



# **The Join-In, Participate, Sing-Along Hagadah**

## **A Hagadah for Irreverent People At Different Levels of Hebrew Literacy**

**by**

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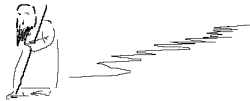
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*No part of this book may be copied in any form without our express written permission,  
but you may read and sing it to your heart's content!*

## Why this Hagadah is Different

This Hagadah is designed so that nobody needs to be left out. Like most families, our extended family includes people with varying levels of ability in Hebrew. For years, we used transliterated song-sheets; then we began to add English renderings that would fit the tune we use. Finally, we decided to go all the way and finish up the rest of the Hagadah, with Hebrew, English, and a transliteration.

An edition of Hagadot from around the world, used by Allen Wolf and Mandy Garver, also prompted this book. Some of these are reproductions of handwritten texts. If the ancients could copy their own, why (I wondered) can't we? This thought was hard for me to discard, because I come from a background that respects the amateur; and I sense a danger for our religion if we leave it up to the experts—following the texts they have edited, the interpretations they have developed, the ideas they have promulgated—instead of ourselves facing up to the challenge of our obligations as Jews. This is a homemade Hagadah; and perhaps you'll make your own, too.

## How To Use This Book

If you don't read Hebrew, read the transliteration—or you can read the translation. Many of the songs are rendered into Singlish™—English that you can sing to the same tune as the Hebrew; the Singlish parts are usually in bold type.

## Tunes

The tunes we sing are mostly those from Hillel Day School of Metropolitan Detroit, with other melodies from British tradition. If you can't imagine what tunes we're singing, and

you can't figure out how to fit the English to the tune, send for our cassette tape: you can find us at [www.singlishps.com](http://www.singlishps.com).

## Translation into English and Singlish

If you're not familiar with Singlish, take a look at *Dayenu* (*Enough, already!*), page 33, or the beginning and ending songs of *Bircat Hamazon* (pages 50 and 64). They are good examples of the method—fairly close translations in rhyme, which will fit the popular tune used for the Hebrew.

The English translation is deliberately colloquial; the words are generally as plain as I could make them. Lofty as are its themes, the story is told in plain words—ordinary people speaking in simple terms to ordinary people. Even the words of God are not beyond the comprehension of a simple mortal. What is surprising, and humbling to find, is that some of the Hebrew portions are so familiar—yet their meaning is still hard to grasp.

Year after year, I have not questioned my understanding of the Seder service, but the process of translating the text has increased my awareness both of its meaning, and of my shortcomings as a translator.

I am no scholar of Hebrew, so what value (apart from a few rhymes) can this translation have? I leave that question for you, dear reader, to answer. But if this book can in any way enhance your Seder gathering, it will have served its purpose.

## Even Less Sexist

The translation does not assume that all children are sons, or that all parents are fathers, or that God is male. Don't most of us think that God transcends human ideas of male and

## The Search For Chametz

*When night falls on the evening before Pesach, you search the house for chametz. You take a candle, a feather and a wooden spoon, search any part of the house where chametz might have been during the year and sweep up any crumbs you find. Before beginning the search, say this beracha:*

We bless you, Sovereign God	בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי	Baruch ata Adonai
Who rules both earth and heaven;	אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Eloheinu melech ha'olam,
You made us holy with your rules	אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו	asher kidshanu bemitzvotav
And told us, "Search for leaven!"	וְצִוָּנוּ עַל בְּעוֹר חֲמֵץ	vetzivanu al bi'ur chametz.

*After the search, gather up any chametz you have found and place it on the table where you're still eating. Then say this Aramaic formula.*

All chametz and all leaven	כָּל חֲמִירָא וְחַמְיָא	Kol chamira vachamiya
Remaining in my trust	דְּאִכָּא בְּרִשְׁחֻתִי	de'ika virshuti,
I saw it not, nor took it out;	דְּלָא חֲמִיתָהּ וְדְלָא בְּעָרְתָהּ	dela chamitei udela vi'artei,
I didn't know it was about	וְדְלָא יָדַעְנָא לֵיהּ	udela yada'na lei,
It's now as if it never was:	לְבִטְל וְלַהּוּי הֶפְקֵר	livtel velehevei hefker,
It's ownerless, like dust.	כְּעַפְרָא דְאַרְעָא	ke'afrah de'ar'ah.

## Hafsakah

*About an hour before noon—check your Jewish calendar for the correct time each year—you should stop eating chametz. You should also stay away from matzah, so in the evening you'll eat your matzah with relish (har, har). At this time, you take all the leftover chametz and burn it—some say you can flush it down the toilet instead. Then you say this Aramaic formula.*

All chametz and all leaven	כָּל חֲמִירָא וְחַמְיָא	Kol chamira vachamiya
Remaining in my trust	דְּאִכָּא בְּרִשְׁחֻתִי	de'ika virshuti,
Whether or not I saw it about,	דְּחֻזְתָּהּ וְדְלָא חֻזְתָּהּ	dachazitei udela chazitei,
Whether or not I threw it out	דְּחֲמִיתָהּ וְדְלָא חֲמִיתָהּ	dachamitei udla chamitei,
It's now as if it never was:	דְּבְעָרְתָהּ וְדְלָא בְּעָרְתָהּ	devi'artei udela vi'artei,
It's ownerless, like dust.	לְבִטְל וְלַהּוּי הֶפְקֵר	livtel velehevei hefker,
	כְּעַפְרָא דְאַרְעָא	ke'afrah de'ar'ah.

## Dayenu (Enough, already!)<sup>1</sup>

Had God saved us, saved us, saved us, Saved us from the nasty 'Gyptians Without giving them conniptions, <i>Dayenu</i>	אֱלֹהֵינוּ הוֹצִיאָנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם וְלֹא עָשָׂה בָהֶם שְׁפָטִים דַּיְנוּ	Illu hotzi'anu miMitzrayim Velo asah vahem shefatim (2) Dayenu
Had God given those Egyptians Unforgettable conniptions, Without smashing all their idols, <i>Dayenu</i>	אֱלֹהֵינוּ עָשָׂה בָהֶם שְׁפָטִים וְלֹא עָשָׂה דִין בְּאֱלֹהֵיהֶם דַּיְנוּ	Illu asah vahem shefatim Velo asah din beloheihem (2) Dayenu
Had God smashed up all their idols— Pulverized those gal- and guy-dolls —Without killing all their first-born, <i>Dayenu</i>	אֱלֹהֵינוּ עָשָׂה דִין בְּאֱלֹהֵיהֶם וְלֹא הָרַג בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם דַּיְנוּ	Illu asah din beloheihem Velo harag bechoreihem (2) Dayenu
Had God killed all their first-born (Made families high and low forlorn) But hadn't given us their riches, <i>Dayenu</i>	אֱלֹהֵינוּ הָרַג בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם וְלֹא נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת-מָמוֹנָם דַּיְנוּ	Illu harag bechoreihem Velo natan lanu et mamonom (2) Dayenu
Had God given us their riches— The goods were Pharaoh's; now they're Mitch's— But hadn't split the sea in two, <i>Dayenu</i>	אֱלֹהֵינוּ נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת-מָמוֹנָם וְלֹא קָרַע לָנוּ אֶת-הַיָּם דַּיְנוּ	Illu natan lanu et mamonom Velo kara lanu et hayam (2) Dayenu

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<sup>1</sup> “Dayenu” means “It would have been enough for us,” or “We couldn’t have asked for more.” Let’s face it, though: we would probably have perished unless we had enjoyed every one of the gracious miracles done for us, so in fact it wouldn’t have been enough. To convey the idea that we would have been content but we would not have survived, you might translate it, “We’d have died content.” You could almost fit this to the tune. Otherwise, you could just say, Dayenu!

## Pesach, Matzah, and Maror פֶּסַח מַצָּה וּמְרוֹר

Now that we have retold the Pesach story, have we done our duty? By no means!

Rabbi Gamliel used to say,  
Anyone who doesn't speak  
about these three things  
on Pesach  
has not fulfilled his duty.

And these are the three:  
the Passover sacrifice, matzah, and  
maror.

רַבִּין גַּמְלִיאֵל הָיָה אוֹמֵר  
כָּל-שֵׁלֹא אָמַר  
שְׁלוֹשָׁה דְבָרִים אֵלוּ  
בַּפֶּסַח  
לֹא יֵצֵא יָדָיו חוֹבָתוֹ  
וְאֵלוּ הֵן  
פֶּסַח מַצָּה וּמְרוֹר

Raban Gamliel haya omer,  
kol shelo amar  
sheloshah devarim elu  
baPesach  
lo yatza yedei chovato.  
Ve'elu hen:  
Pesach, matzah, umaror.

..... *During the next passage, don't point at the bone<sup>1</sup> on the Seder plate* .....

The Passover sacrifice  
which our ancestors used to eat  
in the time when the Temple  
was standing—  
what was it for?  
Because [God] passed over—  
the Holy, Blessed One—  
the houses of our ancestors in Egypt  
[when the Angel of Death killed the  
Egyptians' first-born].

פֶּסַח  
שֶׁהָיוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אוֹכְלִים  
בְּזִמַּן שֶׁבֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ  
הָיָה קַיָּם  
עַל-שׁוּם מָה?  
עַל-שׁוּם שֶׁפֶּסַח  
הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא  
עַל-בֵּתֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם

Pesach  
shehayu avoteinu ochlim  
bizman shebeit hamikdash  
haya kayam—  
al shum mah?  
al shum shepasach  
haKadosh baruch hu  
al batei avoteinu beMitzrayim.

<sup>1</sup> “But,” you say, “surely we should point at the bone; it represents the Passover sacrifice, and that’s what we’re talking about.” Even so, we don’t point at the bone. Why not? Since the Temple exists no more, we cannot offer sacrifices, and we carefully avoid any gesture that might make the bone seem like a sacrifice. Rather than concentrating on this outward symbol—a bone on a plate—we can direct our attention inward, to our spiritual understanding of the meaning of the sacrifice, what we gained with the Temple and what we lost at its destruction.