

# Breaking (Unleavened) Bread, Building Bridges:

## Yachatz and the Path to Collective Liberation

*A Haggadah Supplement*

The fourth part of the seder is called Yachatz, in which we take the middle matzah and break (yachatz) it in half, setting aside the larger piece (which will later be used for the afikomen). We then hold up the smaller piece and we say (or sometimes sing):

הָא לַחְמָא עֲנִיא דִּי אֲכָלוּ אַבְהֵתָנָא בְּאַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם. כָּל דְּכָפִין יְיִתִּי וְיִיכַל, כָּל דְּצָרִיךְ יְיִתִּי וְיִפְסַח. הַשְּׁתָּא הָכָא,  
לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בְּאַרְעָא דְּיִשְׂרָאֵל. הַשְּׁתָּא עַבְדֵּי, לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בְּנֵי חוֹרִין.

Ha lachma anya di achalu avhatana b'ara d'mitzrayim. Kol dichfin yeitei v'yeichol, kol ditzrich yeitei v'yifsach. Hashata hacha, l'shanah habaah b'ara d'Yisrael. Hashata avdej, l'shanah habaah b'nei chorin.

This is the bread of affliction that our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. All those who are hungry let them enter and eat, all who are in need let them enter and celebrate Passover. This year we are here, next year let us be in the land of Israel. This year we are slaves, next year let us be free people.

It is only after this section that we turn to the fifth part of the Seder, Maggid, the telling of the story. We cannot begin the story of the Exodus from Egypt—or our journey toward liberation—before we break this bread and make this declaration.

It may seem odd that our story of liberation begins with the breaking of the unleavened bread, but it is essential to our journey. When we feel whole and complete, we may think we can do it all on our own. But liberation can never happen in isolation.

It is only when we recognize that our liberation is bound up with the liberation of others that we can take that first step toward true freedom.

At this moment, with antisemitism and threats to democracy growing, it is more urgent than ever to build coalitions that recognize our communities' safety and rights are intertwined. Jewish safety and inclusive democracy are not opposing forces; our people's history makes clear that they are, in fact, mutually dependent.

**There is no inclusive democracy without Jewish safety, and no Jewish safety without inclusive democracy.**

This is because antisemitism isn't simply a form of hate. It also functions as a conspiracy theory - rooted in tropes of control and power - that seeks to undermine democracy by sowing distrust and division. And as democracy weakens, antisemitism and extremism flourish, posing a danger to all of us. Where antisemitism is normalized, democracy is threatened; and where democracy is threatened, Jews have historically been among the first targeted.

**This is why we break this matzah.**

**Our story of freedom begins by inviting others into our journey.**

**Liberation can never be and should never be a selfish act; it must be shared.**

In the wake of October 7th, many of us feel the pain of what has felt like a lack of allyship. The solution is not to retreat from building relationships and coalitions. Rather, it is to show up, to be clear about what allyship means to us, to engage in difficult conversations, and to emphasize our shared safety and future. We break the matzah as a symbol of opening our hearts, offering a genuine piece of ourselves, and extending an invitation to others to join us in our shared struggle for freedom.

It is when we seek to keep the matzah whole, holding it only for ourselves, that it becomes the bread of oppression. But when we break it, proclaiming what we have to share, announcing our willingness and our desire to be in relationship with others, it becomes the bread of freedom.

This is the work we are committed to at JCPA - rooted in the recognition that the fight against hate is not zero sum. We hope you'll join us.

**TAKE  
ACTION**

JCPA's *Protecting Democracy and Combating Hate & Bigotry Action Networks* are mobilizing Jewish Americans and allies to show up for the policies we need to advance our safety and our democracy.



SCAN TO SIGN UP