



# Maggid | Telling Our Story

**Reader:**

In every generation we must each see ourselves *k'ilu hu yatzah mi-Mitzrayim* / as though we ourselves were freed from Egypt. This year the story speaks for itself:

**All:**

Long ago, a new king rose over Egypt. "Behold!" he said. "The people are too many and too mighty. Let us deal shrewdly with them." He set over them taskmasters to afflict them and to make their lives bitter and harsh.<sup>i</sup> We became slaves to Pharaoh in Mitzrayim.

Had God not brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, we and our children and our children's children would still be servants to Pharaoh.

**Reader:**

There arose in America a President who did not know the real promise of this country, who did not recognize the beauty of our American ideals. He made our lives harsh with schemes of registers, walls, deportations, and humiliation. He embittered our lives: trampled the poor, cut our safety nets, and flouted the rule and protections of law. He afflicted and enabled the forces of hate. He feared that we, the people, were too numerous - and he tried to divide us from each other.

**All:**

But the more he afflicted us, the more we multiplied.<sup>ii</sup>

**Reader:**

When millions of people marched around the globe and filled the streets to say no the day after an empty inauguration - we multiplied. When we filled the airports with welcome after they tried to slam shut our doors with a hate-filled Muslim ban - we multiplied. When we rang their phones so many times they could not answer us all - we multiplied.

**All:**

We will not stand idly by the blood of our sisters and brothers.<sup>iii</sup> We know the heart of the outsider because we were outsiders in Mitzrayim.<sup>iv</sup>

**Reader:**

Together, we will lift up the oppressed with our own strong hands and outstretched arms. We come from a proud history: our Jewish forebears were workers, strikers, unionists, and activists. Our immigrant families fled terror and sought freedom. Our enslaved and indigenous ancestors fought for their place in an America that tried to deny their humanity. We share a common ancestry of resistance.

**All:**

Whoever destroys one life, it is as if they destroyed an entire world ...  
Whoever saves one life, it is as if they saved an entire world.<sup>v</sup>

**Reader:**

The midwives Shifrah and Puah were the first to resist. Pharaoh ordered every Hebrew baby boy killed at birth, but these two women refused to murder our children. They stood up to the most powerful man in their world. It was they who saved Moses the first time, making possible our whole story of liberation. The second time Moses was saved by his sister Miriam and mother Yocheved. Any of us can find our inner Shifrah and Puah, our Miriam and Yocheved. These times are life and death for too many people - we can all save lives in our times.

**All:**

Not just one enemy alone has risen against us, but in every generation they have risen against us to destroy us. Yet we have been saved from their hands.<sup>vi</sup>

**Reader:**

Today we face a new Pharaoh and we live in fear for our neighbors, our communities, our country, and ourselves. Let us remember that we have faced Pharaoh before – and we have won.

**All:**

Even if we were all old and wise and learned in Torah, we would still be commanded to tell the story of the Exodus from Mitzrayim.<sup>vii</sup>

**Reader:**

These stories give us strength for the work ahead: we have been here before, countless times. At each step on our long journey to freedom, we encountered a moment when we were unsure we would survive. Maybe right now we feel we are standing at the Red Sea. Maybe right now we feel we have still only been through the first plague, with nine more to come. But we will never stop, and we will never be stopped. Though the road ahead is long, may we see how far we have already come, and the incredible power we carry with us.

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<sup>i</sup> Exodus 1:9-11, 14

<sup>ii</sup> Exodus 1:12

<sup>iii</sup> Leviticus 19:16

<sup>iv</sup> Exodus 23:9

<sup>v</sup> Mishna Sanhedrin 4:5

<sup>vi</sup> Passover Haggadah

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*Created by Rebecca Ennen  
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*We hope this Passover brings  
renewed hope and courage  
for all who are seeking to respond  
to the Pharaohs of our times.*

