

HAGADA RHYMES

INTRODUCTION:

One of the most important goals of the *seder* night-if not the most important-is to keep the attention of the children while instilling Torah fundamentals. Parents must resort to any and all pedagogical techniques at their disposal. One of the techniques I've found effective is to tell over various parts of the *seder* in rhyme. Children enjoy guessing the rhyme words...and adults enjoy it even more. The rhymes are not an ends in and of themselves and should not be seen as such. They are a way of maintaining attentiveness and interest, and of making the evening enjoyable and exciting. They should serve as an entry point for parents to then explain the concepts being dealt with.

The rhythm in the poems is not always perfect, so you may have to play around a little by stretching some words and changing speeds. I have inserted dashes in order to help with the rhythm. Some of the words are written intentionally slangy or misspelled, for the sake of the cause. Transliterated words are in italics. And please remember to pause before saying the rhyme word in each sentence, so that everyone present has a chance to guess them. I hope you find them useful and enjoyable.

1) WELCOME

We'd like to welcome - all who are here
For the biggest event - of the entire year
So get ready to drink, - to eat, and to listen
People without *seders* - don't know what they're missin'
Of course if you have - something you'd like to say
Please give it over - in your own special way
It could be a story - an idea or a *vort*
But do us one favor - please keep it short
We have lots of *mitzvos* - to do tonight
With *Siyata Dishmaya* - we'll do them right
We hope you enjoy - yourselves and keep smiling
From the time we do Kiddush - 'till "*Leshana Haba Birushlayim*"
But one last thing - before we start
We have to say - with all of our heart
"Thank you" to Mommy (or Bubby or wife or hostess etc.) - for all that you've done
To make sure our *seder* - is a special one

2) KADDESH

Kaddesh is the beginning - of the *seder*
Right now is early-we'll finish much later
We fill up our *bechers* - all the way to the top
And we'll drink them down - to the very last drop
We drink *behesaiva* - only the boys and the men
If you don't do *hesaiva* - you must drink it again

Some people use grape juice-some use strong wine
According to *halacha*- either way is fine
Now look at your clothing-all nice and clean
That's quite likely change-if you know what I mean
Anticipate spilling-more than you think
That's what's expected - when people drink

3) URCHATZ

We wash our hands - at the sink
But it's not as easy - as you think
We hope you have - a lot of *hatzlacha*
Remembering *not* - to make a *bracha*
The reason we wash - I'll explain to you
You can think about it - while you chew
The *halacha* is - when something is dipped
You can not put it - past your lips
Unless you do - a full *netila*
If you knew this already - I ask *mechila*
The reason we dip is - we're *bnei chorin*
That means we're free-we're not *avadim*

4) KARPASS

Everybody - should take a piece
Less than *kezayiss*-it's not much to eat
Carrots or celery-take your choice
And remember tonight - were going to dip twice
Dip it in - and make it wet
But don't start eating - or munching yet
We have to make - a *bracha rishona*
But we won't be making - a *bracha achrona*
The water is salty - just like the tears
Of the Jews in *Mitzrayim* - for so many years
So much suffering – so much pain
They couldn't wait - to be free again
But the *geula* came-just like a dream
So we dip tonight- like *bnei chorin*

5) YACHAYZ

We start with three matzos-all whole and nice
Just do me a favor - don't ask the price
We try to break one of them - right down the middle
But one piece will be big - and one will be little
The bigger piece - will be hidden away
Then the children will find it - and Daddy will pay

6) HA LACHMA ANYA...

What kind of game is it - which we're playing?
Inviting in people - who can't hear what we're saying?
The answer is - we're not inviting
We're doing something - much more exciting
We're telling the story - of the Jewish nation
And this is what happened - in *their* situation
They left *Mitzrayim* - in a very big rush
Some of the people - didn't get to take much
So those who did - called out nice and loud
Come eat with us-we don't mind a crowd
Of course this is meant - to teach us a lesson
We must open our homes - and our hearts to do *chessed*

7) MA'ASEH BREBBE ELIEZER...

Five big *tzaddikim* - were at the *seder*
They didn't notice it - getting later and later
They we're all having - such a good time
Telling the story - of *yetzias Mitzrayim*
We today - can't possibly measure
How much they enjoyed it - such a pleasure
In the morning their *talmidim* - came and said
We know you never- went to bed
You really got into - telling the story
Which demonstrates *Hashem's* - honor and glory
We hate to have to - ruin your fun
But its *zman krias shama* - of the *Magen Avraham*

8) AMAR REBBE ELAZAR BEN AZARYA...

Rebbe Elazar Ben Azarya - had a beard
But something about it - was a little weird
He went to sleep - as usual one night
When he awoke in the morning - some had turned white
So although he was young - just eighteen
He said out loud - *Harei ani k'ven shivi'im*
But why did this happen- this little *ness*?
Why *was* there a change - in the hair on his face?
As the new *nassi* - he had to speak
He gave a *drasha* - in the *bais medrash* each week
So in order that his words - should carry more weight
He had to look older - than ten plus eight

9) YACHOL MA'ROSH CHODESH

There's a Torah assignment - for every father

And he can't just say - "I don't want to bother"
So if you're a Jew - and not a goy
You must tell over - to all of your boys
How *Bnei Yisrael* did - as were told
Men and women – young and old
They followed *Moshe* - into the desert
It wasn't easy –it was quite an effort
Now *Rosh Chodesh* is when - *Pesach* cleaning begins
This is a *kapara* - for all of our sins
There's scrubbing and cleaning - and unpleasant moods
And don't even bother - looking for food
If you're lucky you'll find - some bread and some chumus
And maybe some leftover - *mishloach moonooss*
O.k. o.k. - you know I'm just kidding
We're more than happy - to do *Hashem's* bidding
The truth is that *Pesach* - cleaning is fun
Because Mommy gets help - from everyone
Smiling and singing - and lots of good cheer
Too bad we don't do - *Pesach* cleaning all year
So we might have thought - *Rosh Chodesh* is when
Fathers must tell over - the story again
The *hagada* teaches us - this isn't so
It's done at the *seder* - with matza and *maror*

10) MITCHILA OVDEI KOCHAVIM...

A long time before - the *avodas perach*
There lived a man - by the name of *Terach*
He sold many idols-some big and some small
His son *Avram* went - and smashed up them all
He put a stick - in the hand of the biggest
Said "It wasn't me-it was him that did it"
So *Terach* told Nimrod- who went into a rage
He had *Avram* thrown - into *kivshan ha'aish*
But *Avram* was saved-not a singe or a burn
And after him - it was *Haran's* turn
But he only believed in *Hashem* - with his lips
So he ended up being - burnt to a crisp
Hashem told *Avram* - take your things and your wife
Go to *Eretz Yisrael* - to start a new life
Yizchak was born - to him and to Sara
Such a fine boy-*bli ayin hara*
Yitzchok had two sons - one good and one bad
Ya'akov made him happy - *Esav* made him sad

11) BORUCH SHOMER HAVTACHASO...

At *bris bein habesarim* - *Hashem* had some news
What *Avraham* heard - was not good for the Jews
They would spend time as strangers - in a land not their own
They'd suffer and weep - they'd cry and they'd groan
It would last for a while - four hundred years
By the end of that time - they'd have pretty long beards
But then they would leave - there'd be a big switch
They'd depart from *Mitzrayim* - with each one quite rich
But the real *rechush* - was still on its way
I'll give you a hint - we still have it today
That's right, it's the Torah - sweeter than pie
The presentation took place - at *Har Sinai*

12) V'HI SHE'AMDA...

No matter how hard - our enemies try
To wipe out the Jews - and commit genocide
They'll never succeed-of that we are certain
Hashem made a promise - which will never be broken
They'll scheme and conspire - they'll plan and they'll plot
Reshaim like *Haman* - and *Achmadinijad*
But we know no matter - how hard they try
We will survive - and they're gonna die
This is the way - *Hashem* demonstrates
That He's protecting us - in all times and places
So we lift up our cups - and say loud and clear
With *Hashem* watching over - we have nothing to fear

13) TSAI U'LMAD...

Lavan had - two wonderful daughters
Yaakov met *Rachel* - at the water
Right there he decided - she'd be his wife
He worked for her - seven yeas of his life
But *Lavan* switched - he gave *Yaakov* her sister
Yaakov confronted him - said "Hey, mister
I worked for *Rachel* - so why did you cheat
You're the biggest crook - I'll ever meet"
Lavan just laughed - in *Yaakov's* face
"You don't know the rules - of our little place
The younger sister - must wait her turn
I guess that's something - you'll have to learn"
Every time - they made a deal
Lavan would lie - and try to steal
Yaakov took his family - and ran away
But what they went in a week - *Lavan* went in a day
Hashem came to *Lavan* - and told him quite clearly

If you start up with *Yaakov* - you're going to pay dearly

14) VAYAIRED MITZRAIYMA...

Yaakov Avinu - went to *Mitzrayim*

He met his son *Yoseph* - *Menashe* and *Ephraim*

The *Bnei Yisrael* were increasing - in leaps and bounds

The *Mitzri'im* felt invaded - there were *Yidden* all around

The mommies were having - six babies at a time

To order a *mohel* - you had to wait in line

The *Mitzri'im* didn't want *Yidden* - all over the place

So they made them build - *Pitom* and *Ra'amsess*

Hashem saw all of - their suffering and then

He decided it was time - for it all to end

So He brought the *makos* - the total was ten

When one was finished - they got hit again

They came at the rate - of one per *chodesh*

That's what they got - that was their *onesh*

15) BIMSEI ME'AT...

Six little babies - make lots of noise

Crying and screaming - and fighting over toys

Pushing the buggy - was no easy feat

Considering it was wider - than the street

Cooking and cleaning - and making the meals

The mother had to be - the "real deal"

The father had pressure - *parnassa* was tough

And this was *before* - having to marry them off

Just imagine - what it was like

If one of them ever - wanted a bike

Dad didn't buy one - he had to buy six

Think of all the tires - he had to fix

And if he decided - to buy a ball

He couldn't buy one - he had to buy for them all

It must've been a project - just to take baths

It's easy for you - to just sit here and laugh

Then the next year - she gave birth to six more

It was probably so crowded - they had to sleep on the floor

But just remember - what the truth is

There's no bigger *bracha* - for parents than kids

16) SHEHAYU YISRAEL METZUYANIM...

Metzuyanim means - they didn't change

Their language or clothing - or their names

You could tell a Yid - with just one glance

By looking at his shirt - or at his pants

They didn't have names - like Greg or Steve
I know you find it - hard to believe
Not Mary or Jane - or Jeff or Wendell
No, they had names - like *Miriam* and *Mendel*
The women wore clothing - *tznius* and long
They knew what was right - and they knew what was wrong
The music they played - was *aidel* and sweet
It didn't sound like people - yelling in the street
Of course this also - applies in our days
To behave like *Yidden* - and not change our ways

17) DAAM

Just imagine - going to the sink
All you want - is water to drink
And then you yell out - "Yuch – its all red"
You won't even taste it – it looks so 'bed'
Then you decide - to take a shower
With soap and shampoo – you'll smell like a flower
You get yourself ready - and turn on the spray
But a stream of blood - comes flying your way
So you decide to go - to the beach for a swim
You'll get yourself clean - once you go in
But the water's all red – people are screaming
You pinch yourself – you must be dreaming
It you think this is bad - there's still something worse
You have no way - of quenching your thirst
So you walk around - till you find a Yid
And then pay good money - for a little liquid

18) TSFARDAYA

There was one big *tsfardaya* - slimy and green
Biggest *tzfardaya* - you've ever seen
He hopped around – cried "ribbit ribbit"
The *Mitzri'im* ran over - and hit it, hit it
But each time they gave it - a good hard smack
More jumped out - and started to attack
The more they hit - the more came out
They filled up *Mitzrayim* - and jumped about
Now just imagine - sitting down
From underneath - you hear a sound
It's just the chair – that's what you wish
But in your heart you know - you felt a squish
When you put your leg - into your pants
You suddenly jumped - and started to dance
When you opened the fridge - to get a snack

Something green - was on the rack
Every room - that you enter
Has become a major - tzfardaya center
There's nowhere to run - and nowhere to hide
Even the bodies - have them inside
When you started to eat - and took a bite
You could tell right away - something's not right
Something green - got caught in you teeth
It was so distasteful - you couldn't breathe

19) KINIM

Just imagine - what it would be like
Mornings without - a scream or a fight
Hair nice and clean - without anything crawling
No special lice combs-no crying or bawling
As bad as it is - the *Mitzri'im* had it worse
All over their bodies, - their pants and their shirts
All they could do - was stand there and scratch
Their arms and their legs - their heads and their backs
So next time your'e thinking - "What can we do
Can't someone invent - some sort of shampoo?
To pour on the head - and use it just once
Instead of spending - so much time going nuts"
Realize things aren't - as bad as you think
They were worse for the *Mitzri'im* - and *Paroah* their king
Imagine what *Mitzri - gannenets* went through
Every one of the kids - had a head like a zoo
"Achmad and Walid - you have to go home
Don't come back until cleaned - by a *kinim* comb"
But the boys didn't go - they stayed and protested
"With all due respect ma'am - you too are infested"

20) AROV

Lions and tigers - with very sharp teeth
Bears and wolves - looking for something to eat
Huge elephants - that weighed a ton
Stomping on *Mitzri's* - and having fun
Hippos that could swallow - whole watermelons
Swallowing *Mitzri's* - who were cryin' and yellin'
They ran in a panic - and tried to hide
But the animals found them - and dragged them outside
"Please please" they yelled - "have *milchiks* to eat"
"No thanks" said the beasts - "what we want is meat"
But they didn't hurt *Yidden* - not even one baby
Banish the thought - don't even think maybe

The *Yidden* could relax - they were the winners
The *Mitzri's* however - became the animals' dinners

21) DEVER

Horses and donkeys - camels and sheep
These creatures were dead - not just asleep
The *Mitzri'im* were suffering - pretty upset
Bnei Yisrael laughed - said "That's what you get"
They cried and they groaned - didn't think it was funny
Because during this *maka* - they lost lots of money
Moshe had warned them - but they didn't listen
So lots of their animals - ended up missin'

22) CHOSHECH

Imagine we went in - for a visit
To a *Mitzri* home – and they said "Who is it?"
We wouldn't answer - we'd have nothing to fear
We'd listen to them - this is what we'd hear
"What's that noise - I hear in my home?"
I've got the feeling - we're not alone
Hey somebody please - turn on the light
It's so dark in here - it seems like night
I can't move my head - or my feet or my hands
I can't run or walk - or put on my pants
They're opening cabinets - closets and drawers
While I can do nothing – can't even see the floor
They want to find gold - and silver and jewels
This isn't fair-they're breaking the rules
But of course they were – very much mistaken
Bnei Yisrael searched-but nothing was taken

23) MAKAS BECHOROS

Moshe said "get ready – it's going to hurt
This is the *maka* - that's going to be worst
There will not be - a *Mitzri bechor*
Who by tomorrow - will be alive anymore
In every home - there's going to be crying
"Help us" they'll yell - "the *bechors* are all dying"
In some of the houses - more than one died
Because the true father - couldn't be identified
Paroah went running - "where's *Moshe*?" he shouted
"You all have to leave - get out out out out!"