

## Understanding the Haggadah

**This is the bread of affliction** that our fathers ate in the land of Egypt. Whoever is hungry, let him come and eat; whoever is in need, let him come and conduct the Seder of Passover. This year [we are] here; next year in the land of Israel. This year [we are] slaves; next year [we will be] free people.

**We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt**, and the L-rd, our G-d, took us out from there with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm. If the Holy One, blessed be He, had not taken our fathers out of Egypt, then we, our children and our children's children would have remained enslaved to Pharaoh in Egypt. Even if all of us were wise, all of us understanding, all of us knowing the Torah, we would still be obligated to discuss the exodus from Egypt; and everyone who discusses the exodus from Egypt at length is praiseworthy.

**In the beginning our fathers served idols**; but now the Omnipresent One has brought us close to His service, as it is said: "Joshua said to all the people: Thus said the L-rd, the G-d of Israel, 'Your fathers used to live on the other side of the river - Terach, the father of Abraham and the father of Nachor, and they served other gods.

**This is what has stood by our fathers and us!** For not just one alone has risen against us to destroy us, but in every generation they rise against us to destroy us; and the Holy One, blessed be He, saves us from their hand!

**Thus how much more so should we be grateful to the Omnipresent One** for the doubled and redoubled goodness that He has bestowed upon us; for He has brought us out of Egypt, and carried out judgments against them, and against their idols, and smote their first-born, and gave us their wealth, and split the sea for us, and took us through it on dry land, and drowned our oppressors in it, and supplied our needs in the desert for forty years, and fed us the manna, and gave us the Shabbat, and brought us before Mount Sinai, and gave us the Torah, and brought us into the land of Israel and built for us the BeitHabechirah to atone for all our sins.