

# SEDER SONGSHEET

## THE BALLAD OF THE FOUR SONS

Said the father to his children  
"At the Seder you will dine,  
You will eat your fill of Matzoh  
You will drink four cups of wine."

Now this father had no daughters  
But his sons they numbered four,  
One was wise and one was wicked  
One was simple and a bore.

And the fourth was sweet and winsome,  
He was young and he was small  
While his brothers asked the questions  
He could scarcely speak at all.

Said the wise son to his father  
"Would you please explain the laws?  
Of the customs of the Seder  
Will you please explain the cause?"  
And the father proudly answered,  
"As our fathers ate in speed,  
Ate the Paschal lamp 'ere midnight  
And from slavery were freed.

So we follow their example  
and 'ere midnight must complete  
All the Seder, and we should not  
After 12 remain to eat.

Then did sneer the son so wicked  
"What does all this mean to you?"  
And the father's voice was bitter  
As his grief and anger grew.

"If yourself you don't consider as  
A son of Israel,  
Then for you this has no meaning  
You could be a slave as well."

Then the simple son said simply,  
"What is this?" and quietly  
The good father told his offspring  
"We were freed from slavery."

But the youngest son was silent  
For he could not ask at all.  
His bright eyes were bright with wonder  
As his father told him all.

My dear children, heed the lesson  
And remember evermore  
What the father told his children  
Told his sons that numbered four.

## "FREEDOM LAND"

When Israel was on Russian soil,  
Let our People go!  
Oppressed, downtrodden, bent with toil,  
Let our People go!  
Speak out Israel,  
raise up your voice and shout!  
Tell the Kremlin to let our people go!

Despite the harsh and bitter plight,  
Let our People go!  
Refuseniks never quit the fight,  
Let our People go!  
Hoping, waiting,  
never giving up the dream!  
Tell the Kremlin to let our people go!

Throughout the years we struggled on,  
Let our People go!  
We marched, wrote letters,  
sang our songs, Let our People go!

And now at last, with doors thrown wide,  
bring our people home!  
We sing with grateful joy and pride,  
bring our people home!  
Brothers! Sisters!  
Freedom is the Promised Land!  
Tell old Pharaoh, Am Yisrael Chai!

## "JERUSALEM OF GOLD"

The olive trees that stand in silence  
Upon the hills of time,  
To hear the voices of the city  
As bells of evening chime.

The Shofar sounding from the Temple  
To call the world to prayer.  
The shepard pauses in the valley,  
And peace is everywhere.

The market square once left deserted,  
Beneath the glowing moon.  
Our voices breaking through the silence,  
"We'll be returning soon."

The battle raged and foes defeated,  
The Shofar sounds its call.  
The market square no longer empty,  
We gather by the wall.

(additional lyrics by Cantor Scharf)

# CONTEMPORARY ADDITIONS TO THE SEDER

*From this mini-anthology of writings, ancient and recent, you may wish to select readings to include in your Seder celebration. The objective? To enrich and intensify your own Exodus experience, so that, in the words of Rav Kook, "the old may become new and the new may become holy." We have retraced our passage from slavery to freedom, from Mitzrayim to Mount Sinai. Now we take up the tale again, for new chapters continue to unfold. For two thousand years we wander through desert and dale — welcome, unwelcome, tolerated, taunted, harbored, haunted—as we journey towards the Promised Land.*

*Erev Pesah 1943.* The Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto started on the first night of Pesah. For twenty-eight shattering days, while the world watched in silence, a handful of men, women and children pitted their fragility against the massed might of the Nazi war machine. Although the flames have long been extinguished, the embers still smolder. For Pharaohs come and Pharaohs go: the Sennacheribs, the Belshazzars, the Hamans. But the Freedom Fighters of the Ghetto will live for ever, fiery testimony to the love of liberty kindled by the Exodus. Once more the Covenant People had kept the faith.

Master of the universe, I do not know what questions to ask. I do not expect You to reveal Your secrets to me. All I ask is that You show me one thing—what this moment means to me and what You demand of me. I do not ask why I suffer. I ask only this: Do I suffer for Your sake?

*Rabbi Levi Yitzhak of Berdichev*

In the Warsaw Ghetto it's Pesah once more.  
The cup of Elijah is filled to the brim.  
The faithful recount the deliverance of yore,  
But in storms the Angel of Death, baleful, grim.  
As always, the barking of Germans is heard.  
As always, the snarling of mad dogs of hate.  
They have come here, these jackbooted pharaohs, to herd  
Israel's innocent lambs to their terrible fate.  
But never again will Jews tolerate taunts,  
Never again obey death-bearing orders.  
The doorposts tonight will be crimson with blood,  
The blood of the murderers, freedom's destroyers.

*Bunim Heller*



*The Jews in Bergen-Belsen had no matzot for Pesah 1944. It was decided that it was permissible to eat hametz, and that the following prayer should be recited before eating:*

“Our Father in Heaven, behold, it is evident and known to You that it is our desire to do Your will and to celebrate the festival of Pesah by eating *matzah* and by observing the prohibition against *hametz*. But our hearts are pained that the enslavement prevents us from doing so, and our lives are in danger. Behold, we are ready to fulfill Your commandment, ‘And you shall live by them and not die by them’. Therefore, our prayer to You is that You may keep us alive and save us and rescue us speedily so that we may observe Your commandments and do Your will and serve You with a perfect heart. Amen.”

On this Seder night, we recall with anguish and with love our martyred brothers and sisters, the six million Jews of Europe who were destroyed at the hands of a tyrant more fiendish than Pharaoh. Their memory will never be forgotten. Their murderers will never be forgiven.

Trapped in ghettos, caged in death camps, abandoned by an unseeing or uncaring world, Jews gave their lives in acts that sanctified God's name and the name of His people Israel. Some rebelled against their tormentors, fighting with makeshift weapons, gathering the last remnants of their failing strength in peerless gestures of courage and defiance. Others went to their death with their faith in God miraculously unimpaired.

Unchecked, unchallenged, evil ran rampant and devoured the holy innocents. But the light of the Six Million will never be extinguished. Their glow illumines our path. And we will teach our children and our children's children to remember them with reverence and with pride.

*Natan (Anatoly) Shcharansky first applied to the Soviet government for permission to emigrate to Israel in 1973. After years of escalating harassment, he was arrested for "treason" in 1977, and separated from his wife, Avital, one day after their marriage. When the Soviet court imposed its harsh sentence, he made this statement:*

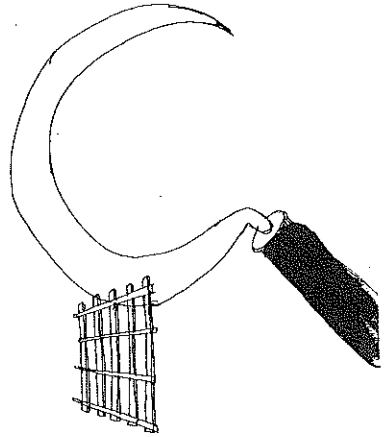
Five years ago, I submitted my application for exit to Israel. Now I am further than ever from my dream. It would seem to be cause for regret. But it is absolutely otherwise. I am happy. I am happy that I lived honestly, in peace with my conscience. I never compromised my soul, even under the threat of death.

I am happy that I helped people. I am proud that I knew and worked with such honest, brave and courageous people as Sakharov, Orlov, Ginsburg, who are carrying on the traditions of Russian intelligentsia. I am fortunate to have been witness to the process of the liberation of Russia's Jews.

I hope that the absurd accusation against me and the entire Jewish emigration movement will not hinder the liberation of my People. My near ones and friends know how I wanted to exchange activity in the emigration movement for a life with my wife, Avital, in Israel.

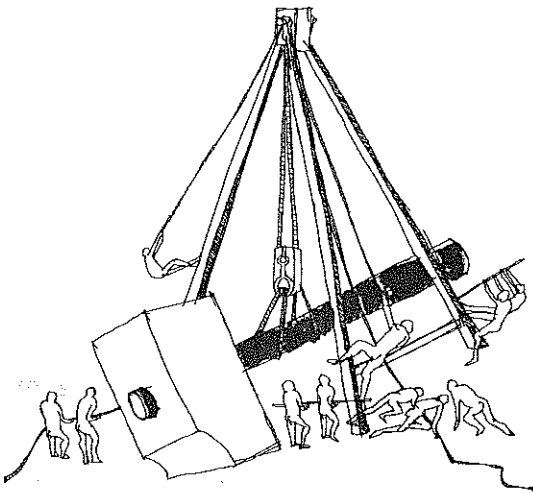
For more than 2,000 years the Jewish People, my People, have been dispersed. But wherever they are, wherever Jews are found, every year they have repeated, "Next year in Jerusalem." Now, when I am further than every from my People, from Avital, facing many arduous years of imprisonment, I say, turning to my people, my Avital: Next year in Jerusalem.

*It was such courage, and our reponse, that made him free.*

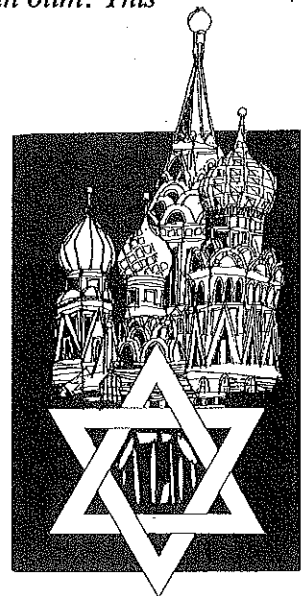


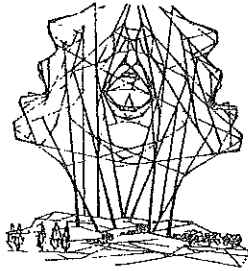
*Shimon Grilius spent five years in a Soviet labor camp as a prisoner of conscience. His crime? His desire to live in Israel. When he finally immigrated in 1974, he opened a yeshiva in Jerusalem for Russian olim. This is an extract from his prison journal:*

We held the Seder in a hurry, as in the time of the Exodus from Mitzrayim, since the camp authorities prohibited the holding of a Seder. Instead of *maror*, we ate slices of onion, and for *zeroa*, we used burnt soup cubes. We read from one Haggadah, the only copy we had, and when we reached *korekh*, we had nothing to put between the *matzot*. Then Iosif Mendeleovich said, "We do not need a symbol of our suffering. We have real suffering and we shall put that between the *matzot*."



*SLAVE LABOR from the Haggadah of Mark Podwal, portraying the situation of Jews in the Soviet Union building the pyramid that then prevents them from living as Jews and forbids them from leaving to live with other Jews in Israel and other free countries.*





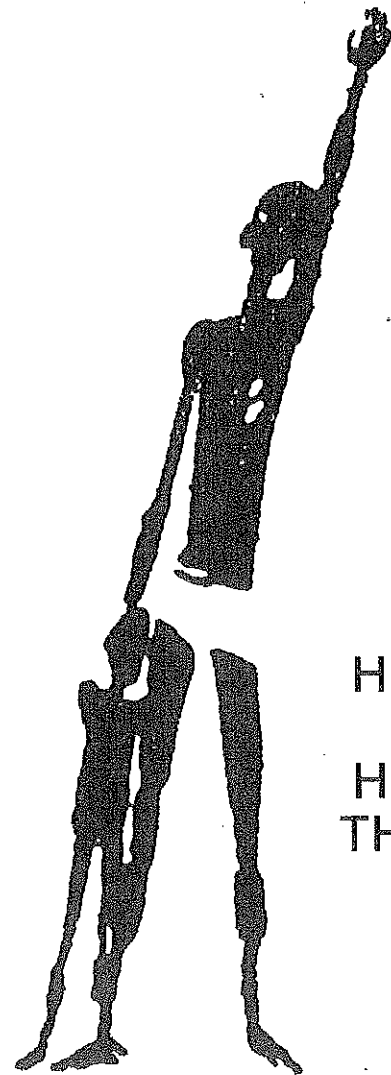
# PESAH IN ETHIOPIA

*In the American Jewish Year Book of 1920, Jacques Faitlovitch published an article entitled, "The Passover as Observed by the Falashas."*

*In our own day, Ethiopian Jews (a more appropriate term than the derogatory word, Falasha) bring their traditions to Israel, following Operation Moses. Thousands of Ethiopian Jews, however, are still trapped in Ethiopia, waiting to be free.*

On their behalf, we reprint this eyewitness account of nearly seventy years ago when their community was much larger. Discrimination, enslavement and even murder have drastically reduced their number.

The Falashas (Jews of Abyssinia) observe Passover for seven days, and during this time they eat only unleavened bread and do not drink any fermented drinks. Several days before the feast, the homes are carefully cleaned, all articles of clothing are properly washed, and all vessels and utensils thoroughly scoured and cleaned. Three days before Passover, they stop eating leavened bread and take nothing but dried peas and beans; and on the eve of Passover, they abstain from all food until after the sacrifice of the paschal lamb. On this day, a little before the setting of the sun, all assemble in the court of the synagogue and, in the name of the entire community, the sacrificer offers the paschal lamb upon the altar. The ceremony is observed with great pomp; the ritual prescribed in the Bible for this sacrifice is followed punctiliously, and after the sacrifice is slaughtered and roasted, the meat is eaten with unleavened bread by the priestly assistants. It is in this manner that the festival is inaugurated. On the following days they assemble in the Mesgid (the place of prayer) at fixed hours, observing a special ritual and reciting various prayers and biblical texts having reference to the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt.



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