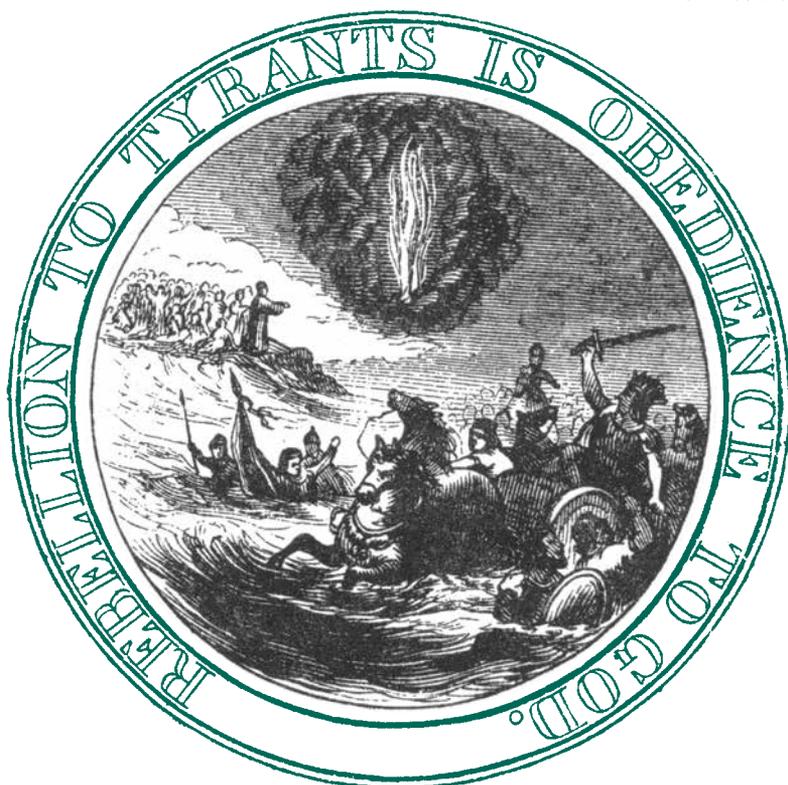


Four Cups of Freedom

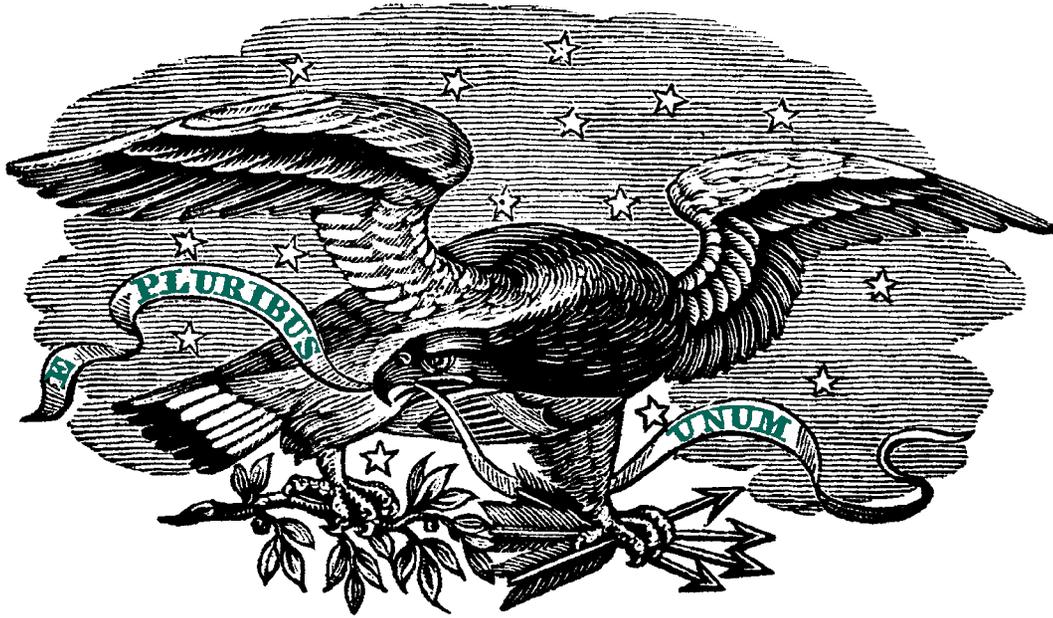
5775/2015



A Haggadah Supplement
On the Occasion of the 150th Anniversary
of the End of the American Civil War

Park Avenue Synagogue קול אגודת ישראל

Hag Pesah sameah!



You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Me.

Exodus 19:4

This year Pesah coincides with the sesquicentennial of the end of the American Civil War. As we turn our attention to retelling ancient Israel's journey to freedom, we are struck by how the narrative that has sustained the Jewish people for millennia resonates in the story of our country.

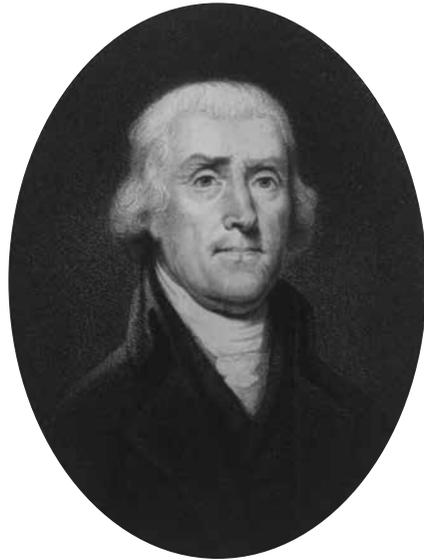
The Biblical struggle for freedom was a touchstone in the founding of America, in African-American spirituals, in the Civil Rights movement of the twentieth century, and beyond. In 1776 Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson proposed the image on the cover of this supplement for the Great Seal of United States. It shows Moses leading the Israelites in celebration as the waters of the Red Sea engulf the Egyptians. As citizens of a nation founded on the principle of freedom for all, we find the Passover story in both our Jewish and American narratives: the journey from slavery to freedom, from oppression to redemption, from the wilderness to nationhood. The story of Passover is a bridge between our identities as Jews and as Americans.

The word Haggadah literally means "telling." As you tell the story of Passover at your Seder, we invite you to use this Haggadah companion to simultaneously tell the story of America. Following the order of the Seder, this supplement provides texts from American history to read and discuss at specific points in the Haggadah. Use just one or use them all! We hope that these selections will bring lively discussion and debate to your Seder, allowing you to experience the story of Passover in a new way.

Rabbi Elliot J. Cosgrove
Leah Loeterman, Rabbinic Intern

To accompany *Yahatz*

(breaking the middle matzah)



**Thomas Jefferson, *Declaration of Independence*
July 4, 1776**

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they

are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. — Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States.

Commentary

During the *Yahatz* portion of the Seder, we break the middle matzah in half and put away one half to eat later as the afikoman. In doing so, we are reminded that a journey to freedom also involves a break with the past. Like Moses before him, Jefferson understood that the founding of our nation was both the fulfillment of an ideal and a painful separation from Britain. Breaks are not always clean, though they may be necessary. Breaking takes courage.

For all Jefferson's idealism, we must confront the fact that he himself was a slave owner. Despite articulating a vision of the "consent of the governed," he harbored a blind spot to that very vision. We continue to wrestle with this inner contradiction of our founding fathers.

Questions for Discussion

- Which is harder for a leader to do: provide a vision for the future or declare a break with the past?
- How do you reconcile the inherent contradiction upon which our country was founded: that America is to be a nation of free people, yet some of its founders owned slaves?

To accompany *Mah Nishtanah*

(Four Questions)



**Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Seneca Falls Convention
July 19, 1848**

But we are assembled to protest against a form of government existing without the consent of the governed – to declare our right to be free as man is free, to be represented in the government which we are taxed to support, to have such is graceful laws as give man the power to chastise and imprison his wife, to take the wages which she earns, the property which she inherits, and, in case of separation, the children of her love; laws which make her the mere dependent on his bounty. It is to protest against such unjust laws as these that we are assembled today, and to have them, if possible, forever erased from our statute books, deeming them a shame and a disgrace to a Christian republic in the nineteenth century. We have met to uplift woman’s fallen divinity upon an even pedestal with man’s. And, strange as it may seem to many, we now demand our right to vote according to the declaration of the government under which we live.

This right no one pretends to deny. We need not prove ourselves equal to Daniel Webster to enjoy this privilege, for the ignorant Irishman in the ditch has all the civil rights he has. We need not prove our muscular power equal to this same Irishman to enjoy this privilege, for the most tiny, weak, ill-shaped stripling of twenty-one has all the civil rights of the Irishman. We have no objection to discuss the question of equality, for we feel that the weight of argument lies wholly with us, but we wish the question of equality kept distinct from the question of rights, for the proof of the one does not determine the truth of the other. All white men in this country have the same rights, however they may differ in mind, body, or estate.

Commentary

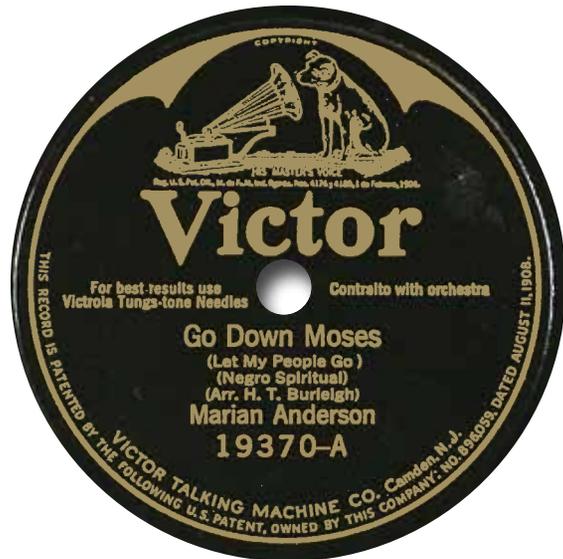
Seneca Falls was America’s first women’s rights convention, at which Stanton made an impassioned case for women’s suffrage. For Stanton, the question of rights is the foundational question from which all others follow. Stanton challenges the existing order, questioning the fact that women cannot enjoy the same rights that men enjoy in America, the country that champions freedom and “the consent of the governed.” She implores her audience and the larger public to keep “the question of equality ... distinct from the question of rights, for the proof of the one does not determine the truth of the other.” Stanton adopts the inclusive language of the Declaration of Independence to make the case for women’s right to vote. Stanton’s battle was eventually won after her lifetime, with the adoption of the 19th Amendment in 1920.

Questions for Discussion

- What are the explicit and the hidden ways by which people are disenfranchised? Who remains disenfranchised today?
- What tasks remain towards fulfilling Stanton’s vision of women’s equality?

To be sung with *Avadim Hayinu*

(We Were Slaves)



Go Down Moses

*When Israel was in Egypt's land,
Let my people go,
Oppressed so hard they could not stand,
Let my people go.
Go down, Moses,
Way down in Egypt's land,
Tell old Pharaoh,
Let my people go.*

Commentary

“Go Down, Moses” was an African-American slaves’ song, or spiritual, popular during the 1800s. Slaves would often use spirituals as ways to remember and communicate, as well as to provide a rhythm for repetitive manual work. “Go Down, Moses” was one of the spirituals that Harriet Tubman used as a code in the Underground Railroad with slaves fleeing Maryland, to let them know that there was danger and it was not safe to come out.

We spend much of the Passover Seder fulfilling the mitzvah of retelling the story of the Israelites’ exodus from Egypt, the journey from slavery to freedom, often through songs such as *Avadim Hayinu*, which similarly tells the story of the Israelites’ being slaves in Egypt under Pharaoh.

Although Moses figures prominently in this particular spiritual, he is never mentioned by name in the Haggadah itself, despite being the hero and leader of the story. We are to remember that it was God who performed the miracles in Egypt, at the banks of the Red Sea, and in the wilderness; it was God who delivered us from slavery to freedom, not a human.

Questions for Discussion

- Passover calls on us to empathize with the suffering of others. How can we prioritize our own communal needs while remaining responsive to the injustices of the world at large?
- Is it justified to keep Moses’ name out of the Haggadah? What lessons of leadership can we learn from this striking omission?

To accompany the Second of the Four Children



Frederick Douglass, “The Meaning of July Fourth for the Negro” July 5, 1852

Fellow-citizens, pardon me, allow me to ask, why am I called upon to speak here to-day? What have I, or those I represent, to do with your national independence? Are the great principles of political freedom and of natural justice, embodied in that Declaration of Independence, extended to us? I am not included within the pale of this glorious anniversary! Your high independence only reveals the immeasurable distance between us. The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence, bequeathed by your fathers, is shared by you, not by me. The sunlight that brought light and healing to you, has brought stripes and death to me. This Fourth July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn. To drag a man in fetters into the grand illuminated temple of liberty, and call upon him to join you in joyous anthems, were inhuman mockery and sacrilegious irony. Do you mean, citizens, to mock me, by asking me to speak to-day? If so, there is a

parallel to your conduct. And let me warn you that it is dangerous to copy the example of a nation whose crimes, towering up to heaven, were thrown down by the breath of the Almighty, burying that nation in irrevocable ruin!

Fellow-citizens, above your national, tumultuous joy, I hear the mournful wail of millions! whose chains, heavy and grievous yesterday, are, to-day, rendered more intolerable by the jubilee shouts that reach them. If I do forget, if I do not faithfully remember those bleeding children of sorrow this day, “may my right hand forget her cunning, and may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!” To forget them, to pass lightly over their wrongs, and to chime in with the popular theme, would be treason most scandalous and shocking, and would make me a reproach before God and the world.... I do not hesitate to declare, with all my soul, that the character and conduct of this nation never looked blacker to me than on this 4th of July!

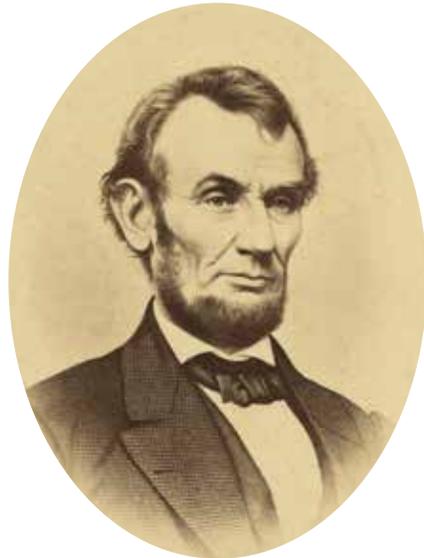
Commentary

The Haggadah harshly rebukes the “wicked” child for removing himself from the central narrative of our people when he asks “What is this service to *you*?” Douglass uses similar language in this speech, proclaiming “This Fourth of July is yours, not mine.” Throughout the speech, Douglass uses almost exclusively “you” language, thereby removing himself – and by extension all African-Americans – from the celebration of the holiday devoted to the birth of the nation. Douglass feels compelled to remove himself from the holiday celebrations because he cannot celebrate a nation that claims to stand for freedom, yet still allows slavery and brutal oppression of his people.

Questions for Discussion

- Is “wicked” the right name for this child? “Rebellious?” What would you call this child?
- The second child feels left out of the Passover celebration, and Douglass feels on the outside of the July 4th celebration. Who else in our society is left out?

To accompany the Ten Plagues



President Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address March 4, 1865

Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with or even before the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces, but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered. That of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offenses; for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having

continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said "the judgements of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

Commentary

The enduring poetry of Lincoln's Second Inaugural is his ability to acknowledge both sides of the conflict. Lincoln, the leader of the North, recognizes the blood and sacrifices made by people of both North and South. So too, as we recall the Ten Plagues, we celebrate God's wondrous miracles, but also spill out a drop of wine from our cups for every plague recited – an acknowledgement of loss of life on the other side. The Egyptians too were God's creatures.

Questions for Discussion

- Pick a controversial social issue about which you are passionate. Can you provide a reasoned defense of the opposing side?
- The Egyptians brutally oppressed the Israelites in Egypt. Should we even acknowledge that they lost their lives?

To be read after singing *Dayenu*



Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “I Have a Dream” August 28, 1963

There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, “When will you be satisfied?” We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro’s basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their self-hood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating: “For Whites Only.” We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until “justice rolls down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream.”

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. And some of you have come from areas where your quest – quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive. Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed.

Commentary

Dayenu is one of the most popular and lively songs at the Seder. *Dayenu! It would have been enough!* We recognize the magnitude of God’s work, and we would have been grateful and satisfied with each step alone. King, however, calls on us to “never to be satisfied” as long as injustice still exists. Both King’s words and the words of *Dayenu* are essential texts, but reflect very different religious and social-political sensibilities.

Questions for Discussion

- Do you think King would have ever said “*Dayenu*”? In what circumstance?
- In our contemporary marches to freedom, when should we say “*Dayenu*,” or should we “never be satisfied”? Why?

To accompany *B'khol Dor Va-dor*

(In Every Generation)



President Abraham Lincoln, “Gettysburg Address” November 19, 1863

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who

fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Commentary

The Haggadah instructs us: *B'khol dor va-dor hayav adam lir'ot et atzmo k'ilu hu yatza mi-mitzrayim*. In every generation, we are all obligated to see ourselves as though we personally emerged from Egypt and are thus charged to continue the work of past generations. Likewise, Lincoln calls on his listeners to continue their work so that “that these dead shall not die in vain.” In every generation, we must commit ourselves to fulfill the legacies of those who came before.

Questions for Discussion

- Which is better: to choose your own causes or to adopt those of prior generations? What causes are you committed to that reflect the values and commitments of a past generation?
- Do you think Lincoln would understand the present civil rights struggles as a continuation of the “unfinished work” of those who gave their lives at Gettysburg? Do you?

To be read before opening the door for *Eliyahu HaNavi*, Elijah the Prophet



Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, “The Religious Basis of Equality of Opportunity: the Segregation of God” 1963

At the first conference on religion and race, the main participants were Pharaoh and Moses. Moses’ words were: “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, let My people go that they may celebrate a feast to Me.” While Pharaoh retorted: “Who is the Lord, that I should heed this voice and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, and moreover I will not let Israel go.”

The outcome of that summit meeting has not come to an end. Pharaoh is not ready to capitulate. The exodus began, but is far from having been completed. In fact, it was easier for the children of Israel to cross the Red Sea than for a Negro to cross certain university campuses. ...

What we must do is to set an example, not merely to acknowledge the

Negro but to welcome him, not grudgingly but joyously, to take delight in enabling him to enjoy what is due to him. We are all *Pharaohs* or *slaves of Pharaohs*. It is sad to be a slave of Pharaoh. *It is horrible to be a Pharaoh.*

Daily we should take account and ask: What have I done today *to alleviate the anguish, to mitigate the evil, to prevent humiliation?*

Let there be a grain of prophet in every man!

Commentary

As we open the door for Elijah, we invite the prophetic voice into our home. Heschel, a prophet in his day, hopes for “a grain of a prophet in every man.” Having lost most of his family in the Holocaust, Heschel spoke out against the injustices of his time. Heschel did not wait for a prophet, nor did he believe prophecy was the possession of any one individual. Rather, he wanted everyone to do the sacred work of repair and justice and to join the struggle for freedom.

Questions for Discussion

- Complete your own version of Heschel’s sentence: “It was easier for the children of Israel to cross the Red Sea than for ...”
- Answer Heschel’s question: “What have I done today *to alleviate the anguish, to mitigate the evil, to prevent humiliation?*”

To accompany *Hallel*



**President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, “Four Freedoms” State of the Union Address
January 6, 1941**

In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms. The first is freedom of speech and expression—everywhere in the world. The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world. The third is freedom from want—which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants everywhere in the world. The fourth is freedom from fear—which, translated into world terms, means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor—anywhere in the world. That is no vision of a distant millennium. It is a definite basis for a kind of world

attainable in our own time and generation. ... The world order which we seek is the cooperation of free countries, working together in a friendly, civilized society. This nation has placed its destiny in the hands and heads and hearts of its millions of free men and women; and its faith in freedom under the guidance of God. Freedom means the supremacy of human rights everywhere. Our support goes to those who struggle to gain those rights or keep them. Our strength is our unity of purpose. To that high concept there can be no end save victory.

Commentary

With this address, Roosevelt first announced his decision to become involved in World War II, and to help the United States’ allies already engaged in the war. His “Four Freedoms” were eventually incorporated into the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The number four is repeated throughout the Haggadah: four cups of wine, four children, four questions. Each one of the four in these categories carries its own significance, but each one only works within the complete structure of the whole. Each cup of wine represents a redemptive act of freedom that God performed for the Israelites (Exodus 6:6-7). Roosevelt’s “Four Freedoms” are significant individually; together they create a basic code of human rights and give expression to a redemptive vision for humankind.

Questions for Discussion

- Why do you think Roosevelt chose these four particular freedoms?
- If you had to make a new list of “four freedoms,” what would they be? What would you add to or replace on Roosevelt’s list?

To be read at *Nirtzah*, the conclusion of the Seder



President Barack Obama, Speech in Selma, Alabama on the 50th Anniversary of the March from Selma to Montgomery March 7, 2015

Fifty years from Bloody Sunday, our march is not yet finished. But we are getting closer. Two hundred and thirty-nine years after this nation's founding, our union is not yet perfect. But we are getting closer. Our job's easier because somebody already got us through that first mile. Somebody already got us over that bridge. When it feels the road's too hard, when the torch we've been passed feels too heavy, we will remember these early travelers, and draw strength from their example, and hold firmly the words of the prophet Isaiah: "Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not be faint."

We honor those who walked so we could run. We must run so our children soar. And we will not grow weary. For we believe in the power of an awesome God, and we believe in this country's sacred promise. May He bless those warriors of justice no longer with us, and bless the United States of America.

Commentary

The conclusion of the Seder is *Nirtzah*, in which we proclaim *L'shanah ha-ba'ah birushalayim!* Next year in Jerusalem! Our Seder ends on a note of hope: just as our ancestors survived generations of slavery in Egypt and were freed, so too we look forward to freedom, and the ultimate redemption. However, there is an internal paradox as we end the Seder: *Nirtzah* signals the end of the seder, but "next year in Jerusalem" implies that there is something more to strive for, something larger to work for, an end goal that has not yet been attained.

In his remarks in Selma recently, Obama reflected on the struggles for freedom in America, and similarly looked toward hope and toward the future as we partner with those who came before: "our march is not yet finished. But we are getting closer." We are one step closer to Jerusalem, *L'shanah ha-ba'ah*, next year, we will be there!

Questions for Discussion

- Is the march for freedom ever complete? Do we ever reach the Promised Land?
- Go around the table: Make a concrete commitment that you can return to next year to take the next step in bettering God's world.



Park Avenue Synagogue ק"ק אנדרת ישׂרים