



In an 18th-century *mahzor* from Korfu, the ancient sacrifice appears not as memory but as presence.

MS 8236 (Mahzor Korfu, 1709) includes a miniature labeled “Korban Pesah.” Four figures stand around a table bearing a roasted lamb. The scene is set indoors, with tiled floor, chandelier, and contemporary dress. The image does not attempt historical reconstruction; it places the sacrifice in the present tense of ritual memory.

Rabbinic literature distinguishes between Pesah Mitzrayim—the first Passover in Egypt, marked by blood on the doorposts and haste—and Pesah Dorot, the Passover observed in later generations in Jerusalem (Mishnah Pesahim 9). This miniature collapses that distinction. It recalls the original act, yet frames it as an enduring obligation. The sacrifice belongs to Egypt in origin, but to every generation in command.

From these two stories—the Egyptians who attended my seder and from the Natziv’s telling of the story of the oppression of the Hebrews—I gained three specific insights about communicating in the presence of conflict. First, I try to avoid using the definite article “the” (such as, “the Egyptians”) so as not to generalize and label entire groups of people. Second, I try to identify and name the specific people or institutions that took specific actions. This clarity calls for a sense of accountability. Finally, I practice *hakarat hatov*, recognizing the good actions taken by people. I hope that these insights offer a helpful model for disrupting generalization and transforming conflict at our Passover seders and beyond.



On a narrow column of a 14th-century Spanish siddur, gratitude climbs the page.

MS 4366 (the Schloss–London Siddur), a 14th-century Sephardic manuscript from Spain, sets *Dayenu* in a narrow vertical column. Each clause *אילו... ולא... דיינו* stands on its own line. The eye climbs the page as the voice moves through the litany. The design is not incidental. Iberian manuscripts often list refrains in this stepped form so that repetition becomes visible, as well as audible. The layout belongs to a Spanish graphic tradition that treats liturgical sequence as structure to be seen not only heard.

I love this midrash because it tends to make people blush a little bit. When you get over your embarrassment and look at the story again, the women in the midrash emerge as powerful, active characters resisting Pharaoh with the simple tools they have on hand—copper mirrors. They resist Pharaoh by holding tight to their relationships, loving one another, and investing in their families.

This midrash complicates the Torah's image of the Israelites as immobilized and exhausted, and it also challenges us to find a different way to relate to the story. Though we may not be able to hear Moses's prophetic call right now, perhaps we can hear this midrash and Rabbi Diamond calling us to hold fast to our relationships. **Loving one another—our families, friends, and communities—is in and of itself a profound act of faith and an investment in a liberated future.**

Zikhrono livrakha. May Rabbi Diamond's memory and teaching continue to be a blessing that reminds us of the power of love in a broken world.



In the spring of 1945, Jewish GIs and newly liberated survivors gathered for seder.

Printed in Dahn, Germany, in 1945, *The Rainbow Haggadah* was prepared by the US Army's 42nd Infantry Division. A hand-colored rainbow stands over the Hebrew word Haggadah. Below it sit the plain signs of the table: matzah, wine, cups, a menorah. That spring, in a shattered Germany, Jewish soldiers held the seder with survivors of the camps, their first Passover after liberation. The words of the Exodus were not distant history; they were read in the presence of men and women who had just come out of bondage.

bodies and souls, the cruel shipping of those bodies to places unknown as if they were disposable commodities, and the disenfranchisement of those who were promised the equality God ordained for human beings.

So yes, the expression of rage is not out of place. It is natural and does no good when it is kept in. But there is one more crucial element in this cathartic moment that must not be missed. For the anger to which we give expression is placed just before the third psalm of the *Hallel*, Psalm 115. The opening words are: “Lo lanu, A-donai, lo lanu, ki leshimkha ten kavod” (“Not for us, Lord, not for us, but rather for the glory of Your name”). Goldschmidt believed that the cathartic verses of anger were intentionally placed here as a preamble to Psalm 115. And that juxtaposition, as we ponder all that ails the world today, conveys a very weighty and critical message. We are given leave to express our wrath at what the pre-messianic world can mete out, but then we are immediately reminded that the anger must translate itself into acts that are not about *our* aggrandizement or felt need for revenge but exist solely to further the kind of world that gives testimony to God’s presence and purposes.

As the door opens this year, let us both testify to the truth of our shredded emotions and yet work for the truth of God’s purposes for the world and its inhabitants.

Adapted from a piece created for the Academy of Jewish Religion.



MS 4481, copied and illustrated by Joel ben Simeon in Germany around 1445, pairs *Shefoch hamatkha*—“Pour out Your wrath upon the nations that do not know You.” (Ps. 79:6; 69:25)—with a scene of Elijah riding a donkey and sounding a shofar. The verses call for divine judgment on persecuting powers. Elijah, rabbinic herald of the Messiah, signals imminent redemption; the donkey recalls Zechariah 9:9. The shofar, instrument of revelation and ingathering (Isa. 27:13), shifts the focus from vengeance to covenantal restoration, integrating eschatological hope into the Passover liturgy.

