

JUNETEENTH SEDER HAGGADAH

Jews For Racial & Economic Justice, 2018



Candlelighting: Starting the Program

Ritual: Light candles, using one of these blessings:

FEMININE LANGUAGE

ברוכה את יי אלהינו מלכת העולם אשר
קדשתנו במצותיה וצונו להדליק נר של יום טוב.

*Brucha at Yah, Shekhina, eloheinu malkat
ha'olam, asher kidashtanu b'mitzvotaiha,
v'tzivatanu l'hadlik ner shel yom tov.*

Blessed are you, Shekhina, Queen of the universe, who has made us holy through her commandments and commands us to light the candles of this holiday

TRADITIONAL

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו רוח (מלך) העולם אשר קדשנו
במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של יום טוב.

*Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu ruach (me-
lekh) ha'olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav
v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel yom tov.*

Blessed are you, God, Spirit (Sovereign) of the universe, who has made us holy through the commandments, and has commanded us to light the candles of this holiday.

HUMANIST

נברך את האור כאשר נקבץ בצותא להדליק נרות
של יום טוב. באור החרות נברך את החיים.

*N'varech et ha'or kasher nikavatz b'tzavta l'hadlik neivot shel yom tov. B'or ha'cherut
n'varech et ha'chayyim.*

Let us celebrate the light as we gather together to kindle the festival candles. With the light of liberation, let us celebrate life.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהִחַיְנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעְנוּ לָזֶמֶן הַזֶּה
Barukh atah adonai eloheynu melek ha'olam shehekheyanu, v'kiyimanu, v'higiyanu lazman hazeh.

בְּרוּכָה אַתְּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהִחַיְתָנוּ וְקִיַּמְתָנוּ וְהִגִּיעְתָנוּ לָזֶמֶן הַזֶּה
B'rukha at ya eloheinu ruakh haolam shehekheyatnu v'kiyimatnu v'higiyatnu lazman hazeh.

You are Blessed, Our God, Spirit of the World, who has kept us in life and sustained us, enabling us to reach this season.

INTRODUCTION

Once we lived in Nigeria, Senegal, Benin, Mali, and Ghana. We gather today to remember and celebrate. Juneteenth, like Passover, presents us the opportunity to re-enact and remember the moment our people were in transition. We memorialize the ending of chattel slavery in the way we remember our liberation from Egypt because ritual is a form of collective embodied memory. We embody our experiences as both slaves and people on a journey towards liberation. We come together carrying with us the ancient tools and technology of the Jews (passover, rituals, and remembering) while lovingly honoring the fierce spiritual soul of our Christian and secular family and ancestors who created and sustain the holiday of Juneteenth.



Milwaukee Juneteenth Parade, 2016



*Juneteenth celebration band, June 19, 1900.
Photo by Grace Murray Stephenson*

Blessings For the Ancestors

The sea swallows. Our name; our clothing; our language — that is all we were allowed to take out of Egypt. It is exactly what we lost when we were taken from Africa. The sea swallowed our ancestor's names and languages the same way it swallowed the Egyptian armies. We remember what we have lost.

May we be in right relation with all beings, including the earth.

How far back do our memories stretch? We are called in this moment to also remember the time before slavery when we were free people — the children of Jacob, natives to the continent of Africa in both stories. Enslavement was not our natural condition as we were free people longer than we were ever slaves. Our story did not start in slavery. We were Igbo and Yoruba and Wolof and Israelites... We were a free people before we were enslaved, and we will be a free people again. Liberation lies in the future, but it is also in our past. Slavery was but one experience in the vast history of our peoples.

May we always retain ancestral memory.

Celebration is also asked of us tonight. Our joy is bound to that of our ancestors, and it is the fuel that feeds our collective future. We bring into this space our ancestors who finally got word of Lincoln's decree, after slaving two and a half years longer than the law allowed. We are here to recreate their resilience and self-love. *Our tradition tells us: "B'chol dor vador chayav adam lirot et atzmo k'ilu hu yatza mimitzrayim. In every generation, each person must see themselves as if they had come out of Mitzrayim." As though we ourselves are coming into liberation during this time. It is our duty to act as the Royalty we really are, as a profound act of resistance and radical choice.*

May we continue to create liberation every day in every way.

Freedom

To celebrate and settle into our joy and our freedom is an act of profound bravery given the incredible vulnerability of Black life in this country. What did it mean for us to be “free” in Texas in 1865? What did it mean for Eric Garner in Staten Island, New York in 2014? For Shantel Davis, who was killed by the NYPD on this date, in 2012? For Saheed Vassell, killed by the NYPD this spring on the ninth night of Pesach? What did freedom mean for Kalief Browder while he was in solitary confinement at Rikers Island — up the river, just out of sight — because he couldn’t afford bail?

Black freedom is a tenuous thing — beautiful and powerful, strong and vulnerable. It can be snatched away in a moment. It is sustained by continual acts of resilience, resistance, and care. *Liberation is not something that once happened to us, in the past. It is something that must be recreated again and again, through action and imagination. Freedom is something we make, together.*

THE FIRST CUP

Raise glass; recite:

Behold this cup of wine. Assata Shakur taught us: It is our duty to fight for our freedom

We raise this first glass to her, to our continued fight, and to our ancestors who believed in collective freedom & liberation: Fred Hampton, Harriet Tubman, Toussaint L’Ouverture, Frederick Douglass, Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera.

Say one of these blessings:	
FEMININE LANGUAGE	TRADITIONAL
ברוכה אתה יי אלהינו מלכת העולם בורא פרי הגפן.	ברוך אתה יי אלהינו רוח (מלך) העולם בורא פרי הגפן.
<i>Brucha at Yah, Shekhina, eloheinu malkat ha'olam bora p'ri hagafen.</i>	<i>Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu ruach (m-lekh) ha'olam borei p'ri hagafen.</i>
Blessed are you, Shekhinah, Queen of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.	Blessed are You God, Spirit (Sovereign) of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.
HUMANIST	
פרי הגפן: אתו נשתה "לחיים".	
<i>P'ri hagafen, ito nishteh, "l'chayim!"</i> The fruit of the vine, with it let us drink “to life!”	

Our Seder Plate

Red foods are customary for Juneteenth, crimson being a symbol of ingenuity and resilience in bondage. Hibiscus tea, red soda, hot sauce, hot links, watermelon, red velvet cake, strawberry pie. We offer this year a Juneteenth seder plate bringing together the legacies of two periods of enslavement to remember that although our ancestors were once slaves we have fought for our liberation and taken many steps toward freedom. This seder plate uses the food tradition of Juneteenth and the American South to construct an altar of abundance for all to partake.

Our Plate

Z'roa: זרוע — Beets

Karpas: כרפס — Okra

Beitzah: ביצה — Black eyed peas/Eggs boiled in hibiscus tea

Maror: מרור — Hot red pepper

Charoset: חרוסת — Baked sweet potato

Lehem: לחם — Tea cakes or cornbread

Cup: כוס — Red soda/hibiscus tea

Elijah & Miriam's Bowl

In many pan-African traditions, it is customary to honor the ancestors. Today we ask the ancestors permission to continue our gathering through the offering of our hibiscus tea (sorrel or bissap) into Elijah and Miriam's Bowl. May our ancestors sustain us for the long haul and into the future.

*Pour Second Cup:
Uncover the Bread;*

MAGGID

Maggid, by Marge Piercy

The courage to let go of the door, the handle.
The courage to shed the familiar walls whose very
stains and leaks are comfortable as the little moles
of the upper arm; stains that recall a feast,
a child's naughtiness, a loud blattering storm
that slapped the roof hard, pouring through.

The courage to abandon the graves dug into the hill,
the small bones of children and the brittle bones
of the old whose marrow hunger had stolen;
the courage to desert the tree planted and only
begun to bear; the riverside where promises were
shaped; the street where their empty pots were broken.

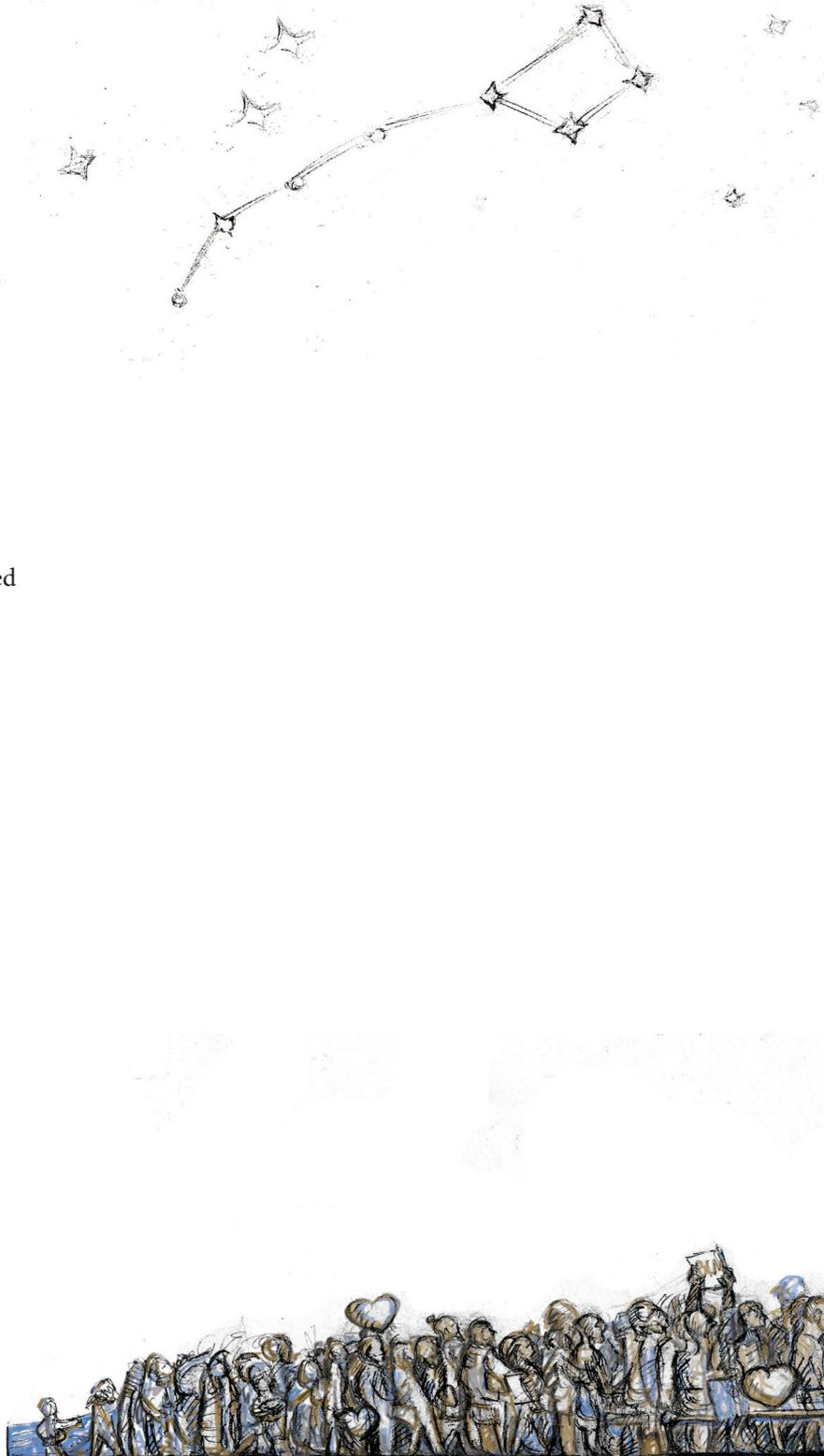
The courage to leave the place whose language you learned
as early as your own, whose customs however dan-
gerous or demeaning, bind you like a halter
you have learned to pull inside, to move your load;
the land fertile with the blood spilled on it;
the roads mapped and annotated for survival.

The courage to walk out of the pain that is known
into the pain that cannot be imagined,
mapless, walking into the wilderness, going
barefoot with a canteen into the desert;
stuffed in the stinking hold of a rotting ship
sailing off the map into dragons' mouths,

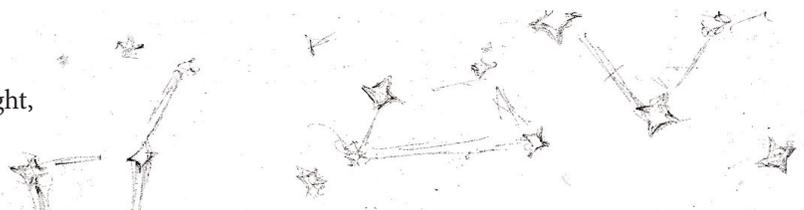
Cathay, India, Siberia, goldenh medina
leaving bodies by the way like abandoned treasure.
So they walked out of Egypt.

So they bribed their way
out of Russia under loads of straw; so they steamed
out of the bloody smoking charnelhouse of Europe
on overloaded freighters forbidden all ports—

out of pain into death or freedom or a different
painful dignity, into squalor and politics.
We Jews are all born of wanderers, with shoes
under our pillows and a memory of blood that is ours
raining down. We honor only those Jews who changed
tonight, those who chose the desert over bondage,



who walked into the strange and became strangers and gave birth to children who could look down on them standing on their shoulders for having been slaves. We honor those who let go of everything but freedom, who ran, who revolted, who fought, who became other by saving themselves.



Winning

At every point in our history, we have used our imaginations to light a path to survival. We imagine freedom even when we have never experienced it — even after generations in bondage. We imagine safety even when it is an alien concept. We imagine solidarity even when we struggle to find evidence of it. This political moment is no different. The darkness of this administration just requires us to confront the truth more honestly, admit that our old strategies weren't working, and step up with bolder visions. Author and activist adrienne maree brown writes:

“...perhaps the number one privilege of being an American is our narrative. we have a story that covers all of our wretched behavior, that makes us exceptional regardless of what we do. we've gotten lost in that story... that we are a benevolent, caring nation that really loves all of our differences, our democracy, our global nature. that we were almost there, to that place where we can know we are better than this.

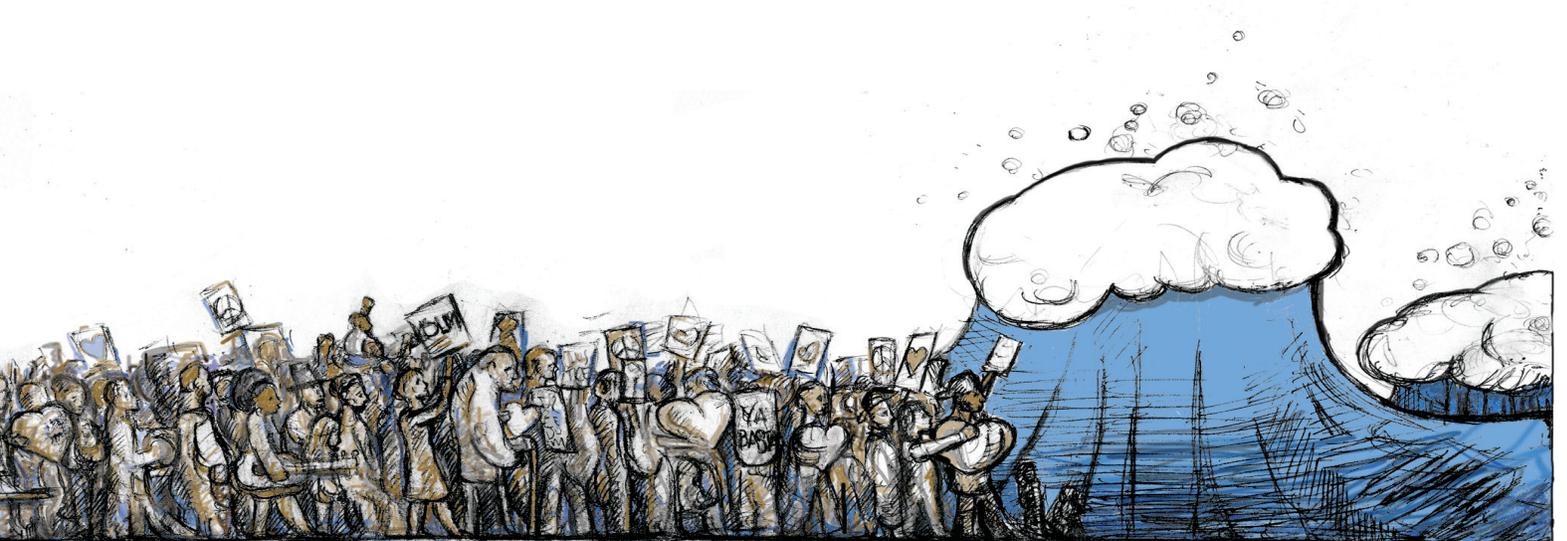
“as a nation we have quietly turned away from any numbers that seemed to make a counter argument about what we were up to — the suicide rates of trans people, the number of bodies along our southern border ... the percentage of black people in prisons, the pace at which people of color are murdered by the state, the rising heat and ocean levels during this golden age of global warming. and so much more.

“what feels new is the unveiling; the heaviness is the increasing weight of the truth becoming undeniable as more people believe it.

“right now, more and more of the truth of this country at this time is visible, left naked, made obvious. not only are each of us right about the particular crisis we have been holding, but others coming up out of their silos are right too — and the intersecting crises are massive.

“now that it is plain to see that we are up against white supremacists whose plan for survival seems to be eliminating the majority of us, we no longer have the luxury of pretending we can change their minds with logic, or survive the pendulum swing of universal survival issues made partisan.

“we have to be willing to engage in radical resistance and radical futuring.”



Ma Nishtana: The Many Questions

Our tradition gives us the spiritual technology to remain curious about our life — individually and communally. And tonight, just like we do at Passover, we can ask ourselves, why is THIS night different than all other nights? This night is different because we take time for ourselves to revel in the liberation that is our birthright. We take this moment to inhale and exhale deeply and fully into this knowledge. We understand, just like our ancestors, our liberation could never be given or taken away. This night, we remember this feeling — because we know we will have to return to this well again and again. At this Juneteenth seder, we are going to ask lots of questions. On all other nights, we are expected to have answers that we don't have — to fix problems we didn't create. Tonight we are messy, uncertain, and incomplete.

But uncertainty can also be liberating, because it allows us space to engage our most creative unbound imagination. We are going to ask questions that call upon your imagination now, in service of our collective liberation. First, close your eyes and imagine your answer. Then turn to the person next to you and share your vision.

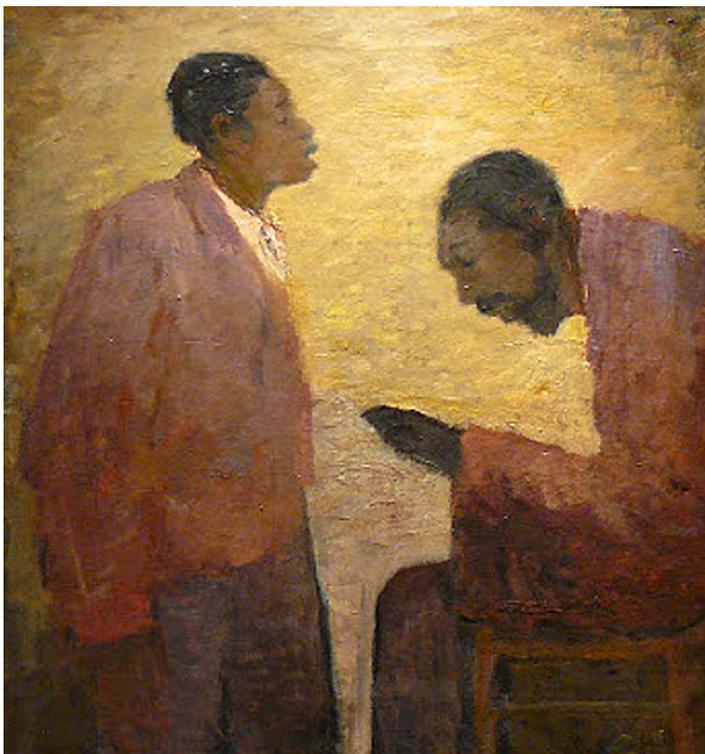
What does a future of joy, freedom, and collective liberation look like? Be specific:

- What does your community look like? Who is there? What do you see around you?
- What does it feel like to walk down the street? To ride the train? To go to school?
- Are you tense and afraid, or fearless and relaxed?
- What does it feel like to be Jewish in this vision?

Hold this beautiful vision in your mind. Again, close your eyes and consider the question, then turn to the person next to you and discuss your thoughts.

- How do we get there from here? What changed about our communities?
- What would have to be true about your life? Your actions?
- Looking back from this visionary future, what did the Jewish community do to make it happen?

Each of you may have different answers, but one basic fact is true: we have to start building a new system — an alternative to the one that we have now. Were there prisons in your vision? Were there police with automatic rifles and zip-ties? If not, then it should be clear that we have to disinvest from the systems that we currently rely on. We don't trust them. They aren't serving us. They are damaging Black people, including Black Jews. We want to reduce the power they have over us and the role they play in our lives, and replace them with systems that are meaningful to us, accountable to us, and that actually move us in the direction of the future we want, rather than keeping us stuck here. It is our duty to fight for the future we all deserve; it is our duty to fight for Black futures, Black joy, and Black freedom. It is our duty to win.



Joseph Nassy (1904-1976), "Reading to a Youth." (Most likely planning the preparations for a Bar Mitzvah.) Oil on canvas, 65 x 50 cm, signed lower right. Gallery Nieuw Schoten, Haarlem.

Josef Nassy was a Black Jewish artist who was born in Surinam and grew up in New York City. Caught in the German occupation of Belgium during World War Two, Nassy endured three years in Belgian and German internment camps. After the war he returned to Belgium and continued to make art until his death in 1976. He is known for his paintings of life in the internment camps, as well as intimate domestic scenes.

THE SECOND CUP:

Behold this cup of wine. Assata taught us: *It is our duty to win.* We drink to her, to our commitment to winning, and to our ancestors who invested in our winning and building power: Fannie Lou Hamer, Bayard Rustin, A. Philip Randolph, Ella Baker, Pedro Albizu Campos.

Raise glass. Say one of these blessings:	
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ברוכה אתה יי אלהינו מלכת העולם בורא פרי הגפן.	ברוך אתה יי אלהינו רוח (מלך) העולם בורא פרי הגפן.
<i>Brucha at Yah, Shekhina, eloheinu malkat ha'olam bora p'ri hagafen.</i>	<i>Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu ruach (melekh) ha'olam borei p'ri hagafen.</i>
Blessed are you, Shekhinah, Queen of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.	Blessed are You God, Spirit (Sovereign) of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.
HUMANIST	
פרי הגפן: אתו נשתה "לחיים."	
<i>P'ri hagafen, ito nishteh, "lchayim!"</i> The fruit of the vine, with it let us drink "to life!"	

Love & Support

We must love and support each other, and for that love and support to have any meaning, it must be material as well as spiritual.

The Torah says: And if thy brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee. And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty: thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock ... And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt...

Black liberation is something that has been compromised again and again, through actions monstrous and tiny — the incomprehensible violations we promise to never forget, and the endless diminutions we all decide to ignore. White supremacy is centered in Christianity, but Jews with white skin privilege have been enacting it and actively benefiting from it for centuries. In the recent history of the United States, white Jews benefited from the G.I. Bill; moved to, and profited from, racially segregated housing; accepted and enabled massive disparities in education; and received loans, financial aid, salaries, and benefits denied to Black people. White folk: even if you personally find the idea of white supremacy repulsive, even if you are afraid of antisemitic neo-Nazis and white nationalists — you still benefit from the culture of white supremacy we all live in.

And so tonight we are asking you to think about what it means to commit to reparation — to take a small but challenging step toward accountability and disinvestment from white privilege — a step that also leads toward a bolder, more moral, more vibrant future for Jews and for all people.

Rabbi Sharon Brous writes:

"Most American Jews came to this country years after the abolition of slavery, but we have thrived under a national economic system that was built on stolen land and stolen labor, a foundational wrong that has yet to be rectified. As survivors of generational trauma and beneficiaries of reparations [from Germany, to Israel] granted after the Holocaust, Jews have a special obligation to help advance this conversation.

Some have argued that the complexity of the undertaking renders it impossible. But I believe this reflects a profound lack of moral imagination.”

In JFREJ’s *Shavuot for Black Lives Study Guide*, Koach Baruch Frazier, with Graie Barasch-Hagans and Mackenzie Reynolds, wrote: “If we were to eliminate all of the economic injustice, we still have people who have been psychologically and spiritually traumatized. If there’s no attention to the emotional and spiritual pain and damage, then it is like an incomplete *t’shuvah*. The great Sephardic Jewish scholar Maimonides gives us guidance: The United States hasn’t stopped shackling Black people, killing Black people, segregating Black people, or claiming the proceeds of enslavement and enjoying the profits of exploitation. So first you have to stop inflicting pain and damage. The 2nd step is to actually apologize, it also hasn’t done that. The 3rd step is that you have to actually feel sorry for what you did. And the 4th is that you have to decide to do something different. America hasn’t done that either. None of the process has happened. There’s never been *t’shuvah*. The sages provide a roadmap for navigating questions of reclaiming what is stolen. The sages teach that we are to reclaim what is owed and allow room for the penitence of the thief. Is White America ready for penitence? Is New York City ready to begin to repair the damage done and resources stolen from Black folx and others by investing in the health and self-determination of our communities and divesting from the institutions that continue to inflict pain and damage?”

Repair can and should take many forms. But tonight we are focusing on one in particular. The strategy of divesting from policies, practices and institutions that are not aligned with our values, and are inherently incapable of leading us toward the future we want. We want to start with mass incarceration and the NYPD.

- *We have a vision for the future we want. Institutions like the NYPD cannot get us to that future. Instead, they directly compete for resources with ideas and alternatives that move us toward that future, or actively undermine our liberation.*
- *Last year, the NYPD consumed 5.6 billion dollars. That staggering sum of money paid for over 36,000 cops — three times the size of the next largest American police force.*
- *At the same time, our schools are segregated and under-resourced, our public housing is crumbling, our public transit system is falling apart, we are closing public hospitals, and we have completely failed homeless New Yorkers.*
- *The NYPD cannot solve the problem of homelessness — they can only harass and jail homeless people;*
- *Putting cops in schools instead of counselors or teachers can never improve education, it can only put more Black and Brown young people into the school-to-prison pipeline. In NYC, Black students make up 44% of referrals to the police and 28% of arrests, even though they make up only 18% of the student body.*
- *The NYPD will never solve the problems of mental illness. They can only jail people (in 2017, 43% of inmates at Rikers Island were mentally ill) and kill people (like Saheed Vassell, Deborah Danner, and Eleanor Bumpurs, who were in emotional distress).*
- *We will only build the future we need for Black people, and all New Yorkers, if we invest in our vision of the future. And we can’t do that if we continue to pour our money into counterproductive non-solutions like policing and incarceration.*



Richmond, VA, Juneteenth Parade, 1905



Austen, TX, Juneteenth Parade. Photo by Jorge Sanhueza-Lyon. 2017

THE THIRD CUP

Behold this cup of wine. Assata taught us: *We must love and support each other—*

And we remember our ancestors who loved us, supported us with love: James Baldwin, Zora Neale Hurston, Audre Lorde. Sojourner Truth. And we know that this is what gives us the courage and strength to love and support each other into a different world.

Raise glass. Say one of these blessings:	
FEMININE LANGUAGE	TRADITIONAL
ברוכה אתה יי אלהינו מלכת העולם בורא פרי הגפן.	ברוך אתה יי אלהינו רוח (מלך) העולם בורא פרי הגפן.
<i>Brucha at Yah, Shekhina, eloheinu malkat ha'olam bora p'ri hagafen.</i>	<i>Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu ruach (melekh) ha'olam borei p'ri hagafen.</i>
Blessed are you, Shekhinah, Queen of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.	Blessed are You God, Spirit (Sovereign) of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.
HUMANIST	
פרי הגפן: אתו נשתה "לתיים."	
<i>P'ri hagafen, ito nishteh, "Ichayim!"</i> The fruit of the vine, with it let us drink "to life!"	

THE MEAL

Now we eat! We recognize that a communal meal is one of the strongest tools we have for peacekeeping and community building. We all must eat to nurture, celebrate, and sustain our lives together.

Raise bread/teacake, say one of the following:	
FEMININE LANGUAGE	TRADITIONAL
ברוכה אתה יי אלהינו מלכת העולם המוציא לחם מן הארץ.	ברוך אתה יי אלהינו רוח (מלך) העולם
<i>Brucha at Yah, Shekhina, eloheinu malkat ha'olam bora p'ri hagafen.</i>	<i>Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu ruach (melekh) ha'olam hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz.</i>
Blessed are you, Shekhinah, Queen of the universe, who brings food from the earth.	Blessed are You God, Spirit (Sovereign) of the universe, who brings food from the earth.
HUMANIST	
נוציא מצה לחם מן הארץ—כדי שנסתפק ונתכלכל כלנו.	
<i>Notzi matzah - lechem min ha'aretz—k'dei sh'nistapek v'nitkalkel kulanu.</i> Let us bring forth bread from the land—so we all may be satisfied and sustained.	

THE FOURTH CUP

Behold this cup of wine. Assata taught us: We have nothing to lose but our chains—

Ancestors who were the folks who played outside of the rules, gave us a difference sense of ourselves in the future — boundary breaking ancestors: Octavia Butler, Prince, Billie Holiday, Gladys Bentley, Sammy Davis, Jr., Nina Simone, Jackie Shane.

Raise glass, say one of the following:	
FEMININE LANGUAGE	TRADITIONAL
ברוכה אתה יה שכינה אלתינו מלכת העולם בורא פרי הגפן.	ברוך אתה יי אלתינו רוח (מלך) העולם בורא פרי הגפן.
<i>Brucha at Yah, Shekhina, eloheinu malkat ha'olam bora p'ri hagafen.</i>	<i>Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu ruach (melekh) ha'olam borei p'ri hagafen.</i>
Blessed are you, Shekhinah, Queen of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.	Blessed are You God, Spirit (Sovereign) of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.
HUMANIST	
	פרי הגפן: אתו נשתה "לחיים."
<i>P'ri hagafen, ito nishteh, "l'chayim!" The fruit of the vine, with it let us drink "to life!"</i>	

Water for baptisms and mikvahs; water to speed our escape from Mitzrayim, halt our escapes from the cotton fields. Water to deliver Moses to Pharaoh and carry him to Batya. Water to swallow up Pharaoh's pursuing armies and oceans to hold the nations of kidnapped Africans destroyed by the Middle Passage. The currents that bore Robert Smalls to freedom and the undertow that forced the last breath from Emmett Till.

Donkor Nsuo in Ghana, where Africans who had been marched hundreds of miles to the coast took their last bath before they were displayed for sale to European slavers. The river healing and cleansing them after one demolishing journey, while preparing them for the next. The Underground Railroad brought us across the Ohio River on our way to freedom in Canada. At Igbo Landing in Georgia, a shipload of kidnapped Igbo — survivors of the Middle Passage — drowned themselves rather than submit to enslavement. The Combahee River, where Harriet Tubman led 727 souls to freedom in 1863.

Song: *Wade in the Water*

Wade in the water, wade in the water children

Wade, in the water

God's gonna trouble the water

Who's that young girl dressed in red

Wade in the water

Must be the children that Moses led

God's gonna trouble the water

Wade in the water, wade in the water children

Wade in the water, God's gonna trouble the water



Painting by Josef Nassy

Who's that young girl dressed in white
Wade in the water
Must be the children of the Israelite
Oh, God's gonna trouble the water.

Wade in the water, wade in the water children
Wade in the water, God's gonna trouble the water

Who's that young girl dressed in blue
Wade in the water
Must be the children that's coming through,
God's gonna trouble the water, yeah

Wade in the water, wade in the water children
Wade in the water, God's gonna trouble the water

You don't believe I've been redeemed,
Wade in the water
Just so the whole lake goes looking for me
God's gonna trouble the water

Wade in the water, wade in the water children
Wade in the water, God's gonna trouble the water

Water is all that separates us from Rikers Island, just out of sight, a few miles upriver. In your heart of hearts, are you grateful for that separation? Is the river a cold barrier or a connecting thread, binding you to them, and all of us to the sea; to our ancestors and our homelands? A river can be a vehicle of escape, a means of migration. Like Moses and Harriet, it can take us to where we need to go, but only if the chains of our debts aren't dragging us down. We came here tonight to dance. It is hard to dance in chains. We know how — we have been doing it, and doing it beautifully for far too long. In this moment, we embrace our liberation and embody our vision. We have nothing to lose but our chains.



CREDITS

Juneteenth Seder Haggadah authored by members and friends of the JFREJ Jews of Color Caucus, including Graie Barasch-Hagans, Shoshana Brown, Leo Ferguson, Koach Baruch Frazier, Sara Goldberg, Megan Madison, Alexis Ortiz and Yehudah Webster. Thanks to April Baskin, Rakel Joseph, Leah King, Amparo Abel-Bey, Isaiah Rothstein, Autumn Leonard, Teresa Basilio, Ana Rubenstein, Yavilah McCoy, Meg Sullivan/JCC Harlem, Solar One, Lucas Shapiro & Jules Skloot, Cecilia Lim. Special thanks to Mackenzie Reynolds for haggadah coordination and editorial support. Exodus artwork by Sarah Quinter.

ABOUT JFREJ

For close to thirty years, Jews For Racial & Economic Justice (JFREJ) has pursued racial and economic justice in New York City by advancing systemic changes that result in concrete improvements in people's everyday lives. We are inspired by Jewish tradition to fight for a sustainable world with an equitable distribution of economic and cultural resources and political power.

The movement to dismantle racism and economic exploitation will be led by those most directly targeted by oppression. We believe that Jews have a vital role to play in this movement. The future we hope for depends on Jews forging deep and lasting ties with our partners in struggle.

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