



DIVINE CHAOS  
HAGGADAH

A NIGHT OF DIVINITY,  
TRANSCENDENCE, AND  
TIME TRAVEL



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# AUTHOR'S NOTE

Hi.

It's been a year. It's been a time. It's been. It's.

And now it's Passover. Which was always my favorite holiday, it's so full of gorgeous things: radical empathy, sweeping stories, identification with the oppressed to keep us focused on liberation. Re-up on the mission for the year ahead, and walk out of the Seder dreaming of what's better, using all the tactics we've learned from the Exodus story to manifest the dream of what I knew was a metaphorical Yerushalayim.

Not this one. Not this Jerusalem. For me, gaining this understanding was my milestone of adulthood, not my b\*mitzvah. My bat mitzvah, when I stood on the grounds of Yad Vashem and chanted Torah in front of my parents and grandparents, among the others on the Birthright-but-for-your-kid's-b\*mitzvah bus tour we went on. I never got to ask my grandparents what they were thinking that day. I just wanted to get back to the hotel so that I could read *A Wrinkle in Time*, which had me truly in its clutches.

I was younger than b\*mitzvah age when I started writing songs and poems for Seders with my parents. I wrote my first Haggadah in high school, and have compiled/written Haggadot now for many years. This ritual allows me to stay connected to all that I love so dearly about Judaism – our culture, our flawed texts, our foundational liturgies and traditions, our magic, our grief – while also using the metaphors and morals to encounter the moment.

The Seder ritual has given me a space to approach my work as Jewish person outside of the walls of institutional Judaism, of Zionism and nationalism generally, of binary thinking that is always looking for a hero and a villain. I strive to create Jewish connections that are pluralistic, interfaith, and openly cognizant of our trauma and the trauma that we play out internationally, interpersonally, and everywhere in between. Passover is a night to walk alongside our fears, to access courage, to embrace mystery. Let it be so.

With the Seder's ancient mandate of radical empathy towards liberation, this Haggadah was born from my recent training as a grief coach and death doula. What I have come to understand is that, like Moses, each of us encounters the burning bush – divinity that burns eternally – and the work of the Angel of Death, a sensual but senseless and terrifyingly-reliable aspect of divinity. These divinities transform us, wash through us, and with smoke in the air and stories to tell, we move through them tonight with the aim of divine and ancestral connection. It is also a time to explore the cycles of empire and oppression, to challenge ourselves to not just identify with the “hero,” but seek to find identification with each character. Including the divine.

How does this night make us more divine? How does this night make us more mortal? When we encounter the divine, how do we act?

I hope we can approach each other as ancient treasures – full of strength and delicacy.

With love,  
Ariel

WE HOLD OUR LIVES CLOSE  
TONIGHT, ALONG WITH OUR  
POWERS AND OUR  
CONNECTION TO DIVINE  
MYSTERY - THESE ARE OUR  
CONSTANT COMPANIONS IN  
THE "NARROW PLACES" AND  
IN LIBERATION.



# THE SEDER

**K A D E I S H - קדש**

Creating holiness – Kiddush blessing and first cup of wine

**U R C H A T Z - ורחץ**

Crossing waters – Silent hand washing

**K A R P A S - כרפס**

Earth connection – Dipping karpas in salt water

**Y A C H A T Z - יחץ**

Breaking the middle matzah; the larger piece becomes the Afikoman

**M A G G I D - מגיד**

Some lifetimes – The Passover story and second cup of wine

**R A C H ' T Z A H - רחצה**

Divine waters – Hand washing with blessing

**M O T Z I M A T Z A H - מוציא מצה**

Blessing what is brittle – Blessing over matzah

**M A R O R - מרור**

Bitterness visualization – Eating of the maroR

**K O R E I C H - כורך**

Eating of a sandwich made of matzah and maror

**S H U L C H A N O R E I C H - שלחן עורך**

We dedicate to the ancestors – The holiday meal

**T Z A F U N - צפון**

A bland morsel – Eating the afikoman

**B A R E I C H - ברך**

A robust old chant – Blessing after the meal & third cup

**H A L L E L - הלל**

Ecstasy cries – Hallel and the fourth cup of wine

**N I R T Z A H - נרצה**

Waves of Want – Closing the Seder





K A D E S H - קִדְשׁ  
CREATING HOLY SPACE

We are here tonight as specks in the ocean of time, divinity, and knowledge. We are here for mysterious reasons, most of which are beyond our control. We have a text to guide us. We have a 14-step process that allows us the luxury of knowing what it will all look like so that we can be taken. We can transcend this moment, this century, our entire lives, in order to meet this ancient religious mandate.

Given all this, let us hold our mortality close tonight – indeed, we were brought out of Mitzrayim – out of the narrowest of places – for exactly this.

We challenge our lives with imagination, humility, steadfastness, empathy, and the work of making what's to come better. We are not required to complete the work but we must not abandon it either, the Talmud says.

And so we bless the night, the holiday, the occasion to do this work with liturgy that is thousands of years old. In bringing the ancient into the room, we recognize the timelessness that this night requires of us. We must become a part of the Exodus story ourselves, and our ability to time travel in this way removes us from the time and culture in which we live now. How does – how can – this change our daily life? May it transform us towards peace.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיְמָנוּ וְהַגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה:

*Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech haolam, shehecheyanu, v'kiy'manu, v'higianu  
laz'man hazeh.*

It is such a blessing that we live and are uplifted, that we are sustained by this world, and that we found our way here, for this moment. Amen.



# URCHATZ - וְרַחֵץ

## CROSSING WATERS



It's powerful that our first act within this holy space is done in silence. We must treat this space with reverence – and make the most of it, since the rest of the night will likely, or hopefully, be pretty loud.

In a writing about funerals – another time traditionally in Judaism when folks wash their hands without a blessing – in his work the Sfat Emet, Jewish Chasidic Rabbi Yehudah Aryeh Leib Alter said that such handwashing is “giving the water to the impure energies” so that they will be satiated.

Presumably this means the water is an offering. It can hold “impure energies” in a way that helps to keep us safe. What energies do we have on us now that the Seder wants us to get rid of in order to start?

I point this out (with thanks to Lucie) because what this water is doing for us is cosmic, and at the same time it's our offering.

In my family tradition, we wash each other's hands. We consider the need for each other in this ritual, this life. We consider each other as caretakers and partners in crime. We consider that in ancient times, the blood of our sacrifices were all put into the same bowl, and the sprinkles from those shared bowls were (somehow) the source of communal healing for our individual and collective sins. We consider the ways we can and cannot control water.

Fill a washing cup with water and place it in a large bowl. We turn to face each other, put the bowl in your lap, and I pour three small pours over each of your hands. You shake your hands – maybe you use a towel, or maybe you let them dry on their own time if you're not keen to let the feeling go. Pass the bowl to the next, and the next.

Cast this water back out into a moving body of water if you please, or find a way to meaningfully dispose of the water which holds our impurities and energies.



## K A R P A S - כַּרְפָּס

### EARTH CONNECTION

We have consecrated this holy space with our intentions and our first cup of wine, we've been quietly blessed and cleansed by water. Now, we invite in the earth.

For those of us raised on Captain Planet, there are barely words for the distress we can feel as creatures who stay connected to the planet at the cost of feeling its pain. Even when our species has found ways to completely disconnect from that which sustains us. Maintaining connections to that which we cannot explain or control helps to put our lives in perspective.

And still there is joy in the planet – joy in the snow days and in the beach days. There are flowers and forests full of ferns and moss. There are the figures we see in the stars and the ways they become our companions. We honor the ancient pagan nature of this ritual by offering up newly-sprouted spring greens.

Whether you eat potato, celery, a whole handful of parsley (help, why), or something else, prep that now, dip it into salt water and praise the spring, praise the planet, praise the humans who collaborate with the planet, and bless the divinity that lives within it all.



# GO TO THE LIMITS OF YOUR LONGING

Written by Rainer Maria Rilke  
Translated and read by Joanna Macy

God speaks to each of us as he makes us,  
then walks with us silently out of the night.

These are the words we dimly hear:

You, sent out beyond your recall,  
go to the limits of your longing.  
Embody me.

Flare up like a flame  
and make big shadows I can move in.

Let everything happen to you: beauty and terror.  
Just keep going. No feeling is final.  
Don't let yourself lose me.

Nearby is the country they call life.  
You will know it by its seriousness.  
Give me your hand.

Book of Hours, I 59

# Y A C H A T Z - י ח ז

## BREAKING OPEN VISUALIZATION

This is the first of four guided visualizations in this Haggadah. It is meant to open up space within us as we also perform literal breaking.

I was skeptical about the power of visualizations, but have found them to be meaningful and grounding spaces for transcendence and time travel. Because the Seder requires time travel, radical empathy, and connection as we study and talk and strategize into the night. The wine is meant to be a part of this at the Seder, but some of us don't drink and others of us need a bit more to accompany the wine.

Let's meditate on the middle of our three stacked ritual pieces of Matzah. We break in half and read what's below. And, if someone would rather hide the afikoman than sit through this visualization, let it be so.

Space should be made following visualizations to breathe, stretch, take a bio break, and discuss anything we saw, anything that came up, etc. A chime could be used, or something that marks the closing of the visualization.

And what is a holy space without brokenness? There are hardships to come, we know, and they start now.

Close your eyes. Breathe.

Like the matzah, we are full of seams. Visualize yourself, full of seams. Find one that looks good.

Run your finger along it. Test it.

Break yourself open along that seam.

Leave yourself behind, and walk through the now-open gate.

Leave today behind.

Leave your house, your things. Leave any trappings that make you you.

And walk through the space you opened.

Breathe into the space. Recognize yourself. Recognize preparing for a journey.

What does it look like there? What does it smell like?

Turn in a full circle.

Walk through and find yourself back here, exactly where you are.

Where do you feel it in your body, when you're walking through?

Breathe. Open your eyes slowly.

Breathe. We have many stories to tell.

# MAGGID - מגיד

## SOME LIVES IN REVIEW



Maggid is a big heart of the Seder. It takes us through a full lifecycle arc of experience – intention setting, confusion, childhood, telling, learning, traveling, reflecting, and re-telling the story in context after it happens.

We will live about 500 years during Maggid, and finally after it's over we will really enjoy that second cup of wine. Until then though, we're really in it.

### Ha Lachma - Generosity

Maggid requires its own intentional space-making and intention-setting, and *Ha Lachma* is it. We are eating the decidedly un-lush bread of our ancestors. We are opening our space. We are agreeing that we do know where we are – we're here. We're slaves. And in all these states of being that are so neatly contrasted by the poem's classic biblical parallelism – the way it repeats and refines from one sentence to the next while employing the same sentence structure. And what it's saying is that we have what to share, and what to dream.





# FOUR QUESTIONS

The four questions are kind of like... priming the pump. The Rabbis picked these four basic questions not with no intention of answering them, rather with the intention of reminding us to check in about what we're doing as we're doing it. To ask ourselves why. It's a good life skill and especially encouraged throughout the Seder as we play with time – we ground here in the moment so that we can move through the 500 years of Maggid at the same time.

What if we gave this kind of scrutiny to everything we did? How does asking questions open us up?

## „ ANSWERS ”

There are no answers – it would be foolish to think that we would find any here in the Haggadah (and generally in life). But, this is what comes after the questions, and so many have explored the ways that this text is or is not an answer to any of the questions.

### Seder of our Sages: Telling of the Story

We are also time traveling to the Rabbinic Age – the night we read about here took place around 100CE under the Roman occupation. Some say that the scholars were studying Exodus, others say that they were strategizing about how to mount a rebellion against the occupation. Either way, I also read this story as a reminder that it's easy to lose oneself and one's time during the Seder. This is a tradition we can uphold and keep in mind as we study something that we can study every year and still not understand!

# FOUR CHILDREN

It's time for more time travel – this time to ourselves as children. I generally dislike talking about the four children as they are archetypes made by a few well-known men living in a patriarchy/society/culture/economy so far from our own that their archetypes barely make sense. Let's trash others' archetypes in our quest toward freedom!

Still, there is what to be gained here. The Jungian dream theory in which everyone is me/you/one can also apply here – how are we each child *and* the adult? The answers are quite similar with one nasty exception. I've always been struck by how quickly that adult unilaterally cuts a “bad” child out of collective liberation. Isn't that the Angel of Death's job? When have we played divine, or had divinity/power played upon us?

בְּרוּךְ הַמְּקוֹם, בְּרוּךְ הוּא. בְּרוּךְ שִׁנְתָן תּוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּרוּךְ הוּא  
כִּנְגַד אַרְבַּעַה בָּנִים דִּבְרָה תּוֹרָה. אֶחָד חָכָם, וְאֶחָד רָשָׁע, וְאֶחָד תָּם, וְאֶחָד שְׂאִינֹו יוֹדֵעַ לְשֹׂאֹל

The Torah speaks of four types of children:  
one is wise, one is wicked, one is simple, and one does not know how to ask.

## Smarty

חָכָם מָה הוּא אוֹמֵר? מָה הָעֵדוּת  
וְהַחֻקִּים וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יי  
אֶלְהֵינוּ אֶתְכֶם? וְאֵךְ אֵתָה אֶמֶר לוֹ  
כִּהְלָכוֹת הַפֶּסַח: אֵין מִסְטִירִין אַחַר  
הַפֶּסַח אֶפִיקוּמִן

The “Wise” One asks: "What is the meaning of the laws and traditions God has commanded?"  
(Deuteronomy 6:20) You should teach him all the traditions of Passover, even to the last detail.

## Bad / Boundaried

רָשָׁע מָה הוּא אוֹמֵר? מָה הָעֵבֶדָה הַזֹּאת לָכֶם? לָכֶם - וְלֹא  
לוֹ. וְלִפִּי שֶׁהוֹצִיא אֶת עַצְמוֹ מִן הַכְּלָל כִּפְסַר בְּעַקְרָו  
וְאֵךְ אֵתָה הִקְהָה אֶת שְׁנֵיוֹ וְאָמַר לוֹ: בְּעִבּוֹר זֶה עָשָׂה יי לִי.  
בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם. לִי - וְלֹא לוֹ. אֵילוֹ הָיָה שָׁם, לֹא הָיָה נִגְאָל

The “Wicked” One asks: "What does this ritual mean to you?" (Exodus 12:26) By using the expression "to you" he excludes himself from his people and denies God. Shake his arrogance and say to him: "It is because of what God did for me when I came out of Egypt..."  
(Exodus 13:8) "For me" and not for him – for had they been in Egypt, they would not have been freed.

## Groovy

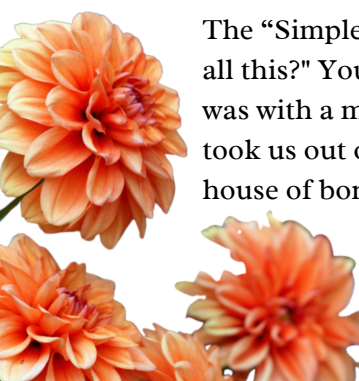
תָּם מָה הוּא אוֹמֵר? מָה זֹאת?  
וְאֶמְרָתְ אֵלָיו: בְּחֶזֶק יָד הוֹצִיאָנוּ יי  
מִמִּצְרַיִם, מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים

The “Simple” One asks: "What is all this?" You should tell him: "It was with a mighty hand that God took us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."

## Non-verbal

וְשֹׂאִינוּ יוֹדֵעַ לְשֹׂאֹל - אֵת פֶּתַח לוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וְהִגַּדְתָּ לְבִנְךָ  
בְּיוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר, בְּעִבּוֹר זֶה עָשָׂה יי לִי בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם

As for the “One Who Does Not Know How To Ask,” you should open the discussion for him, as it is written: "And you shall explain to your child on that day, 'It is because of what God did for me when I came out of Egypt.'" (Exodus 13:8)



# MAGGID - TEXT STUDY

## ENCOUNTERING MANIFESTATIONS OF THE DIVINE

The Exodus story is one where the veil between humanity and the divine is thin. Let's explore two of those instances. In the first, Moshe encounters the burning bush inhabited by an angel of God. Later, the divine logistics of the tenth plague reveal a "Destroyer," generally described as the Angel of Death. Who are these divine characters, and how are humans interacting with them?

### Texts

#### The Burning Bush

An angel of God appeared to him in a blazing fire out of a bush. Moshe gazed, and there was a bush all aflame, yet the bush was not consumed. Moses said, "I must turn aside to look at this marvelous sight; why doesn't the bush burn up?" When God saw that Moshe had turned aside to look, God called to him out of the bush: "Moses! Moses!" He answered, "Here I am." And God said, "Do not come closer! Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you stand is holy ground!" Exodus 3:2-5

#### The Destroyer / Angel of Death

For that night I will go through the land of Egypt and strike down every [male] first-born in the land of Egypt, both human and animal; and I will mete out punishments to all the gods of Egypt, I God. For God, when going through to smite the Mitzrim, will see the blood on the lintel and the two doorposts, and God will pass over the door and not let the Destroyer enter and smite your home. Exodus 12:12-13

### Commentary

#### The Burning Bush

Rav Yosef says: A person should always learn proper behavior from the wisdom of his Creator, as the Holy One, Blessed be He, disregarded all of the mountains and hills and rested the Divine Presence on the lowly Mount Sinai. And similarly, when appearing to Moses, God disregarded all of the beautiful trees and rested the Divine Presence on the bush. Sotah 5a:9

Once Moses became aware that God was revealing Godself in the flame in the bush, he ceased to gaze at the flame out of reverence for God. Alternatively, Moses feared that he would die. Indeed, in similar instances, the revelation of an angel caused individuals to fear that this vision was to be their last, after which they would die. Steinzaltz Commentary

#### The Destroyer / Angel of Death

Rav Yosef taught a baraita: What is the meaning of that which is written with regard to the plague of the firstborn: "And none of you shall go out of the opening of your house until the morning" (Exodus 12:22)? If the plague was not decreed upon the Jewish people, why were they not permitted to leave their homes? Once permission is granted to the destroyer to kill, it does not distinguish between the righteous and the wicked. Bava Kamma 60a:17

### Discussion Questions

- How do the Angel of the bush and the Angel of Death relate to God?
- How do God, the Angel, and the Destroyer use their senses?
- What do the humans in the story do in the face of divinity?
- What do you do when you face divinity, or when you can't face it but know it's there?

M A G G I D  
M A R G E P I E R C Y

The courage to let go of the door, the handle.  
The courage to shed the familiar walls whose very  
stains and leaks are comfortable as the little moles  
of the upper arm; stains that recall a feast,  
a child's naughtiness, a loud blattering storm  
that slapped the roof hard, pouring through.

The courage to abandon the graves dug into the hill,  
the small bones of children and the brittle bones  
of the old whose marrow hunger had stolen;  
the courage to desert the tree planted and only  
begun to bear; the riverside where promises were  
shaped; the street where their empty pots were broken.

The courage to leave the place whose language you learned  
as early as your own, whose customs however dan-  
gerous or demeaning, bind you like a halter  
you have learned to pull inside, to move your load;  
the land fertile with the blood spilled on it;  
the roads mapped and annotated for survival.

The courage to walk out of the pain that is known  
into the pain that cannot be imagined,  
mapless, walking into the wilderness, going  
barefoot with a canteen into the desert;  
stuffed in the stinking hold of a rotting ship  
sailing off the map into dragons' mouths,

Cathay, India, Siberia, *goldeneh medina*  
leaving bodies by the way like abandoned treasure.  
So they walked out of Egypt. So they bribed their way  
out of Russia under loads of straw; so they steamed  
out of the bloody smoking charnelhouse of Europe  
on overloaded freighters forbidden all ports—

out of pain into death or freedom or a different  
painful dignity, into squalor and politics.

We Jews are all born of wanderers, with shoes  
under our pillows and a memory of blood that is ours  
raining down. We honor only those Jews who changed  
tonight, those who chose the desert over bondage,

who walked into the strange and became strangers  
and gave birth to children who could look down  
on them standing on their shoulders for having  
been slaves. We honor those who let go of every-  
thing but freedom, who ran, who revolted, who fought,  
who became other by saving themselves.

# MAGGID

## FREEDOM - MYSTERY VISUALIZATION

This is a guided visualization using text from Marge Piercy's poem "Maggid." Any reader can volunteer to lead and anyone can opt out. If you'd rather read the poem, it's on the previous page.

What is a holy space without brokenness? There are hardships to come, we know, but they're already here anyway so we may as well get through it.

Close your eyes. Breathe.

Like any old long story, we are full of seams. Visualize yourself, full of seams. Find one that looks good.

Run your finger along it. Test it.

Nudge into the story that opens along that seam.

Leave yourself behind, and walk through the now-open story.

Leave yourself behind.

Leave today behind, leave your house, your things, the trappings that make you you.

Leave behind anything that isn't yearning for freedom.

Move through and through. Find something in your hand that's always been there.

A little mystery floats by on a breeze.

Follow it to a place that's somehow full of what sustains you most.

Breathe.

Breathe. Honor the mystery above its outcome.

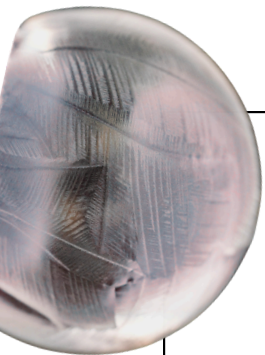
Find the familiar rush of the earth full of words and stories. The songs of its ocean.

Fly above its rush like a little mystery.

The globe spins. It drops you in the desert.

Breathe. Feel the sunshine. Slowly open your eyes. Breathe.

Space should be made following visualizations to breathe, stretch, take a bio break, and discuss anything we saw, anything that came up, etc. A chime could be used, or something that marks the closing of the visualization.



## THE TEN PLAGUES

These plagues mark a time of immense pain, grief, suffering, ecological disaster, and death. Our cups of joy, as they are called, are always lessened by the mandated recitation of the litany of what happened.

Why is it meaningful to repeat the litany of the collective suffering we've witnessed in our lives?

We don't have to think too hard about the plagues of our time, so perhaps we can take a moment to remember that the Exodus story shows us examples of immense resilience and collective caretaking.

What did we do in the narrow places?

- Be midwives
- Keep each other alive
- Watch over each other
- Break laws
- Talk to the divine
- Believe in magic
- Collaborate with divine forces
- Mourn losses, celebrate wins
- Build rhythms

What are we doing now?

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 



## MAGGID - CLOSING - דַּיְינוּ

This is when we stop being enslaved – we create and tell our own time.

Let us yet again experience some Maggid time travel – now that we have delved into the Exodus story, we are able to look back at the highlights of the journey. This is a powerful and strange ritual for being on the other side of a crisis. Dayeinu is basically all of us at some point in our lives, remembering and reciting the litany of sometimes horrible milestones (it was miserable? at the time it didn't feel like enough??), but it was a miraculous step on a miraculous path toward something better!

How can we find meaning and freedom in re-telling the same stories in different phases in our lives?



יְפֶמָּה מַעֲלוֹת טוֹבוֹת לְמָקוֹם עָלֵינוּ  
אֱלוֹ הוֹצִיאָנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם, וְלֹא עָשָׂה בָּהֶם שְׂפָטִים, דַּיְינוּ  
אֱלוֹ עָשָׂה בָּהֶם שְׂפָטִים, וְלֹא עָשָׂה בְּאֱלֹהֵיהֶם, דַּיְינוּ  
אֱלוֹ עָשָׂה בְּאֱלֹהֵיהֶם, וְלֹא הִרְגָּ אֶת בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם, דַּיְינוּ  
אֱלוֹ הִרְגָּ אֶת בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם, וְלֹא נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת מְמוֹנָם, דַּיְינוּ  
אֱלוֹ נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת מְמוֹנָם, וְלֹא קָרַע לָנוּ אֶת הַיָּם, דַּיְינוּ  
אֱלוֹ קָרַע לָנוּ אֶת הַיָּם, וְלֹא הֶעֱבִירָנוּ בְּתוֹכוֹ בְּחָרְבָהּ, דַּיְינוּ  
אֱלוֹ הֶעֱבִירָנוּ בְּתוֹכוֹ בְּחָרְבָהּ, וְלֹא שָׁקַע צָרְנוֹ בְּתוֹכוֹ, דַּיְינוּ  
אֱלוֹ שָׁקַע צָרְנוֹ בְּתוֹכוֹ, וְלֹא סָפַק צָרְפָּנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה, דַּיְינוּ  
אֱלוֹ סָפַק צָרְפָּנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה, וְלֹא הָאֲכִילָנוּ אֶת הַפֶּן, דַּיְינוּ  
אֱלוֹ הָאֲכִילָנוּ אֶת הַפֶּן, וְלֹא נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת, דַּיְינוּ  
אֱלוֹ נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת, וְלֹא קָרְבָנוּ לְפָנֵי הַר סִינַי, דַּיְינוּ  
אֱלוֹ קָרְבָנוּ לְפָנֵי הַר סִינַי, וְלֹא נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַתּוֹרָה, דַּיְינוּ  
אֱלוֹ נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַתּוֹרָה, וְלֹא הִכְנִיסָנוּ לְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, דַּיְינוּ  
אֱלוֹ הִכְנִיסָנוּ לְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְלֹא בָּנָה לָנוּ אֶת בֵּית הַבְּחִירָה, דַּיְינוּ

*Ilu hotzi'anu mimitzrayim... dayenu.*

*Ilu asah bahem shfatim... dayenu...*

*Ilu natan lanu et hashabbat... dayenu.*

*Ilu karvanu lifnei har Sinai... dayenu.*

*Ilu natan lanu et hatorah... dayenu.*

God has bestowed many favors upon us.

Had God brought us out of Egypt... It would have been enough – Dayyenu

Had God executed judgments against the Mitzrim... It would have been enough – Dayyenu

Had God executed judgments against their gods ... It would have been enough – Dayyenu

Had God put to death their firstborn... It would have been enough – Dayyenu

Had God given us their riches... It would have been enough – Dayyenu

Had God split the Sea for us... It would have been enough – Dayyenu

Had God split the Sea for us... It would have been enough – Dayyenu

Had God led us through it on dry land... It would have been enough – Dayyenu

Had God sunk our foes in it... It would have been enough – Dayyenu

Had God satisfied our needs in the desert for 40 years... It would have been enough – Dayyenu

Had God fed us the manna,... It would have been enough – Dayyenu

Had God given us the Sabbath... It would have been enough – Dayyenu

Had God brought us to Mount Sinai... It would have been enough – Dayyenu

Had God given us the Torah... It would have been enough – Dayyenu

Had God brought us into Yisrael, and not built the Temple... It would have been enough – Dayyenu



# MAGGID - OUR ALTAR



רַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל הָיָה אוֹמֵר: כָּל שֶׁלֹּא אָמַר שְׁלֹשָׁה דְּבָרִים אֵלּוּ בַּפֶּסַח, לֹא יֵצֵא יְדֵי חוֹבְתּוֹ,  
וְאֵלּוּ הֵן: פֶּסַח, מַצָּה, וּמְרוֹר

Rabban Gamliel would teach that all those who had not spoken of three things on Passover had not fulfilled their obligation to tell the story, and these three things are: Pesach, Matzah, Maror.

Rabban Gamliel, I genuinely believe, could not have imagined the possibility of the orange. I asked the internet if people in 100CE knew about beets and I learned that folks didn't know to eat the roots until 100 years later.

Time, though, has built us a whole collection of items with individual and collective meaning that becomes ever more robust an altar. As perhaps our ancestors hoped it would on nights like tonight when we look through time. As we explore the items on the altar and their ancient and contemporary meanings, let's consider our wishes for how this altar might grow in the future.

The Pesach – the shankbone or beet – calls back to the “pass over” sacrifice that deterred the Angel of Death from the homes of our ancestors. Marking their homes like a mezuzah. Like their vulnerability is what will keep them alive.

Matzah exists because, as it is written: “And they baked the dough which they brought forth out of Mitzrayim into matzah – cakes of unleavened bread – which had not risen, for having been driven out of Egypt they could not tarry, and they had made no provisions for themselves.” Being unprepared and doing it anyway.

Maror – “And they embittered their lives with servitude, with mortar and bricks without straw, with every form of slavery in the field and with great torment.” Balance in all things – bitter offsets the other flavors but it's heavy to eat alone.

The egg is one of the first religious symbols – representing fertility, eternity, and the renewal of a new annual cycle that begins with our liberation. It doesn't get a step or designated moment in the Seder like Karpas and some of the others, so we eat it now, quietly and delightedly (and dipped in salt water if we please), and wish for all that it represents. Some take the metaphor further and roast the egg until the shell cracks as another nod to the Temple sacrifices.

Karpas represents a holy spring growth, giving honor to the season and its first fruits.

Charoset is made of sweetness and wine, spice and nuts. However, it is said to represent the mortar that was used by the enslaved in the cruelty-toil of their construction. Charoset is so that we may taste the grit in our teeth of slavery forever. We gather in our memories of hardship and meet them with sweetness – Lucie calls it alchemy.



# MAGGID - OUR ALTAR



## The Orange and the Olive

These two items remind us that there are nations within our nation. Let there only be more.

Our liberations are all of ours. Anyone who left Mitzrayim was one of us, period. Our communities and dreams for the future must hold our ever-expanding multiplicity.

As altar additions, these meaningful items remind me of the power I have to bring my sweet juicy self into our rituals. The power we all have to challenge the status quo of what the Rabbis/authorities tell us to do. This independence is transcendent.

### The Orange

During a visit to Oberlin College in the early 1980s, Susannah Heschel read a feminist Haggadah that called for placing a piece of bread on the seder plate as a symbol of the need to include LGBTQ folks in Jewish life. Heschel liked the idea of putting something new on the seder plate to represent this, but she was uncomfortable with using *chametz*, which would invalidate the very ritual it was meant to enhance. She chose instead to add the orange, full of color, compliant with Passover's dietary restrictions, and completely new.

### The Olive

No one says it better than Jewish Voice for Peace:

*The olive tree is one of the first plants mentioned in the Torah and remains among the oldest species in Yisrael/Palestine. It has become a universal symbol of peace and hope, as it is written in Psalm 52: "I am like a thriving olive tree in God's house, I trust in God's loyal kindness forever and ever." We add this olive to our seder plate as a reminder that we must all be God's bearers of peace and hope in the world.*

*At the same time, we eat this olive in sorrow, mindful that olive trees, the source of livelihood for Palestinian farmers, are regularly chopped down, burned and uprooted by Yisraeli settlers and the Yisraeli authorities. As we look on, Yisrael pursues systematic policies that increasingly deny Palestinians access to olive orchards that have belonged to them for generations. As we eat now, we ask one another: How will we, as Jews, bear witness to the unjust actions committed in our name? Will these olives inspire us to be bearers of peace and hope for Palestinians – and for all who are oppressed?*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ

*Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha'olam, borei p'ri ha'eitz.*

Blessed are You, Yah, our God, Ruler of the Universe, who gives us the fruit of the tree.



# R A C H T Z A H - גַּחַצְהָ

## DIVINE WATERS



The divine, watery woman is a longstanding trope in ancient and contemporary texts, and the Exodus story is no different. Moses, whose name means “drawn from the waters,” was watched over by his sister Miriam as he floated down a river to his destiny. Miriam who later lead us in song as we crossed the Red Sea. And once we made it across, she became our source of our water in the desert. Like Miriam, we can transcend our human form to provide for others. Miriam moved water and was moved by water; we move through it, we avoid it, we witness its destructive powers and its powers to change. Water is Miriam is life – “she becomes herself in the service of her people,” Lucie says.

Water is something we cross as we move through the phases of our lives. Water is cleansing and, as discussed earlier, it has powers that can transform us far beyond what we can perceive or control.

We call in the divine and all that water is as we prepare to nourish our bodies. We move through the water, with its momentary-ness and its eternity as we wash our hands and say the blessing.

## MOTZI/MATZAH - מוֹצִיא מַצָּה

### BLESSING THE BRITTLE AND ITS DREAM TO BE MORE

Y'all, we are at step 7 out of 14, which makes this at least one midpoint of the Seder (Maggid is so long, there are other midpoints I'm sure). We found a center seam and it's brittle, especially if we forget to be careful and reverent of its fragility at all times.

When it breaks, it leaves a mess everywhere.

It is the only thing tonight that we bless both for what it isn't and what it is – Matzah isn't bread, but we say the blessing for bread because it was intended to be bread. We bless the intention with which the dough was made. We bless the dough's aspiration to be something it never became. And then immediately after we say the blessing for Matzah to bless exactly what it is. Lucie: "The matzah didn't fail by not becoming bread."



# MAROR - מָרֹר

## MAROR VISUALIZATION

This third of four guided visualizations is centered around bitterness and as such asks for some deeper things as we move deeper into the segment of the night that involves eating. The ancestral tradition of feasting is well documented, and we walk alongside the ancestors as we eat their food in the ways that they meant us to share it. Opt out any time. Any reader can volunteer to lead.

First, take ke'zayit (an olive's volume) of maror. Dip it into the Charoset, but not so much that the bitter taste is neutralized. Recite the following blessing and then eat the maror (without reclining):

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מָרֹר

*Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al achilat maror.*

Blessed are You, Yah, our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has taught us the way of holiness through commandments, commanding us to eat the bitter herb.

While we experience the maror, the visualization begins.

What is a holy space without brokenness? There are hardships here with us, we know, but we are nearer now to time of dreaming.

Close your eyes. Breathe.

Like the maror roots, we are full of reaching seams that move through the sweet dark earth.

Visualize yourself. Full of seams. Find one that looks good.

Run your finger along it. Test it.

Break yourself open along that seam.

Leave yourself behind, and walk through the opening.

Leave yourself behind.

Leave today behind, leave your house, your things, the trappings that make you you.

Walk through the space you opened.

Walk through and find your archive. Whatever it looks like – memories are small things you can hold. <sup>22</sup>

Don't linger on anything too long, but find one of each of these things:

- A time when you won but at a cost, and it felt bad or ill-gained
- A regret or humiliation
- A person who wronged you
- Something you knew at the time you did it that you shouldn't have done, but you did it anyway

Now, look up from the archive and notice your surroundings. Did you know that you were in a field full of rows of wavy, strong, and rich green leaves?

They're beautiful, aren't they? Going so far, the breeze so light and warm.

Bend down and, with your free hand, grab a handful of leaves and bring with it as you pull this gnarly root.

It's beautiful and dangerous – like you.

Take a bite of the root – you can wipe it off first if you want or you can eat the dirt.

Let the strength of it permeate through you with its bright fire.

Now, toss up those cards, those memories in your other hand, and spit all the shivering bitterness up and away at them. Watch them disappear back into the earth and bless them and their disappearance.

Breathe.

Breathe. The breeze is rustling.

Watch time go by – the horseradish you didn't harvest grows taller, wilder, and bursts into a field of small, sweet smelling flowers.

They bloom and the ancestors come up with them.

Invite someone or someones to watch the field bloom with you.

Someone who came from the deep roots.

Greet them. Greet their strength and warmth.

Let them be or, if you'd like, invite them to join us for the rest of the Seder.

Feel your heart. Beating. With them.

Breathe. When you are ready, open your eyes. Breathe.

Space should be made following visualizations to breathe, stretch, take a bio break, and discuss anything we saw, anything that came up, etc. A chime could be used, or something that marks the closing of the visualization.

## KORECH - כּוֹרֵךְ ANCESTRAL INVENTIONS

Some of us are here with our ancestors. Welcome to them. This sandwich is for all of us. It connects us through time and space.

Some possible names for this sandwich:

1. The Trauma Sandwich
2. The New-Old Ritual
3. Fanfic Sandwich
4. Humble Pie

Why?

1. Our ancestors (Hillel specifically) used to eat a matzah sandwich of the meat from their sacrificed lambs, the Maror horseradish. This was when people were making sacrifices at the temple in Jerusalem.
2. We can't eat the sandwich anymore because of how the temple was destroyed in 70 CE, so we don't have sacrificial meat to eat. So this is a new ritual born in memory of an old one.
3. So, out of the story and with the companionship of our ancestors, we swap *charoset* in for the lamb. (Also, arguably the whole Seder is fanfic.)
4. Humbly, because this is calling back to the true offerings of our lives and labors that our ancestors undertook – this is no small feat of a sandwich.

## SHULCHAN ORECH - שְׁלֻחַן עוֹרֵךְ FESTIVE MEAL

Now is time to enjoy the festival meal and participate in lively discussion. It is presumed that revelers will drink wine between the second and third cups. Rest. Serve each other. Lounge. Discuss. Be silent. Shake out the body. Be satiated.

## TZAFUN - צֶפֶן A BLAND MORSEL

After the meal, take the Afikoman and divide it among all the guests at the Seder table.

We hearken back to our visualization of cracking open the matzah and walking through its opening. We can't put anything back together with a seam like that, but here we are, ending the eating part of the night by eating the material of the first cracking.

We start moving into the back end of the Seder with this ritual closing. Let this sliver of didn't-have-time-to-be-bread linger on our tongues even as we sweeten them with sweet words and wine...





## THE ANCESTRAL CUPS

The stories I grew up with about Elijah the prophet were that he came to walk among us essentially as a test of our goodness and a reminder that every person we encounter is divine. The stories depicted Elijah in disguise as a beggar, coming to someone's door and bringing divine blessings to those who are welcoming, generous, and kind.

This is the closest that we as Jews get to Santa Claus – somehow during the Seders around the world, Elijah makes it to everyone's house to partake of this offering of wine. Do we see movement in the cup? As a child, I was certain that it was happening, the cup was being drained. Here we are with our magical thinking, having a collective experience on earth with a dead prophet. After four cups of wine? Sure!

The addition of Miriam's cup, filled with water, brings another prophet into our space and brings up connections between women and the powers of water we've discussed tonight. Miriam is not a challenge like Elijah is, rather she is a watcher, a provider, a protector.

We humbly recognize these ancestors and all our others who are here with us. We ask for their beneficence, protection, and connection. We seek to earn and witness their company today and every day.

### Elijah's Cup

We now open the front door to invite the ancestor prophet Elijah to join our seder.

אֱלִיָּהוּ הַנָּבִיא, אֱלִיָּהוּ הַתְּשֻׁבִי, אֱלִיָּהוּ, אֱלִיָּהוּ, אֱלִיָּהוּ הַגִּלְעָדִי. בְּמַהֲרָה בְיָמֵינוּ יָבוֹא אֱלֵינוּ עִם מְשִׁיחַ בֶּן דָּוִד

*Eliyahu hanavi Eliyahu hatishbi Eliyahu, Eliyahu, Eliyahu haGilad*

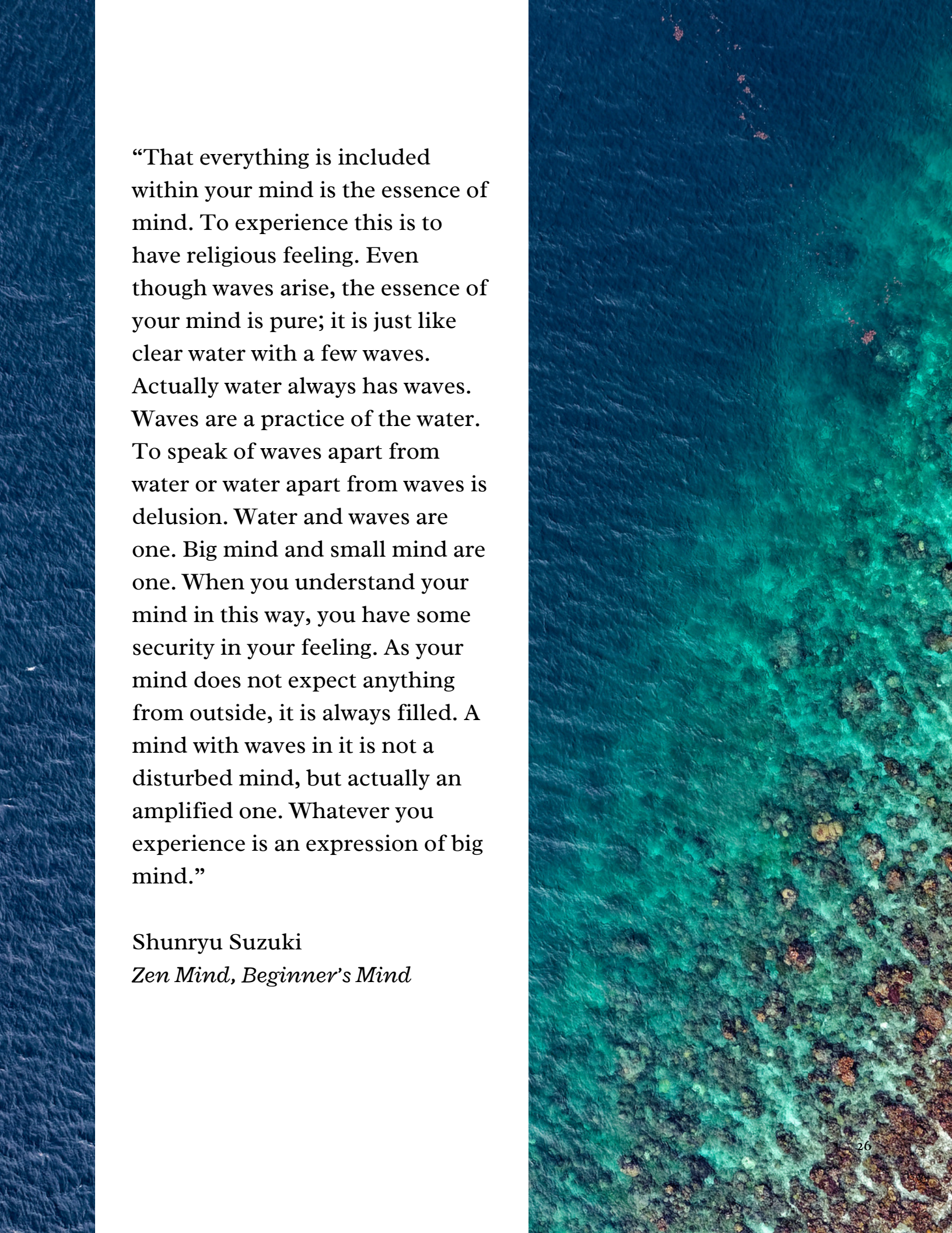
*Bimheirah b'yameinu, yavo eileinu Im mashiach ben-David, Im mashiach ben-David*

Elijah the prophet, the returning, the man of Gilad, return to us speedily, in our days with the messiah, son of David

### Miriam's Cup

We lift our cup to the Prophet Miriam. Giver of water and song, watching and bravery.  
Have a sip of the prophet's insight – our last sip of the Seder ritual.





“That everything is included within your mind is the essence of mind. To experience this is to have religious feeling. Even though waves arise, the essence of your mind is pure; it is just like clear water with a few waves. Actually water always has waves. Waves are a practice of the water. To speak of waves apart from water or water apart from waves is delusion. Water and waves are one. Big mind and small mind are one. When you understand your mind in this way, you have some security in your feeling. As your mind does not expect anything from outside, it is always filled. A mind with waves in it is not a disturbed mind, but actually an amplified one. Whatever you experience is an expression of big mind.”

Shunryu Suzuki

*Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*

# NIRTZAH - נרצה

## DREAMING VISUALIZATION

This final guided visualizations is a space for us to vision what's to come for us.

What is a holy space without brokenness? There have been hardships, and alongside the remembering we are dreaming now.

Close your eyes. Breathe.

Like water, we are continuous. Like water, we are full of waves. Visualize yourself. Full of waves. Find one that looks good.

Slip into it. Immerse in it.

Feel how strong it is. Find another wave – this one shimmers.

Leave yourself behind, and immerse in the wave.

Walk through the space you opened.

Leave yourself to float out into everything.

Float and count whatever is in the sky – birds maybe, or clouds. All the trappings that make you you.

Don't do anything, just track them. Put them in utopia and track them.

What are they doing?

How can it be the most wonderful?

Watch the time go by. Let the moon's transformative light rise.

What joy will all those parts of you find together? Open all the way into the sky, and find what's most wonderful.

We've been. Everywhere.

Take a breath. We are all here. Ground your body in wherever here is.

Find, right closer in to here, the archive. Open it again.

Breathe. Look it over.

Let go of everything but freedom.

Watch the sun set. Watch a new day begin.

Find the collection of other Seders. Introduce tonight to the rest of them and tuck them away together.

Breathe. Open your eyes. Breathe.



## NIRTZAH - נרצה

### WAVES OF WANT

After all the singing is concluded we rise and recite a closing formula that feels right and honest for us. Some options are below, but make your own.

Either way, the Seder is concluded.

One Heart  
Li-Young Lee

Look at the birds. Even flying  
is born

out of nothing. The first sky  
is inside you, open

at either end of day.  
The work of wings  
was always freedom, fastening  
one heart to every falling thing.

הסל סדור פסח פהלכתו, פכל משפטו וחקתו. פאשר זכינו לסדר אותו. כן נזכה לעשותו.  
זך שוכן מעונה, קומם קהל עדת מי מנה. בקרוב נהל נטעי כנה. פדוים לציון ברנה


*Chasal sidur pesach k'hilchato, k'chol mishpato v'chukato. Ka-asher zachinu l'sadeir  
oto, kein nizkeh la-asoto. Zach shochein m'onah, komeim k'hal adat mi manah.*

*B'karov naheil nitei chanah, p'duyim l'tzion b'rinah.*

The Passover Seder is concluded, according to each traditional detail with all its laws and customs. As we have been privileged to celebrate this Seder, so may we one day celebrate it in utopia. Pure One who dwells in the high places, support your People countless in number. May you soon redeem all your People in joy.

לשנה הבאה בירושלים  
L'shana Haba'ah b'Y'rushalayim  
Next Year in Utopia!

We did it!



“The most beautiful part of your body is where it’s headed.  
& remember, loneliness is still time spent with the world.”  
Ocean Vuong



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