



**Jewish Democratic
Council of America**

JEWISH DEMS PASSEOVER SEDER COMPANION

**BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE JEWISH DEMOCRATIC
COUNCIL OF AMERICA (JDCA), THE ONLY
NATIONAL ORGANIZATION COMBINING
JEWISH VALUES ADVOCACY WITH A
DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL AGENDA.**

What a year it's been. In the time since we last celebrated Passover, we've experienced a year-long global pandemic which coincided with the rise of a racial and social justice movement. Our nation survived direct and unprecedented threats to our democratic institutions, including a deadly insurrection and siege on the U.S. Capitol that imperiled the peaceful transition of power, and ongoing voter suppression. We achieved historic electoral victories that flipped the White House and Senate blue by way of Georgia, and the inauguration of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris.

The soul of our nation is healing.

But the work is far from over.

According to our tradition, Passover is when Jews around the world tell the story of the Exodus, "as if we ourselves were slaves in Egypt." We do this by gathering with friends and loved ones — using symbols and rituals, readings and songs — so that we may appreciate our freedom and ensure it for others.

As we come together for another year of virtual Seders, we encourage you to use the Jewish Dems Passover Companion alongside your Haggadah as a way to spark conversations around some of the most pressing issues of our time — we've included nine of our issue priorities on the Seder plate below. We also hope you'll take action with JDCA by visiting jewishdems.org.

From everyone here at JDCA, we wish you a happy, healthy, and action-oriented Passover.

Chag Sameach!

The Jewish Democratic Council of America





Reflecting on the year of the pandemic

On Passover we look back at our bondage and we look forward towards our liberation. Egypt in Hebrew is "Mitzrayim," translated as "Narrow Places." **As we reflect on this past year, what were the "narrow places" we faced as individuals and as a society?**

We stand on the shoulders of others – we must remember all of those who we have lost this year. As we reflect, we honor the memories of two civil rights heroes: Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg (z"l) and Representative John Lewis. In the Torah, Moses passed away right before the Jews made it into Israel, but he had been responsible for leading the Jewish people out of their oppression in Egypt. Representative John Lewis and Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg spent their lives fighting for civil rights, and passed away as our country is turning towards a reckoning. **Who in your life are you carrying the torch for? What does it mean for the next generation to take the baton?**



This year we sing *Dayenu* to mark our thanks for all we have experienced, fought for, and accomplished.

If we had just taken back the House in 2018...

DAYENU!

If we had just won back the Senate...

DAYENU!

If we had just won back the White House...

DAYENU!



The Four Questions

1. Matzah: Survival is about taking bold action. The Israelites had to act quickly and had no time for their bread to rise as they fled from the Egyptians. As Joe Biden faces an unprecedented public health crisis, he too is taking fast and bold action by passing the American Rescue Plan, the largest piece of anti-poverty legislation in a generation.

What challenges have you faced in your personal life that required stepping up and acting fast? What are some of today's challenges that must be addressed with bold action?

2. Bitter Herbs: As we remember the bitter conditions of the slaves in Egypt, we must also recognize the bitter conditions in our own country and times for marginalized communities. Systemic racism, police brutality, and historic inequities target people of color and other minority communities. It is our responsibility to stand against these injustices.

What are the steps Jews can take to stand with marginalized groups and individuals in the face of oppression?

3. The Freedom to Dip Twice: Dipping twice is an expression of our freedom from bondage. The wave of voting restrictions put forward by the GOP is testing freedom and democracy in this country. The events of January 6 showed us that being free does not mean we are free from threats to our democracy, and we all have a responsibility to protect and maintain that democracy and freedom.

What can you do to help protect the freedom of all people to vote?

4. Reclining: We know that in tight races the Jewish vote can make a difference. Since 2018, the Jewish Democratic Council of America has helped Democrats flip the House, Senate and White House. It took every volunteer, and every vote, to restore the soul of our nation.

Tonight, let us recline and celebrate the fruits of our labor, and commit to taking action to protect the right to vote and impact the outcome of the next election.



Four cups of wine

The four cups of wine represent the four ways by which we experienced deliverance when we were led out of Egypt.

What are ways in which we have been delivered when we advocate for our Jewish and Democratic values?



The creation of the COVID-19 vaccines, in less than a year, was a miracle of science and ingenuity. Doctors and scientists are delivering us to safety.



President Biden's leadership has led to unprecedented scientific and business collaboration and is delivering us to a future free from COVID.



The American Rescue Plan will cut child poverty by nearly 50% and will help American families most in need of support.



Democrats are fighting to deliver democratic reforms and to fight Republican attempts to suppress our right to vote and our access to the ballot box.



The Four Children: Four Approaches to Political Activism

The Wise Child: Spreading truth and facts.

We are living in a world where right wing propaganda and dangerous conspiracy theories are attacking basic truths and facts. We need to restore shared understanding of the truth and push back against misinformation. We must replace ignorance with education, and that starts with educating and imparting our values to our children.

The Wicked Child: Pushing back against the politics of exclusion.

Many in the Republican Party have made excluding voters from the electoral process its official policy. We should strive to create a country where citizens feel included, and that can only happen with racial justice, voting rights, and ongoing efforts to combat systemic racism. Our democracy works best when every American has access to the ballot.

Dr. Fauci has explained what divisiveness in our country has done to our pandemic response. “We are fighting a war with our hands tied behind our back.” Exclusionary politics has made this pandemic worse. Just as the wicked child says this is ‘your’ service and not ‘ours,’ many people in this country have felt the pandemic is not their problem.

The Simple Child: Educating and empowering citizens to seek help.

As politically active citizens, it is imperative that we spread the facts about the important legislation Democrats are passing. Americans must know what benefits they get from legislation like the American Rescue Plan and the For the People Act. It is our job to educate those seeking information.

The Child Who Doesn’t Know How to Ask: Asking hard questions.

In order to create change and to repair the world, we must know how to ask the hard questions. Having conversations about racism, privilege, and inequality in America are vital to creating a more just and equitable society.



Shaping the Future

Each year, we complete the Passover Seder by reflecting upon where we will be, “next year.”

Will we be sitting together in-person with family and friends, or will we be gathering again, virtually, as we have done in the face of a global pandemic?

What actions will we take in the coming days and months to ensure that our country is more equitable, just, and safe for all peoples?

Together, we have the ability to shape what “next year” looks like. We hope you will do so with JDCA.

Thank you for welcoming us into your homes and as part of your Seder. We encourage you to visit www.jewishdems.org to learn more about all of our policy priorities and how you can join us as we work towards a better future for us all.

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