



AN URBAN ADAMAH

# HAGGADAH SUPPLEMENT

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# BELOVED COMMUNITY...

The human world has welcomed Spring in an unusual way this year.

Many of us are sheltering inside, isolated from our communities, watching a pandemic that, in its spread, ignores borders and affects equally people of all races, classes, and religious identities. We are also experiencing, to varying levels, the economic impact of our society's strategy to minimize harm as many of us find ourselves out of work, out of childcare, limited in resources, and processing the fallouts of life as we have always known it. We are hanging on as waves of fear, confusion, and heartbreak wash over us and our loved ones.

Ironically, there couldn't be a better time to mark and celebrate the holiday of *Pesach, Passover*.

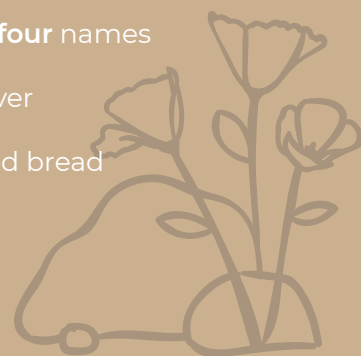
## WHY?

Because *Passover* honors the very worn and familiar journey from the narrows to the expanse, from places of enslavement to freedom on the other side.

Passover deals in **fours**...

**four** cups, **four** children, **four** questions, and **four** names

- *Chag HaPesach* – the holiday of passing over
- *Chag HaAviv* – the holiday of springtime
- *Chag HaMatzot* – the holiday of unleavened bread
- *Chag HaCherut* – the holiday of freedom.



The holiday's name that resonates deeply in these times is that of *Chag HaCherut*, the holiday of freedom. *Cherut*, the kind of freedom we are talking about on *Passover* is inextricably linked to responsibility, to a sense of impact on a larger whole. This is a freedom that binds human-being to human-being and lifts up the interconnectedness of one thing to another. This kind of freedom calls us into relationship and reciprocity with our surroundings. Jewish writer and organizer **Emma Lazarus** put it this way, "Until all of us are free, none of us are free."

This is the freedom we are called to celebrate: a vision of freedom from systems that create winners and losers, and the great liberty to enter into mutually beneficial relationships through which we hold each other up. If COVID-19 teaches us anything, it is that we are all connected, we are one organism, and one immune system. It teaches us that we are all responsible for our collective health and wellbeing.

We live in an economic system that keeps us individualized, isolated, and encouraged to believe we are all in it alone and in isolation from one another. This pandemic powerfully reminds us of the falsehood of that premise. COVID-19 makes powerfully clear that we are responsible for our neighbors next door and around the world.

So join Urban Adamah in celebrating *Passover* in the time of COVID-19. Let us be resourced through earth-connection and awake to the potent possibilities embedded in the devastation. What offerings are revealing themselves alongside the suffering to our multicultural family of human beings? What do you notice?

May we all find the freedom of *cherut*, calling us up from the oppressive powers and into mutual aid and reciprocity with each other, the land, the water, and that which flows through all beings.

In Love & Freedom,

Rachel & Jesse

# PREPARING FOR THE SEDER

## LOCAL SEDER PLATE

Consider making your own local *Seder* plate. Here are some suggestions for ways to make your *Seder* plate come alive!



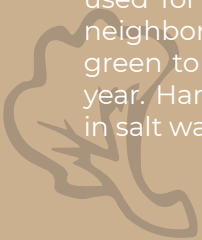
On the *Seder* plate there are traditionally six items...

- **EGG** (hard boiled)
- **SHANK BONE** (roasted)
- **PARSLEY** (spring vegetable)
- **CHAROSET**
- **HORSERADISH**
- **LETTUCE** (some include a sixth item called *chazeret*)

Here are ideas for how to make your own *Seder* plate from wild foraging in your neighborhood, re-interpreting essence, and getting creative!

## KARPAS: SPRING GREEN

The holiday of *Passover* is also called *Chag HaAviv* – the holiday of spring! This holiday marks an essential passage from the introverted winter to the blossoming and blooming spring. After a long winter we revel in the fresh and potent first greens to sprout and nourish our bodies with the vibrancy of beginnings. While traditionally parsley or lettuce, even potatoes are sometimes used for *karpas*. Consider walking around your neighborhood and harvesting a wild-edible green to use as *karpas* on your *Seder* plate this year. Harvest enough for all at your table to dip in salt water, and maybe even to include in a wild foraged salad.



Wild edible plants to look for...

clovers | miner's lettuce | nettles | fiddleheads



## Z'ROA : ROASTED SHANKBONE

The *z'roa* represents the pass over sacrifice which the Hebrew people (and Egyptians) slaughtered and processed. The divine instruction was to use the blood of this sacrificed animal to paint the doorways of each house so that G-d would know which houses to passover during the 10<sup>th</sup> and final plague, the killing the firstborn sons. In this plague of COVID-19, we might feel a piece of the fear the Egyptians felt as the plagues, each as unusual a circumstance as the next, commanded their presence. We are being asked to make sacrifices right now in order to ensure the collective care and healing of our communities. What are you sacrificing? Consider writing down on a note card or a piece of paper the sacrifices you or those you love are facing and use that ceremonially as your shankbone this year.



## BEY'TSA : HARD BOILED EGG

The *bey'tsa* is a reminder of the renewal of springtime and the potency of birth. *Passover* is often referred to as the moment when the Hebrew people renewed as a unified and autonomous group. The egg reminds us of this time of new-ness, of renewal, of sowing seeds and hoping for health and prosperity for what's ahead. Find something in your neighborhood or home garden that represents renewal, seeds, or birth. You could use seeds you saved from your garden, a seed from a lemon or citrus growing in your neighborhood, or life nourishing compost.



## MAROR : BITTER HERB

The *Passover Seder* is not an easy story. It is full of sadness and tragedy. Some say the bitter herb represents the bitterness of slavery. It might also represent the pain and impact that must, by design, coincide with shedding oppressive forces. Perhaps we eat what is bitter to embody the pain that must come with struggle, as we fight for freedom. Consider finding something bitter in your neighborhood or home garden that can represent *maror* on your local *Seder* plate.

Some ideas include...

dandelion | wild radish | mugwort | horehound



What other bitter greens are growing on the land around you?

**FUN FACT:** Many potent medicines are bitter plants. Bitter tastes can often mean that the plant is good for moving digestion and settling tummies, thus the reason for drinking bitters after a meal.

## CHAROSET : FRUITS & NUTS

This item represents the mortar that the Hebrew people used to build Pharaoh's kingdom. *Charoet* is made many different ways by Jews of varying ancestry. We have provided a *charoet* recipe here for you to try that comes from the Persian tradition. If you hope to make a local *charoet*, consider making a fruit salad with all native & in season fruits you find!

That might include...

lemons | oranges | grapefruits | tangerines



What else do you see ready at this time of year to make a fruit salad with?

## BONUS : A BEAUTIFUL ORANGE

A newer tradition is to add an orange to the *Seder* plate to represent all marginalized peoples in our communities. This tradition has been popularized by **Susannah Heschel**, once a professor of Jewish studies at Oberlin College, who adapted the practice from a queer affirming feminist *Haggadah*. Many Jews have incorporated an orange to symbolize and embrace all those who are told they don't belong and to give them a seat of honor right next to the *karpas* and *z'roa*.

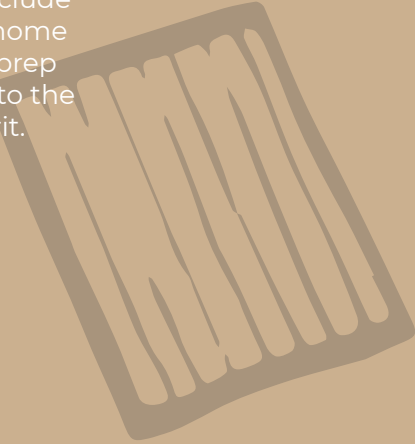


What act of radical inclusion can you incorporate into your *Seder* plate or at your table this year?

# HOMESTEAD PESACH

## M A T Z A H

An 18 minute race to the oven. Making *matzah* from scratch is a fun way to include everyone at home in the *Seder* prep and to get into the *Passover* spirit.



When we think of living, fermented foods, we usually think of cheese, miso, pickles, or yogurt. Bread is also a living food, made possible by the respiration of tiny living beings called yeast that float in dormancy everywhere all around us. The word for life in Hebrew, *chai*, is connected to the number 18, and so we strive to bake our *matzah* dough before it has been sitting out for 18 minutes, enough time for yeast to come alive in our dough and breathe, causing the *matzah* to rise.

Recipe adapted from...

*'Flatbreads & Flavors'*

By: Jeffrey Alfrod & Naomi Duguid

## RECIPE...

Makes 8 – 12  
*matzah* sheets

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups of flour
- 1 cup of water
- Pinch of salt

## INSTRUCTIONS

Pre-heat the oven to 475°. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.

When the oven has pre-heated, mix together the flour, water, and salt.

Knead briefly until the dough comes together into a smooth ball, three – five minutes. If the dough sticks to your hands or the counter, add flour, a small pinch at a time, until it is no longer sticky.

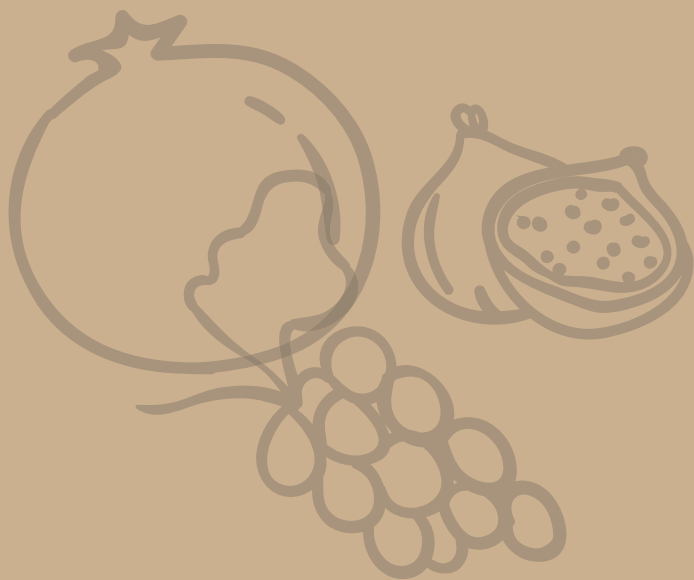
Cut the dough into egg-sized pieces and sprinkle the counter with flour. Working with one piece at a time, roll out the dough as thin as you can. Transfer to a baking sheet and prick it all over to prevent the dough from puffing in the oven.

Repeat until the baking sheet is full. The *matzah* won't expand, so you can place the sheets close together on the baking sheet. Bake until crisp, three – four minutes.

While the first batch is baking, prepare the second batch. Continue baking and rolling until all the *matzah* has been cooked — or until your 18 minutes are up!



# HOMESTEAD PESACH CONTINUED...



## P E R S I A N C H A R O S E T

Recipe adapted from...

The family of  
Asal Ehsanipour  
Urban Adamah Fellow  
Fall 2014

## R E C I P E . . .

### INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 apple, peeled, cored & cut into quarters
- 1 cup mixed nuts  
pistachios,  
walnuts &  
almonds
- 1/4 cup grape juice
- 3/4 cup dates,  
pitted
- 1/4 cup raisins
- 1/2 banana,  
mashed
- Optional: dash of  
pomegranate juice
- Dash of cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp ground  
cardamom
- 1/2 tsp ground  
ginger

## I N S T R U C T I O N S

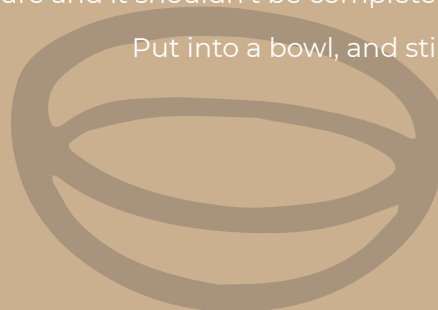
Shred apple on a box grater or in a food processor with the shredding attachment and set aside.

Pulse nuts in a food processor until just ground.

Add grape juice, dates and raisins and pulse until just combined.

Add banana and apple, wine and pomegranate juice, if using. Pulse some more until just combined; there should still be some texture and it shouldn't be completely smooth.

Put into a bowl, and stir in spices.



# MEDITATION & LANDING

Consider starting your *Seder* with a grounding exercise to arrive present and ready to receive.



Arrive at your seat, feel the weight of your body on the seat under you, notice where the weight of your body makes contact, feel the way your body is met with equal and opposite forces supporting you, linger there for a moment suspended in your seat and know that you are held...

## NOTICE YOUR BREATH

Notice the rise and fall of your chest, the feeling of air passing through your nostrils or lips, feel the exhale, let it fully empty, then slowly let your lungs fill up and linger there with full breath. Thank those vital organs that pump and purify. Take four slow breaths, taking time to notice the inhales and exhales, and share in the wonder of our lungs and hearts and veins...

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Now turn your attention to the tippy-top of your head. Notice the line, the chord that runs from the crown of your head down through you sinuses, past your throat and lungs and other vital organs, through your sacrum and allow that chord to leave your body and continue straight down through the floorboards and foundation, feel it break the earth's crust, past sand and clay and soil connecting you to the larger extended earth body. Feel as the chord travels with ease down down down through water tables, down down down through layers and layers of rock porous and permeable, traveling down down down to the lava at the earth's core. Here is where you are from.

Linger here for a moment, connected to the very center of the earth, gather what you will and when you are ready you can trace your steps back up through layers of rocks, through water tables, through sand, clay, and soil, back up through foundation and floor boards and finally back through your seat arriving at your body. Stay here and gather what you will. You may open your eyes when you are ready.



# LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

If you are living in the East Bay, where Urban Adamah is privileged to own and tend land, you are on the unceded territory of the Ohlone people. If you are not in the East Bay, do you know on whose ancestral land you reside?

This is an important question as we enter into the *Seder* because the *Passover* story that we are told to retell year in and year out, is not just so we can remember the story. The commandment says that “It should be as if you were a slave in Egypt,” that we don’t just retell but relive the disenfranchisement and the suffering that we know ancestrally to be true: to remember what it is like to not have a home to call your own, to not have sovereignty over your land or your life, and to have no liberties from which to source the integrity that all humans deserve.

This is the story of native people in the country now called the United States. Many native people called these lands Turtle Island. Their beloved land was stolen and a systematized and brutal genocide of their people by the settlers continues to play out on their lives to this day.



## Some discussion questions for your *Seder* table:

- How can remembering the systemic native genocide here on Turtle Island bring more meaning and reverence for your retelling and reliving of the *Passover Seder*?
- What does it mean for you to be living on someone else’s ancestral land and what relationship might you be called into as you embrace that knowing?
- How can or do you show up for native communities that are still here and struggling to find their own liberties and freedoms?
- What makes you feel connected to the land which you call home?



# MAGGID : AGRICULTURAL THEMES OF THE *PASSOVER* STORY



## PASSOVER MITZRAYIM INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE

The seminal biblical story of oppression is the story of *Passover*. Pharaoh, as oppressor, has been used as a metaphor by marginalized and oppressed people throughout the ages, including in the civil rights movement.

Egypt was in some ways the first civilization to transition to industrial agriculture. Egypt was able to utilize the annual flooding of the Nile river to set up aqueducts to distribute water far beyond the lands right on the river's banks. This made Egyptian farmers less reliant on rain and more able to grow more crops. We see this in the biblical story of Joseph, Jacob's son, who was sold into slavery in Egypt after being thrown into a pit by his brothers who were jealous of their father's love for him. We know from that story that Joseph was called before the Pharaoh to interpret his dreams. In Pharaoh's dream, Joseph understood that the Egyptians were going to be able to accumulate a great surplus of grains over a period of seven years and that they should store them because a famine was coming. This is also the reason the sons of Jacob also found themselves in Egypt, as they traveled south to find food during the famine. They ended up staying in Egypt and eventually becoming enslaved there after a few generations of good relations.

Industrial farming has always generated great wealth and abundance from great oppression and exploitation of bodies, land, and water. This is a story that should also be recounted on *Seder's* eve. We should be wondering, how is our industrial farming system enslaving people? How is it creating power dynamics and functioning as an oppressive force in the world? What might it look like to bring liberation and freedom to those subject to the shadow side of a system that deals in both abundance and exploitation? How can we become aware and take responsibility for the systems that feed and nourish, as they also create pain for many others?

### Some discussion questions for your *Seder* table:

- What is one issue in the food system you are aware of? Who bears the brunt of that issue and how does it affect them?
- How can you make choices with your purchases or with your time to support a shift in the system?
- What other forms of slavery and oppression do you see at play in our economic system, in the systems that extract resources and produce the goods we consume and use?
- How do you or might you in the future help make that system better?



# B'YAD CHAZAKA U'B'ZROA NETUYAH



In the *Passover* story as it is told in the *Torah* and *Haggadah*, we read that G-d helped take the Hebrew people out of the land of Egypt “*B’yad chazaka, u’b’zroa netuyah.*” These words are given in answer to the question, “How did G-d do the impossible and free the Hebrew people?”

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This phrase is translated as, “with a strong hand, and an outstretched arm,” but these words call to mind another meaning. The word *b’zroa* reminds us of the word for seed (*zera*). The word *netuyah* reminds us of the word for planted (*nata*). A different translation of this could be, “With a strong hand, and planted seeds”.

The first translation gives us a more militaristic and forceful nature that G-d enlists to do this miracle – and is referenced in other parts of the *Torah* to demonstrate a dominating power. The hidden translation of seeds and plants offers a different metaphor, one that invites cultivation, cooperation, and a life affirming strategy for how we get free.

## Some discussion questions for your Seder table:

- What might it mean for *Hashem* to support the Hebrew people with a strong hand, full of seeds?
- What were the seeds, what was being planted, who was tending to those plants, and how?
- What other differences do you understand between the two translations? How do they change the way you understand the *Passover* story?
- What strategies do you want to enlist to cultivate liberation in the world? How might strategy inform the kind of freedom that you create?

