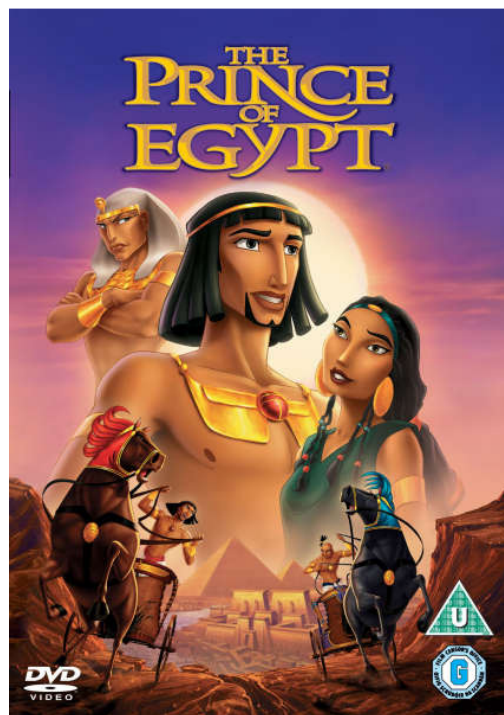


Miller Introduction to Judaism Program
American Jewish University

CLASS #7

Passover: The Jewish Master Story



בכל דור ודור חייב אדם לראות את עצמו כאילו הוא יצא
ממצרים

In every generation, a person is obligation to see themselves as though they personally went out from Egypt.

TIMELINE OF THE EXODUS STORY

Israelites settle in Egypt—in the Land of Goshen-- following a famine in Canaan. Joseph serves as prime minister to Pharaoh. All is good.

The Israelites cross the Sea of Reeds to begin their journey to the Promised Land. Pharaoh and his army are drowned. We are free. All is good.

THE EXODUS:

a story in seven short chapters

retold by Rabbi Rachael Barenblatt

1. Once upon a time our people went into *galut*, exile, in the land of Egypt. During a famine our ancestor Jacob and his family fled to Egypt where food was plentiful. His son Joseph had risen to high position in Pharaoh's court.
2. Generations passed and our people remained in Egypt. In time, a new Pharaoh ascended to the throne and ordered our people enslaved. In fear of rebellion, Pharaoh decreed that all Hebrew boy-children be killed. Two midwives named Shifrah and Puah defied his orders. Through their courage, a boy survived; midrash tells us he was radiant with light. Fearing for his safety, his family placed him in a basket and he floated down the Nile. He was found, and adopted, by Pharaoh's daughter, who named him *Moshe* because *min ha-mayim m'shitihu*, from the water she drew him forth. She hired his mother Yocheved as his wet-nurse. Thus he survived to adulthood, and was raised as Prince of Egypt.
3. Although a child of privilege, as he grew he became aware of the slaves who worked in the brickyards of his father. When he saw an overseer mistreat a slave, he struck the overseer and killed him. Fearing retribution, he set out across the Sinai alone. God spoke to him from a burning bush, which though it flamed was not consumed. The Voice called him to lead the Hebrew people to freedom. Moses argued with God, pleading inadequacy, but God disagreed. Sometimes our responsibilities choose us.
4. Moses returned to Egypt and went to Pharaoh to argue the injustice of slavery. He gave Pharaoh a mandate which resounds through history: Let my people go. Pharaoh refused, and Moses warned him that Mighty God would strike the Egyptian people. These threats were not idle: ten terrible plagues were unleashed upon the Egyptians. Only when his nation lay in ruins did Pharaoh agree to our liberation.
5. Fearful that Pharaoh would change his mind, our people fled, not waiting for their bread dough to rise. (For this reason we eat unleavened bread as we take part in their journey.) Our people did not leave Egypt alone; a "mixed multitude" went with them. From this we learn that liberation is not for us alone, but for all the nations of the earth.
6. Pharaoh's army followed us to the Sea of Reeds. We plunged into the waters. Only when we had gone as far as we could did the waters part for us. We mourn, even now, that Pharaoh's army drowned: our liberation is bittersweet because people died in our pursuit.
7. To this day we relive our liberation, that we may not become complacent, that we may always rejoice in our freedom.

How to Conduct a Spiritual Spring Cleaning:

Hametz:

Examples:

Kitniyot:

Examples:

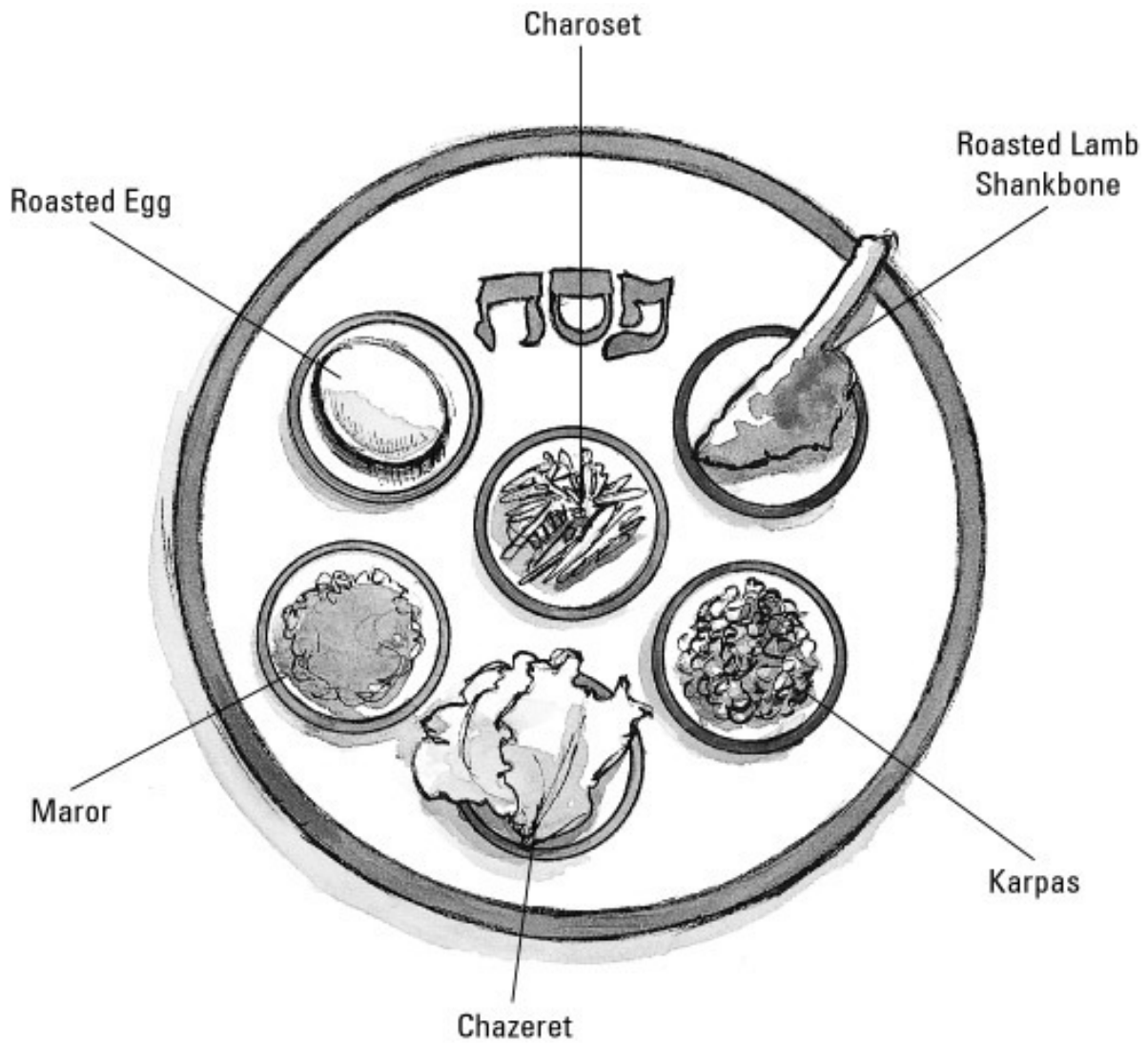
Metal & glass pots and pans and utensils are cleaned by:

Baking dishes and grills are cleaned by:

Counter tops, ovens, and other spaces are cleaned by:

The following cannot be cleaned for Passover:

The SEDER Table



Other Things on the Seder Table:

Matzah Haggadah Elijah's Cup

Afikomen

Freedom Dreams

Sea Turtles and You

Every year, hundreds of giant green sea turtles swim hundreds of miles from their natural habitat on the Brazilian coast to tiny Ascension Island in the Atlantic Ocean, in order to mate.

For years, researchers and pioneer conservation biologist Archie Carr tried to understand how the turtles found their way to the island from such a great distance, when even airplanes had trouble finding it. Carr's conclusions were fascinating: he claimed that turtles navigate using genetic memory. Millions of years ago, when a strip of land bisected the Atlantic, the journey from Brazil to the closest stretch of the eastern shore was only a short swim.

That land was submerged millions of years ago. But the turtles, driven by genetic memory, still search and find the last remaining remnant of the world that disappeared into the ocean—Ascension Island. Every year they return to perpetuate the species and the memory.

- from *A Night to Remember: The Haggadah of Contemporary Voices*

“We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and the Lord our God took us out of there, with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. Had not the Holy One taken out our ancestors from Egypt, know that we and our children and grandchildren, would still be enslaved to Pharaoh in Egypt. And even if we were all scholars, sages or elders, even if we knew all of the Torah, it would still be a requirement for us to tell the story of the Exodus from Egypt. **And all who expand on the story of the going out from Egypt, this is praiseworthy.**”

~From the Haggadah

We still believe, or many of us do, what the Exodus first taught, or what it has commonly been taken to teach, about the meaning and possibility of politics and about its proper form:

1. Wherever you are, it's probably Egypt.

2. There is a better place, a world more attractive, a Promised Land.

3. The only way to this Promised Land is through the wilderness. There is no way to get there except by joining together and marching.

Professor Michael Walzer, "Exodus and Revolution"

In every generation, each person is obligated to **see** themselves (*I'raot et atzmo*) as though they personally came out of Egypt.

-From the Ashkenazi Haggadah, following the Mishnah

In every generation, each person is obligation to **show** themselves (*I'harot et atzmo*) as though they personally came out of Egypt.

-From the Sephardic Haggadah, following Rambam

In Hebrew, the word for Egypt—Mitzrayim—means a “narrow place.” What are some of your own narrow places that you are hoping to find liberation from?