: Banana**

A [photograph](#) of a young boy, face planted on a Turkish beach, clothes sopping wet, rocked the world in 2015. Aylan Kurdi and his brother, Galip, were victims of the Syrian refugee crisis

To honor them — along with thousands of other refugees — Rabbi Dan Moskovitz [called for](#) placing a banana on the *seder* plate, commemorating a tradition in which the boys’ father would bring them a banana to share every day. According to Moskovitz: “We place a banana on our *seder* table, and tell this story to remind us of Aylan, Galip, and children everywhere who are caught up in this modern day exodus. May they be guarded and protected along their journey to safety, shielded by the love of their parents, watched over by the God full of mercy and compassion.”

# Unique Items to Add to Your Seder Plate



## MyJewishLearning suggests: Orange

In the early 1980s, while speaking at Oberlin College Hillel (the campus Jewish organization), Susannah Heschel, a well-known Jewish feminist scholar, was introduced to an early feminist *haggadah*.

The *haggadah*, a guide to a Passover *seder*, suggested adding a crust of bread on the *seder* plate to show solidarity with Jewish lesbians. It was intended to convey that there's as much room for a lesbian in Judaism as there is for a crust of bread on the *seder* plate.

Heschel didn't like that idea. She felt that to put bread on the *seder* plate would be to accept that Jewish lesbians and gay men violate Judaism like hametz [leavened food] violates Passover.

So at her next *seder*, she chose an orange as a symbol of inclusion of gays and lesbians and others marginalized within the Jewish community. She offered the orange as a symbol of the fruitfulness all Jews experience when lesbians and gay men are contributing and active members of Jewish life.

In addition, each orange segment had a few seeds that people spit out as a gesture of repudiating the homophobia of Judaism. While lecturing, Heschel often mentioned her custom as one of many feminist rituals developed in the last 20 years.

She writes:

Somehow, though, the typical patriarchal maneuver occurred: My idea of an orange and my intention of affirming lesbians and gay men were transformed. Now the story circulates that a man said to me that a woman belongs on the bimah [podium of a synagogue] as an orange on the *seder* plate. A woman's words are attributed to a man, and the affirmation of lesbians and gay men is erased. Isn't that precisely what's happened over the centuries to women's ideas?

# Unique Items to Add to Your Seder Plate



## **Kveller suggests: Fair trade chocolate, coffee, or cocoa beans**

The most delicious, unique addition to the seder plate has got to be chocolate. In 2011, [Fair Trade Judaica](#) launched a campaign to shine a light on forced child labor in the chocolate and coffee industries.

### ***Click to Expand***

In partnership with Fair Trade Judaica, advocacy group Global Exchange created a [haggadah supplement](#) to be used after the *Maggid* (telling of the story), and before blessing the *matzah*, bitter herb, and *charoset*.

Leader: Once, we were slaves in Egypt.

Assembled: Today, young children are toiling in the West African cocoa fields.

Leader: Just as Moses grew up in the house of the Pharaoh, we have influence over those who exploit children in the cocoa fields.

Assembled: We can walk in Moses' footsteps. We can have the courage to ask the Pharaohs of today to let the children go.

# Unique Items to Add to Your Seder Plate



## Kveller suggests: Cashews

At a local CVS, **Rabbi Wesley Gardenswartz** saw a sign asking customers to buy bags of cashews to send to troops in Iraq.

One of the employee's sons was abroad in the war and explained that cashews provide sustenance and hydration in Iraq's dry climate. To honor the troops, Rabbi Gardenswartz called for adding cashews to the  *seder*  plate.



## Kveller suggests: Potato

When **Ethiopian Jews** were brought to Israel via Operation Solomon in 1991, they were famished.

They were so ill and emaciated that they couldn't stomach a substantial meal. Instead, doctors fed them boiled potatoes and rice. To represent the continuous exodus of Jews from oppressive regions, some Jews place boiled potatoes alongside the green vegetable — karpas — we dip in saltwater.

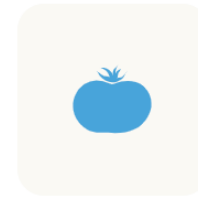


# Unique Items to Add to Your Seder Plate



## Kveller suggests: Olives

The olive branch is famous for being the symbol of peace. Olives were introduced to the *seder* plate as a symbol of hope for a future with peace between Israelis and Palestinians.



## Kveller suggests: Tomato

Inspired by her visits to Florida, where she met with underpaid and overworked tomato pickers, Rabbi Paula Marcus, a Rabbis for Human Rights member, decided to introduce the tomato to her *seder* plate.

### *Click to Expand*

“We imagine what it was like to be slaves and celebrate our freedom,” she wrote in [Jewish Week](#). “But the truth is, there are people in our own country who don’t have to imagine what it is like to be a slave.”

## Cuisine: Passover Recipes

**Matzah Brei**

**Passover Granola**

**Chocolate Toffee Matzah**

### Basic Matzah Brei

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Create a variation by adding sweeteners- honey, maple syrup, jam, cinnamon-sugar, fruit or go savory with ingredients like onions, mushrooms, peppers, cheese, salsa, etc.

#### INGREDIENTS

- 3 to 4 large eggs

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- 4 (6-inch squares) *matzot* (plural of *matzah*)

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- ¼ teaspoon salt

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- Ground black pepper to taste

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- 3 tablespoons butter or margarine

## DIRECTIONS

- 1** Lightly beat the eggs in a large bowl.
  - 2** One at a time, run the *matzah* pieces under cold running water until soft but not mushy, about a minute. Then crumble it into coarse pieces, dropping the pieces into the eggs. Season with salt and pepper.
  - 3** In a large skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add the *matzah* mixture and fry, pressing down the center occasionally and turning once, until golden brown on both sides, about 5 minutes per side. For scrambled *matzah* brei, stir the mixture constantly, while frying.
  - 4** Serve warm either sweet or savory.
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# Passover Granola

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 ½ cups *matzah* farfel
- 1 cup shredded coconut
- 1 cup blanched almonds (coarsely chopped)
- ¼ cup margarine
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup honey
- ½ teaspoon salt

## **DIRECTIONS**

- 1** Mix farfel, coconut and nuts very well.
  - 2** Spread the farfel mixture on a lightly greased cookie sheet. Toast the farfel mixture for about 20 minutes at 325°F, mixing several times to make sure that all sides are toasted to a golden brown.
  - 3** Mix all the other ingredients. Heat, stirring constantly, until the ingredients are well blended into simmering syrup.
  - 4** Add the farfel mixture to the syrup mixture. Toss together until the farfel mixture is well coated.
  - 5** Spread the mixture on a lightly greased pan. Bake at 350°F for 20 to 25 minutes. Stir several times, so the mixture does not burn.
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## Chocolate Toffee Matzah

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### INGREDIENTS

- 4-5 lightly salted *matzot*
- 2 sticks (1 cup) unsalted butter
- 1 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 1 (12-ounce) bag semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 heaping cup chopped pecans
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt flakes or kosher salt

## DIRECTIONS

- 1** Preheat the oven to 350°F.
- 2** Line a rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil, making sure the foil goes up and over the edges. Place a sheet of parchment paper on top of the foil.
- 3** Cover the entire baking sheet with the *matzot* and set it aside.
- 4** Making the Toffee- Combine butter and brown sugar in a medium saucepan.
- 5** Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly with a whisk until the mixture comes to a boil.
- 6** Once the mixture comes to a boil, continue cooking and stirring for another 3 minutes until foamy and thickened.
- 7** Pour the toffee over the *matzot*. Use a spatula to spread an even layer.
- 8** Put the pan into the oven and bake for 8 to 10 minutes. The toffee topping should be crackled and bubbling all over.
- 9** Remove the pan from the oven and place on a cooling rack.
- 10** Immediately scatter the chocolate chips evenly over the top.
- 11** Wait 3 to 5 minutes for the chips to soften, then use a spatula to spread the chocolate into an even layer.
- 12** Sprinkle with the pecans and sea salt. Refrigerate until the chocolate is firm, about 45 minutes.
- 13** Lift the foil overhang to transfer the *matzah* toffee onto a large cutting board. Using a large sharp knife, cut into 2-inch squares. Store in an airtight container in the fridge and serve cold.

## Souvenirs - Downloadable Activity Book

Keep your kids engaged this Passover with our **Downloadable Activity Book!**

Book includes:

- *Matzah* Box Matzah Holder- How To!
- Paper *Matzah* Holder- How To!
- Craft Stick *Matzah* Holder- How To!
- Order of the Seder Placemat- available in 8.5×11 and 11×17
- Passover Comic



[Download Activity Book](#)





## More Stories Of Freedom

The themes of Passover are universally relevant and traverse generations. The Exodus from Egypt is part of the Jewish people's story, but we are not the only people to have experienced slavery and yearned for freedom. In this country alone, slavery has existed in many different forms. Our nation was founded upon the backs of the enslavement of African-Americans, and human trafficking continues to exist in the shadows of our society. Passover creates space for us to learn from the past and acknowledge the work that still needs to be done to create a just society where all peoples are truly free.

We base our pursuit of freedom on the principle that every soul is inherently worthy. The Jewish value that expresses this is *b'tzelem Elohim*, that God created each of us in God's own image. This teaches us to recognize the value in ourselves and every human being. It motivates us to create a reality where every person is embraced and treated with dignity and respect.

What do you perceive as issues of freedom in our country today? While we enjoy relative freedom in this country today compared to other times and other places, there is still work that can be done to create a more just and equitable society.

**Poverty** affects more than 37 million Americans. Approximately 80 million Americans struggle with **food insecurity**. Judaism teaches a communal responsibility to help the most vulnerable in our society. Poverty and food insecurity are human rights that severely inhibit people's ability to thrive and succeed in society.

[Read UNESCO's report](#) on the commitment to address "the moral obligation to take action to eradicate poverty and to contribute to the full realization of the fundamental basic rights of all peoples." If you are interested in learning more about food insecurity, specifically, and what you can do to help, visit [Mazon](#), a Jewish response to hunger based on Jewish values and ideals.

**Human Trafficking** is a form of modern-day slavery that afflicts nearly 21 million people worldwide. Learn what [T'ruah](#) is doing to end this modern plague and how you can support their work.

**Voting Rights** are guaranteed to all Americans by the Constitution. Suppressing or inhibiting a person's or group of people's right to vote is stripping them of this basic American freedom. Learn what the [ACLU](#) is doing to preserve voting rights for all Americans and what you can do to support their efforts.

**Refugees** are people escaping persecution and war from their native countries. [HIAS](#) is a Jewish organization that works to protect refugees and help them rebuild their lives. The Jewish Federation of Cleveland is partnering with other organizations to help both Afghan and [Ukrainian](#) refugees.

**Racial Disparity** in America is a very real issue caused by systemic racism. Learn more about the diversity within the Jewish community at [Be'chol Lashon](#). Take action for racial justice with the [Religious Action Center](#).

\*\*See Passover Journey Day 1 for suggested actions you can take to help create a more just and equitable society.

## The Haggadah



The *haggadah* will serve as your guide through the Passover *seder*, the structured order for the first night's celebration of Passover that uses food as symbolism to engage with Jewish values.

*Haggadah* means “telling” in Hebrew. The *haggadah* will take you through the story of the Israelites’ Exodus from Egypt. Some *haggadot* (plural form of *haggadah*) include prayers, blessings, rituals, fables, songs, and information on how your family should perform the *seder*.

Every family is unique. Some may want a multicultural *haggadah*, a historical or current events *haggadah*, or a *haggadah* focusing on specific art pieces. To make your custom *haggadah*, visit [haggadot.com](http://haggadot.com) and create a free one unique to you.

**Here are a few excellent haggadot to guide your family through the Passover seder!**

For everyone

The Wandering is Over Haggadah

Minimalist Haggadah

For adults

Schitt's Creek Haggadah

Kid-friendly

Favorites for Families Haggadah

10 Minute Dayenu Seder

## Music



[Listen on Spotify](#)

Every expedition needs a stellar [playlist](#).

Listen to the [playlist](#) as you plan your Passover *seder* menu, pick up ingredients at the store, peruse which *haggadah* to use, and discuss Jewish values related to Passover.

Passover is also a time to have meaningful conversations.

Use this [playlist](#) to talk with your partner or family about Passover themes. We suggest a song to listen to for each conversation, but we include many others you may choose from to personalize your experience!

*Lotsa, Lotsa  
Matzo  
by Shira  
Kline*

**Conversation:** *Matzah* is simple food. The flour, water, oil, and salt mixtures kept the Israelites alive while fleeing slavery. When you eat *matzah* this year, think about the basics in your own life.

**Adults:** What are the basics in your life? What are your extras?

**Kids & Adults:** What do you need in your life? What do you need to live your life?

*Clean by Taylor  
Swift or  
Come Clean by  
Hillary Duff*

**Conversation:** Passover can be an opportunity for spring cleaning for the soul. What do you want to cleanse or remove from your life this Passover?

**Adults:** What are your thoughts on spring cleaning? Will you spring clean your house? Have you found an opportunity to look at your physical surroundings differently? Have you looked inside yourself differently?

**Kids:** Have you ever found anything interesting or meaningful while cleaning?

*Don't Sit On The  
Afikoman  
by Deborah  
Katchko-Gray*

**Conversation:** We create the Afikoman when we break an ordinary piece of *matzah*.

**Adults:** How do you know that something has become extraordinary? Did others or just yourself see the transformation? Do you have a “public” Afikoman and a “private” Afikoman?

**Kids:** Is there an ordinary object, like a blanket or a toy, that is special to you because you love it so much? Something you received from a relative, or something you made?

*I Want to  
Break Free  
by Queen*

**Conversation:** During Passover, we celebrate the story of the Israelites who sought freedom in the Promised Land. But what does being free mean to each of us?

**Adults:** What does freedom look like to you? When are you truly free? On vacation? Engaging in a special family activity? Cooking dinner with friends? Going for a long hike? Is freedom just having unscheduled time? Do you have a favorite activity when you feel most free in your mind and spirit?

**Kids:** You may feel free during summer vacation, summer camp, sleepovers, walking your dog, or attending a sporting event. When do you feel most free to do what you want and be yourself?

*Dayenu  
by Craig  
Taubman*

**Conversation:** Dayenu is the Hebrew word for enough. People also say dayenu to express gratitude. When was a time in your life that you truly experienced Dayenu? And expressed gratitude?

**Adults:** Was there a time in your life that you didn't experience Dayenu, when you didn't appreciate that you had received enough but should have?

**Kids:** Can you think of a time when you received something in your life that made you thankful?

*Miriam's Song  
by Debbie  
Friedman*

**Conversation:** Miriam led the Children of Israel in celebration after they crossed the Sea of Reeds. What does it mean to be someone who leads others in rejoicing? When have you ever danced for pure joy to celebrate? How did it feel? What was the response of the group to your dance?

**Adults:** When have you let loose for pure celebratory dance?

**Kids:** When have you started a fun celebration dance with your friends?

# The Seven Days of Your Passover Journey

DAY

1

Day 1

## Seeing Injustice

On this, the first day of Passover, we learn from the biblical midwives of our story:

*"The king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, saying, 'When you deliver the Hebrew women, look at the birthstool. If it is a boy, kill him; if it is a girl, let her live.' The midwives, fearing God, did not do as the king of Egypt had told them; they let the boys live." (Exodus 1:15-17)*

The Jewish value that prompted Shiphrah and Puah to action is *tzedek*, righteousness or justice. Two often quoted texts describe this Jewish imperative:

*"Justice, justice shall you pursue so that you may live and inherit the Land that Adonai, your God, will give to you." (Deuteronomy 16:20)*

*"God has told you what is good and what God requires of you: to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8)*

Judging others fairly, securing equitable treatment for all, and ensuring our righteous treatment of others is how we fulfill these biblical mandates. Our sages emphasize this value and suggest that God even desires it over compassion. This should move us to action and not stand silent in the face of oppression of any people or individual wronged in any way.

Consider different scenarios in which you have or might have an opportunity to practice *tzedek*. Discuss with your family or friends.

Consider visiting the [Religious Action Center](#) to explore their advocacy efforts for justice. What steps will you take to pursue justice like Shiphrah and Puah?



# The Seven Days of Your Passover Journey

DAY

2

Day 2

## Responsibility For Others

We continue on the second day of Passover with a “grown up” Moses:

*“Sometime after, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his **kinsfolk** and witnessed their labors. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his **kinsfolk**. He turned this way and that and, seeing no one about, he struck down [read: killed] the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. When he went out the next day, he found two Hebrews fighting; so he said to the offender, ‘Why do you strike your fellow?’ He retorted, ‘Who made you chief and ruler over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?’ Moses was frightened, and thought: Then the matter is known! When Pharaoh learned of the matter, he sought to kill Moses; but Moses fled from Pharaoh.” (Exodus 2:11-15)*

One thing that we can focus on in this densely packed section of Torah is Moses’s relationships with the others in this story and how he may (or may not) have felt a responsibility to the others. The Hebrew word for responsibility is *acharyut*, which is our value for today, and there are two important words in these verses that help us focus on this value.

- **Kinsfolk** – אחי – ehchav – Literally: “His brother”
- **Fellow** – רֵעַ – rey’echa – Literally: “Your companion” or “your friend”

Moses witnesses two violent scenarios and has very different responses. First, he witnesses an Egyptian beating a Hebrew. Since Moses is born a Hebrew but raised in Pharaoh’s palace, it is possible that he could have an affinity for either. However, we read that Moses recognizes the Hebrew slave as his kin. Was Moses raised knowing that he was Hebrew-born? Torah doesn’t say. Nevertheless, Moses sees this injustice happening to his **kinsfolk**, literally “to his brother,” and has the urge to stand up and defend him by striking the Egyptian, presumably to death.

# The Seven Days of Your Passover Journey

The next day, Moses finds two of his **kinsfolk** fighting. This time, Moses responds differently. Instead of physically intervening, he merely asks, “why do you strike your fellow?” This use of the word “fellow” shows us that Moses believes these two Hebrews, his **kinsfolk**, should not be acting this way. Moses believes in the Talmudic dictum *kol yisrael arevim zeh bazeh*– all of Israel is responsible for one another. The word Moses uses to express the relationship between these two Hebrews, *rey’echa*, is the word used throughout Torah to connote an expected positive relationship.

- In the story of the Tower of Babel, the workers use this term when they unite to build a tower to the heavens;
- This word is used repeatedly in the 10 Commandments: do not bear false witness against your fellow, and do not covet your fellow’s house;
- This word is used in Leviticus 19, the section called The Holiness Code, when we are taught to “love your neighbor as yourself.”

Through his words and actions, Moses teaches us that our closeness to someone may affect our feeling of responsibility towards them.

How do your feelings for someone affect your treatment of them? Take some time to consider this. Have you ever treated someone more harshly than they deserved? Have you been more lenient or forgiving than you should have been? What message do your words and actions convey?

Create a code of conduct. You may wish to do this for yourself, writing a letter of your self-expectations for your relationships that you may return to year after year to hold yourself accountable. Or, as a family or with the people you live, create a code of conduct to which you all agree to adhere that will foster a tone of mutual respect and consideration and strengthen your relationships.

# The Seven Days of Your Passover Journey

DAY

3

Day 3

## Finding Miracles & Mindfulness

Our voyage continues on day three, where it's necessary to slow down to notice what is essential to move forward.

Moses's observant nature in the Torah, the first five books of the Bible, helped him witness a miracle. That miracle would make him realize his bigger purpose to free the Israelites from Egypt.

As he led his sheep around a mountain to graze, Moses noticed flames engulfed a large bush nearby. He realized the fire did not harm the bush, became curious, and approached the bush.

*"And God called to him from the midst of the bush, and said: Moses, Moses. And [Moses] said: Here I am." (Exodus 3:4)*

God told Moses to stop moving closer and instructed Moses to take off his shoes because Moses stood on holy land. God saw how Egyptians oppressed the Israelites and advised Moses to get the Israelites out of Egypt.

*"And now, go, and I will send you to Pharaoh, and you will take out My people, the children of Israel, from Egypt." (Exodus 3:10)*

# The Seven Days of Your Passover Journey

Moses witnessed a miracle in the burning bush that gave him a purpose and greater intention. Some find this in the Jewish value of *tikkun middot* – awareness of character habits and living with greater meaning and a sense of sacred purpose. One way to achieve this is by practicing mindfulness.

Mindfulness is a type of meditation where you focus on being very aware of what you are sensing and feeling in the moment, according to the [Mayo Clinic](#). Practicing mindfulness can help you squash negative thoughts, stress, and anxiety. With a clear mind, it's easier to find the small miracles in your life.

How could you practice mindfulness daily? Weekly? Monthly? Talk about this with your family.

Here are some tips:

- **Be attentive.** Life is extremely busy. Try to find time, even if it's just a moment, to slow down and notice what's around you. For example, you could practice this by noticing all of the flavors in your favorite snack.
- **Breathe.** When you feel stressed, take a deep breath and close your eyes. Focus on how your breath feels when you inhale and when you exhale. Even a few minutes of this practice can reduce stress.

Try this 10-minute guided meditation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IS0kcSNIULw>

# The Seven Days of Your Passover Journey

DAY



Day 4

## Sacred Partnerships

On the fourth day of Passover, we find Moses and Aaron uniting for a great adventure with God's help:

*"God said to Aaron, 'Go to meet Moses in the wilderness.' He went and met him at the mountain of God, and he kissed him. Moses told Aaron about all the things that God had committed to him and all the signs about which God had instructed him. Then Moses and Aaron went and assembled all the elders of the Israelites. Aaron repeated all the words that God had spoken to Moses, and he performed the signs in the sight of the people, and the people were convinced. When they heard that God had taken note of the Israelites and that God had seen their plight, they bowed low in homage." (Exodus 4:27-31)*

This moment is an example of the Jewish value of *shutafut*, partnership. Based on this text, what do you feel are the defining characteristics of this partnership?

Judaism is deeply attuned to the importance of us doing our most sacred work in partnership with others. We know that partnerships can take many forms in our lives- work partners, life partners, etc. Below are three texts that speak to Judaism's affinity for us seeking partnerships of all kinds:

*"God said, 'It is not good for a person to be alone; I will make a fitting helper for them.'" (Genesis 2:18)*

# The Seven Days of Your Passover Journey

*“At a time that the community is encompassed by trouble, a person should not say, ‘I will go to my own house and eat and drink and peace to you.’ Rather, a person should suffer with the community, as we find with Moses, our teacher, who caused himself to suffer with his congregation...Rather, this is what Moses said: ‘Since the Israelites are suffering, I will be with them in their suffering. And anyone who suffers with the community will merit to enjoy comforting times with the community in the future.’” (Taanit 11a)*

*“There are eight levels of tzedakah, each one greater than the other. The greatest level, higher than all the rest, is to fortify a fellow Jew and give them a gift, a loan, form with them a partnership, or find work for them, until they are strong enough so that they do not need to ask others [for sustenance].” (Mishneh Torah, Gifts to the Poor 10:7)*

Consider the values and characteristics of each of these partnerships. How do any of these texts strengthen or change your understanding of Moses’s, Aaron’s, and God’s partnership?

Activity: Take five minutes today and write a note of gratitude to someone whom you consider to be your partner. Take note of your personal feelings while writing the note, after sending the note, and while your partner reacts to your note.

# The Seven Days of Your Passover Journey

## DAY 5

### Day 5

## The Importance of a Good Snack

**MATERIAL NEEDED:** One snack...really. Don't continue reading until you have a delicious, healthy snack in hand!

Our journey on day five begins at a very familiar moment in the story of the Exodus from Egypt:

*"[Pharaoh] summoned Moses and Aaron in the night and said, "Up, depart from among my people, you and the Israelites with you! Go, worship [your] God as you said! Take also your flocks and your herds, as you said, and begone! And may you bring a blessing upon me also!" ...So the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading bowls wrapped in their cloaks upon their shoulders...And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough that they had taken out of Egypt, for it was not leavened, since they had been driven out of Egypt and could not delay; nor had they prepared any provisions for themselves." (Exodus 12:31, 32, 34, and 39)*

In their haste to leave Egypt, our ancestors didn't have time to take care of every important task on a typical "To Do List" before their journey. They didn't know where they were going, nor did they know how long it would take. They only knew they needed to go immediately. But fear not, because our ancestors brought travel snacks! Well, they brought what they needed to make some travel snacks (*matzah*).

This moment in our journey is all about the Jewish value of *kemach* (lit. "flour"), which our tradition uses to signify physical sustenance- aka snacks.

# The Seven Days of Your Passover Journey

When we are on a journey, whether physically or spiritually, we need to make sure we have what we need to sustain ourselves. The 2nd century Rabbi Eliezer ben Azariah helps us greatly by teaching in Mishneh, [Pirke Avot 3:17](#): *Im ein kemach, ein Torah; im ein Torah, ein kemach*. If there is no “snack”, there is no Torah; if there is no Torah, there is no “snack”. If a snack nurtures our bodies, then Torah nurtures our souls.

This isn't breaking news. Our ancestors taught we should distribute roasted grains and nuts on Passover to children before the *seder* so that they will not sleep and so they will ask the four questions ([Pesachim 109a](#)). We know very well that a good snack can help us focus to perform the task at hand, which makes us hungry again from accomplishing our task.

Rabbi Eliezar sets up a cycle that is tailor made to nurture both our bodies and our souls. One does not come before the other. They must be accounted for at all times. We must nurture ourselves physically and spiritually simultaneously. As is said in Hebrew, בְּתֵאָוֹן, *b'tey'avon*, have a “good appetite.” Enjoy your snack.



# The Seven Days of Your Passover Journey

DAY



Day 6

## Going Out on a Limb

When we are nearly at the end of our Passover story, the Israelites are being chased by Pharaoh and reach the Sea of Reeds. The Israelites have had the taste of freedom for just a moment in time. They face the choice of an overwhelming sea in front of them or to turn back and become enslaved to Pharaoh once more.

*"Then God said to Moses, Why do you cry out to Me? Tell the Israelites to go forward." (Exodus 14:15)*

Moses then raises his arms and parts the sea. However, a *midrash*, a rabbinical story, says when the Children of Israel came to the edge of the sea, the water first refused to part. Each one said, "I will not be the first to enter." A person named Nachshon leaped into the sea, plunging into its waves. The sea did not part for him until he had waded into it up to his nose; only then did it become dry land.

# The Seven Days of Your Passover Journey

Now, as then, redemption cannot come unless we take that first step. As you contemplate the steps you are willing to take, we invite you to contribute to this collective expression of courage [HERE](#).

French painter Henri Matisse famously said, *"Creativity takes courage."* His flat shapes, expressive abstractions, and vivid use of color were highly controversial in his day. Today Matisse's work is treasured and appreciated and a source of inspiration for artists worldwide.

Often, the things worth doing in our lives take some degree of courage. May you be like Nachshon, a person who is willing to step forward in the face of fear to better your life and the lives of others.

*"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear." – Nelson Mandela.*

# The Seven Days of Your Passover Journey

DAY



Day 7

## Continuing the Journey

On the seventh and final day of Passover, we celebrate Miriam. Miriam was Moses's older sister who looked out for his safety when he was a baby floating in a basket in the Nile river. She watched as Pharaoh's daughter rescued him and adopted him as her son. Miriam continued to have an instrumental role in our story. Along with Moses and Aaron, she led the people to freedom.

*"For the horses of Pharaoh, with his chariots and horsemen, went into the sea; and God turned back on them the waters of the sea; but the Israelites marched on dry ground in the midst of the sea. Then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her in dance with timbrels. And Miriam chanted for them: Sing to God, for God has triumphed gloriously; Horse and driver God has hurled into the sea." (Exodus 15:19-21)*

Our sages said that it is because of Miriam's merit that a well followed the Israelites as they journeyed in the wilderness, providing water to sustain them (Ta'anit 9a:9).

Consider the miraculous nature of this story and the actions of our heroine. What does it take to call someone to action in the face of their destruction? Like Moses and Aaron, Miriam faced death as she went against Pharaoh's orders facilitating Moses's survival as a baby and later helping the Israelites escape Egypt. What would encourage you to take such extreme action to save an entire people?

# The Seven Days of Your Passover Journey

Judaism teaches that we must be mindful of the important balance of the needs of the individual and the needs of the community. While each person must tend to their own needs, we are taught not to put our individual needs before the needs of all others. When we act to better ourselves, we are cautioned to consider how our actions impact others and the community. Rabbi Hillel expressed this concept beautifully by saying:

*If I am not for myself, who will be for me? And if I am only for myself, what am I? And if not now, when? (Avot 1:14)*

Here in Cleveland, we have a history of risking personal safety to save people. The Underground Railroad ran through Cleveland and helped African-Americans escape slavery. Consider following in these footsteps to celebrate freedom. Travel the stops on the [Cleveland Underground Railroad tour](#).

If seven days is not enough and you yearn for another ritual to light the path to freedom, we suggest you try a practice called Counting the Omer. It begins on the second night of Passover and continues to the holiday of Shavuot, when we celebrate the giving of the Torah (5 Books of Moses). This is the time of the barley harvest in the Land of Israel when people would bring sheaves to the Temple in Jerusalem in thanksgiving to God. This practice helps keep us accountable. Many Jews will focus on a different Jewish virtue each day of the counting as a way to better themselves (e.g. loving kindness, compassion, etc.). We are reminded that the journey from slavery to freedom and redemption is ongoing. May we never lose sight of our active role in this journey for all peoples. Learn more about this ritual counting [HERE](#).

\*\*Passover is a seven day holiday. However, many Jews celebrate the holiday for eight days. Historically, an eighth day was added as a safeguard to ensure the holiday's observance at the correct time. More traditional Jews maintain this eighth day of observance, while more liberal Jews and Jews living in Israel celebrate the biblically prescribed seven days (See [Exodus 12:15-18](#)).



## Join Us!

We can't wait to see how you incorporate these conversation starters, recipes, crafts, activities and more into your Passover celebrations this year! Share with us on:



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We wish you a fun and meaningful Passover! We look forward to connecting with you.