

1st Annual Ladies' Seder

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March 30th, 2010

NYC



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Ladies' Haggadah:

Toast to a new tradition!

Afikomen: The middle matzah on the plate is broken in half. One half is put back with the stack; the other half is placed in a napkin (or special holder) and designated the Afikomen (the dessert) and put aside.

Why is this night different from all other nights?

1. On all other nights we eat either bread or matzah;
2. On all other nights we eat herbs or vegetables of any kind; on this night we eat bitter herbs
3. On all other nights we do not dip even once; on this night we dip twice
4. On all other nights we eat our meals in any manner; on this night we sit around the table together in a reclining position

Menu:

Matzah ball soup

Gefilte fish

Farfel with mushrooms and onions

Passover mac & cheese

Sweet potato kugel

Sauteed fresh string beans

Spinach souffle

Romaine salad with mandarin oranges, red onion, blue cheese, cranberries and walnuts (with balsamic vinaigrette)

Dessert: The Afikomen, Macaroons, Fruit salad, Halavah

The 10 Plagues:

It is a tradition to remove ten drops of wine from our cups as we recite the ten plagues as a remembrance that while the Jews were redeemed through these plagues, people did suffer.

1. Blood *Dam*
2. Frogs *Tze-phar-day-ah*
3. Vermin *Kee-nim*
4. Beasts *Arov*
5. Cattle Disease *De-ver*
6. Boils *She-heen*
7. Hail *Ba-rad*
8. Locusts *Ar-beh*
9. Darkness *Cho-shech*
10. Slaying of the first born *Ma-kat Bechorot*

On the Seder plate:

Susannah Heschel set the record straight about the origins of placing an orange on the seder plate, a practice that has become widespread in mainstream as well as women's seders. The orange, she felt, suggested the fruitfulness the community enjoys when women, gays and lesbians are accepted into it. Over the years, as Heschel's custom spread throughout the Jewish community, a myth developed around it. The story went that she had added the orange to the seder plate after a man shouted at her that a woman belongs on the bimah (pulpit) as much as an orange on a seder plate. The orange has come to represent the empowerment of Jewish women.

To many people the orange now stands for the inclusion of all who have been marginalized and whose stories and voices were written out of the haggadah. And now, like the orange on the seder plate, they reclaim those stories and voices and place them where they should be, at the center of the festival of freedom.

Maror: The bitter herbs. The maror reminds us of the bitter pain and suffering the Israelites went through as slaves to the Egyptians.

Eating the bitter herbs:

Blessed are You who has commanded us to eat bitter herbs.

Baruch Atah Ado-nai, Elo-heinu Melech Ha-olam, Asher Kid'shanu B'mitzvotav V'tzivanu Al Achilat Maror.

Matzah and Charoset Sandwich: Each person makes a sandwich using two pieces of matzah with maror and charoset, a mixture of nuts, fruit, wine, and spices that symbolizes the mortar used by the Jewish people to make bricks while enslaved in Egypt. This is done in commemoration of an enactment made by the great sage Hillel, who lived in the time of the Second Temple, to eat the Passover sacrifice together with matzah and maror in a sandwich.

Parsley: The parsley (or another vegetable such as celery) is dipped in salt water and then eaten. The parsley symbolizes both the humble origins of the Jewish people as well as the rebirth of spring, which is starting now. (In Eastern Europe, where green vegetables were not common, a potato was used). The salt water symbolizes the tears shed during slavery.

Pesach: The Passover sacrifice represented by the shank bone. The Pesach sacrifice reminds us that God passed over the Israelite houses when the tenth plague was visited upon the Egyptians after the Israelites offered the Passover sacrifice.

Matzah: The unleavened bread. The matzah represents the hurried Exodus from Egypt wherein the Israelites left so quickly that their dough did not have time to rise.

Blessing the Matzah:

Blessed are You who has commanded us to eat matzah.

Baruch Atah Ado-nai, Elo-heinu Melech Ha-olam, Asher Kid'shanu B'mitzvotav V'tzivanu Al Achilat matzah.