

Next Year in Safety & Liberation



INSPIRED BY AURORA LEVINS MORALES POEM "RED SEA" wes



Haggadah 5786/2026

Next Year in Safety and Liberation

Fighting Fascism and Genocide
is a Jewish Tradition

JVPLab Anti-Zionist Multi-Tendency
Haggadah 5786/2026

Cover art by Wendy Elisheva Somerson
All of Us

The linocut was inspired and based on Aurora Levins Morales' stunning poem "The Red Sea", especially the last paragraph. 2021

Haggadah design by Miranda Cohen

Red Sea: April 2002

By Aurora Levins Morales

This Passover, who reclines?
Only the dead, their cupped hands filling slowly
with the red wine of war. We are not free.

The blood on the doorposts does not protect anyone.
They say that other country over there
dim blue in the twilight
farther than the orange stars exploding over our roofs
is called peace.

The bread of affliction snaps in our hands like bones,
is dust in our mouths. This bitterness brings tears to our eyes.
The figs and apples are sour. We have many more
than four questions. We dip and dip,
salt stinging our fingers.
Unbearable griefs braided into a rope so tight
we can hardly breathe,
Whether we bless or curse,
this is captivity.
We would cross the water if we knew how.
Everyone blames everyone else for barring the way.

Listen, they say there is honey swelling in golden combs, over there,
dates as sweet and brown as lovers' cheekbones,
bread as fragrant as rest,
but the turbulent water will not part for us.
We've lost the trick of it.

Back then, one man's faith opened the way.
He stepped in, we were released, our enemies drowned.

This time we're tied at the ankles.
We cannot cross until we carry each other,
all of us refugees, all of us prophets.
No more taking turns on history's wheel,
trying to collect old debts no-one can pay.
The sea will not open that way.

This time that country
is what we promise each other,
our rage pressed cheek to cheek
until tears flood the space between,
until there are no enemies left,
because this time no one will be left to drown
and all of us must be chosen.
This time it's all of us or none.

Dedicating this Haggadah

Offered by Melissa Nussbaum Freeman

Our grandparents' grandparents' grandparents entreat us to tell the Passover story as if it were happening now and we are the protagonists. We are the ones who must leave whatever small comfort we have and find the courage to leave the zone of oppression, from mitzrayim, the narrow space, and move together towards liberation. To not turn back.

We thought that we could never be in a more narrow place. But we are. Whatever the odds against us - there is no turning back.

Our mothers' midwives are engaging us, looking deeply into our eyes, holding us steady and reminding us it is in our genes to do this. It is not time to hold back but not recklessly push forward. Through the most narrow place will come life.

This is our story. Over and over. We break what needs to be broken and we search for what has been hidden. Brokenness, tended together, becomes the shape of resistance.

We cherish Passover because it is meant to fortify us to keep going, not to become complacent and numb to injustice. We don't know when or even how but we have the assuredness that liberation will be achieved. It is in our bones. Just as it is the birthright of every living being - to be safe and free.

Take this Haggadah and find the words that give you strength to keep going. To go fight for your neighbor. To break down walls. To raise a flag of safety. May our ancient tradition be of service in our sacred duty to pursue liberation.

In this spirit we dedicate this Haggadah to the deeply rooted Jewish traditions of fighting genocide and fascism.

We are the ancestors to-be of our grandchildren's grandchildren's grandchildren. They will point to us and they will remember that we did not stay in mitzrayim. They will chant: "They found the courage, they were not silent. They did the right thing."

We commit to keep doing the right thing. There is no other choice.

Next year in safety and liberation.

Chag sameach Pesach.

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Introduction



Offered by Liv Kunins-Berkowitz

Welcome dear ones to Passover. We welcome your grief, your broken hearts, your rage, your fear, your steadfastness, and all of our dreams of collective liberation.

During the course of the night, we will tell our ancestral story of the Israelites' journey from mitzrayim, the narrow place, to freedom. While tonight our story ends with the Israelites crossing the Red Sea, dancing with Miriam and her timbrels, tasting freedom—we know that the Exodus story doesn't end there. The Israelites would go on to wander for forty years in the desert before killing and displacing people in pursuit of the Promised Land. Tonight we acknowledge that the Jewish tradition contains both freedom stories and conquest stories, narratives of supremacy and narratives that teach us about the sacredness of all life. We ask, how does our experience of the Passover story change if we understand that each of us can both experience and perpetrate oppression? Tonight we wrestle with the contradictions in our inheritances.

This year the world feels unfathomably narrow. As we gather for Passover, the Israeli government furthers its genocidal project, destroying life and land all across Palestine. As we gather for Passover, modern day Pharaohs are rising to power all over the world.

In the United States, a fascist government is using the guise of fighting antisemitism to punish those who speak out for Palestinian freedom. This Passover gathering is an act of refusal. We will not allow our tradition, history, and identity, to be fuel for authoritarian crackdown.

Tonight we have never been more clear: the journey to liberation will not be realized until it is a journey for collective liberation.

This Haggadah does not contain the answers, yet we gather with faith that we have much to learn through the reverent retelling of this story. May we find questions and songs to accompany us as we continue organizing for liberation in Palestine, on Turtle Island, and wherever you may be arriving from.

May you find moments to breathe deeply, to rest, to weep, may you meet a new comrade, may you ask a new question, may our actions be meaningful, may you sing a song that your ancestor loved.

We particularly want to welcome your messy and complicated feelings in regard to this thing we call Jewishness/Judaism. For those of you who have been waiting all year for seder—you are welcome. For those of you who have never attended a seder—you are welcome. For those of you who have been told that you are too big, loud, and Jewish—welcome. For those of you who have been told you aren't Jewish enough or aren't a real Jew, we say bullshit and we say welcome! For those of you grieving loved ones who could not join us at seder this year—you and your grief are welcome. To those of you who don't believe in God, to those of you who love God, to those of you who are angry with God—we say welcome. To the Arabic speakers, the Hebrew speakers, the Yiddish speakers, the Ladin and Spanish speakers, to our dear ones who communicate in ASL, to you and all your languages—we say welcome. To the loudest singers and to those of you who don't know the words to prayers or to the songs—we say welcome. To the parents, to the babies, to the teenagers, to our dear elders, to your pets, to all of you and all your wisdom—welcome. To those of you who for whatever reason are struggling to participate—we welcome you however you are able to show up. There is no right way to be Jewish or right way to be at this seder. We are grateful to be with you.

Let us begin with a phrase that is repeated throughout the Haggadah from our dear teacher Aurora Levins Morales: “We cannot cross until we carry each other.” Through this journey may we better understand what it might mean to truly carry each other as we continue working toward Palestinian freedom and collective liberation. May it be so.



The Seder Plate

The entire story of the Haggadah is contained in the Seder plate; everything on it contains an aspect of Exodus:



Bone – Z’roah

the sacrifice

**vegetarians can use beet*

Bitter Herb – Maror

the bitterness of slavery

Horseradish – Maror

bitterness and fire

Mortar – Charoset

labor forced to build

Egg – Beitzah

sacrifice/the cycle of life

Greens – Karpas

hope and renewal

Strawberries

for Gaza

Olive – Zayit

for the destroyed Palestinian olive groves

Orange – Tapuz

for LGBTQIA

Acorn – Balut

recognizing Native land

Spoon – Kafit

nourishment & care for elderly & disabled

Garlic – Shoom

ancestral care & wisdom

The Evolving Seder Plate (2025)

Offered by Aurora Levins Morales

Please feel free to add verses

Here's where we riff on the right of the moment,
here's where we shoot for the moon,
here's where the possibles on the table
and everyone's in the room.

Oranges, olives, beetroot and spoons.

Glowing orange segments
bless every kind of love
and every shade of gender
fills the world we're dreaming of.

Oranges, olives, beetroot and spoons.

The olive is for Palestine
our dear beloved kin
how the peace that comes from justice
is how everybody wins.

Oranges, olives, beetroot and spoons.

The blood-red beet represents all those
who lost the right to own our wombs
who bear the babes we cannot raise
or bleed out in back alley rooms.

Oranges, olives, beetroot and spoons.

Persimmons, roasted corn, pecans,
Cranberries red and wild rice black
Tell us the only thing to do
With stolen land is give it back.

Oranges, olives, beetroot and spoons.



קַדֵּשׁ | Kadesh

Offered by Rooted in this World Network

Opening a seder as a ritual space dedicated to liberation is difficult, and perhaps impossible, in the context of ongoing genocide in Palestine and a new Israeli/U.S. war on Iran. A war timed to fit into our ritual calendar's collapse of willful mass murder into "preemptive self-defense" and to land particularly painfully in the Muslim ritual calendar – and that aims to further merge Christian Zionism with the U.S. military, solidifying one of the axes of global authoritarianism.

It is not difficult to appreciate this community in its aspirations towards solidarity in active resistance, or to feel, deeply, how valuable it is to gather with other anti-Zionist, anti-militarist Jews and comrades in this season.

This year, our four cups are not a progression, but four beginnings: four places to start, while we see "a folk tsvishn falndike vent" [a people between falling walls] both in Palestine and in Iran (and throughout the region), even as no bombs are yet falling in this colonized land where we live and struggle.

One starting point for responding to that difficulty, that impossibility, is to name this as a space not of celebration but of witness. Outside of the massacres, outside of the genocide, but not disconnected from them. Sarah Aziza, a Palestinian American, in her 2023 essay "The Work of Witness" writes:

Rather, we—those outside of Palestine, watching events through a screen—ought to think of ourselves in relation to the legacy of the shaheed*. Our work as witnesses is to be marked; we should not leave it unscathed. We must make an effort to stay with what we see, allowing ourselves to be cut. This wound is essential. Into this wound, imagination may pour—not to invade the other's subjectivity, but to awaken awe at the depth, privacy, and singularity of each life. There, we might glimpse, if sidelong, how much of Gaza's suffering we will never know. This is where real witness must begin: in mystery.

*Note: Last year, when we first offered this text, JVP seder coordinators asked us to include the definition of "shaheed". In recognition of its many layered meanings, we offer the meaning as Sarah Azizi relates it in her 2022 piece, "Anointing the Dead": "The word shaheed, meaning martyr, anoints the dead with honor. It hugs them like a shroud. It speaks, perhaps, to a force of spirit that transcends the breath of lungs." (We use her transliteration here; the word is also romanized as "shahid"—either way, its plural is "shuhada")

Or, much better expressed in the words of my cousin, the pharmacist,

ما زلت مصرا نحن لم نعتد القصف ونخاف من كل حدث ولم نعتد مشاهد المعاناة ، ان القلب دائما ما
ينفطر، ولم نعتد المجازر الذي يرتكبها الاحتلال فلكل شهيد حياة

"I continue to insist, we have not gotten used to bombing and we are afraid of everything happening to us. We have not gotten used to the sight of suffering. No, it always breaks our hearts. We have not gotten used to the massacres perpetrated by the occupation. No. For every martyr, there was a life."

(DRINK FIRST CUP)

We drink the first cup to those lives, to the life of each shaheed. L' khayem.

Shehechyanu

Offered by Rooted in this World Network

There is a tradition, after the first cup of wine, to say Shehekhiyanu. Broken down, the word "shehekhiyanu" means "we are alive." We are, and so many others are not.

As we prepared for Pesach in 2024/5784, Bisan Owda awoke, to tell the world not only that she was still alive, but to also introduce the Anemone coronaria or poppy anemone, shuqa'iq an-naa'mun. To share her joy at finding this wild red flower growing, and at seeing green space for the first time in so many months.

Now, as we mark yet another year of this unrelenting genocide, of expanding war, and of Bisan's words (despite attempts to silence her, most recently by the new U.S.-regime-aligned owners of TikTok), may we continue to witness and share the stories that bring us to this moment – the accounts of horrors, but also the glimpses of joy despite them.

*barukh ato adonoy, eloheyenu melek ha-olam
shehekhiyanu v'kiymanu v'higianu lazman ha-ze*





ורחץ | Urchatz

Offered by Rebecca Maria Goldschmidt

PLEASE PREPARE AN EMPTY BOWL, A PITCHER OF WATER, AND A CLEAN HAND TOWEL

We will be helping each other to cleanse our precious hands in the first handwashing. The person to your left can hold the bowl, while the person to the right can pour the water over your hands. In this way we pass the water around the table, helping our neighbors in this symbolic purification.

Today we offer this first handwashing to the Palestinian People, Land and Waters. I'm writing from beside the Motoyasu river, where a confluence of eight rivers braids together in a delta that feeds into the Setonaikai 瀬戸内海, the Seto Inland Sea. The sea's small islands float in indigo waters under white skies. Today the sakura trees are in their full bloom state of mankai 満開. Spring has arrived. Eighty-one years ago, on August 6th, 1945 at 8:15am, Hiroshima's mountains, rivers, delta and all of its inhabitants were subjected to humanity's horrendous technological experiment—the nuclear weapon. The US military obliterated both Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the rivers were clogged with thousands upon thousands of bodies whose spirits are still searching for respite from the fires and radiation. Many thought that the land and waters would not be inhabitable for at least 75 years...

For the same 75 years, our Palestinian siblings have been suffering their own tragedy at the hands of the illegitimate zionist state, made by our own relatives. As we bear witness over two years of unimaginable suffering and genocidal bloodshed, we are here today to tell the story of Liberation and re-dedicate ourselves to Palestinian Liberation. Palestinians have suffered their wells being poisoned or turned into mikvaot by settlers; their waters diverted and stolen; their water tanks shot and drained; and they continue to be deprived of our most vital lifegiving necessity—WATER.

Urchatz is a water offering that reminds us of our vulnerability, our connectedness, our reliance on each other. Our responsibility to each other. Washing our hands is a gesture of care. I share my name, Rebecca, Rivkah, with my beloved teacher and Queer Mikveh comrade, Rebekah Erev. In the Torah, Rebecca is the water bearer who first appears drawing water from the well. She offers the water to Eliezer and his camels, who have traveled a long distance through the desert.

In Hiroshima, we continue to stand in front of the ruins of the Atomic Bomb Dome in solidarity with the Palestinian People. There are very few Jews in Japan, and even fewer anti-zionist Jews. I can count us all on two hands.

The two hands you are washing for me now.
The two hands typing these words.
The two hands of the woman photographing the blossoms.
The two hands of the journalist maneuvering the camera.
The two hands wiping the table.
The two hands lifting the collapsed concrete.
The two hands painting the banner.
The two hands flipping the bread.
The two hands smashing the machinery.
The two hands gathering flour from the earth.
The two hands assembling the robot.
The two hands collecting the za'atar.
The two hands filing the paperwork.
The two hands operating in the dark.
The one hand of ash in the rubble.
The one hand ringing the bell.
The one hand clutching the rose.
The one hand reaching.
My mother's hands embroidering a watermelon.

Let us give gratitude for this blessed water. Let us bless the hands we have lost.
Let this offering of water, this act of care, remind us of our tethered-ness. Our one-ness.
As we wash each others' hands, we honor our waters and ALL water protectors. From Gaza to the Galilee, from Hawai'i Nei to Taiwan, the Rhein to the Amazon to the Ganges, the Congo River to the Strait of Hormuz.
May ALL the waters of Palestine be liberated!
May ALL our waters of all our Peoples be liberated!
May we liberate ALL our waters—together.
From the River, to the Sea.

FREE PALESTINE

パレスチナ解放



Rebecca washing their hands in the Motoyasu river in Hiroshima with the waters from Mitakidera temple, the site of three waterfalls in the mountains that was a refuge for victims of the nuclear weapon. The temple is also the site of a shrine containing the ashes of Auschwitz victims.



כַּרְפָּס | Karpas

Karpas: a three-part ritual

*Written and woven by Elliot batTzedek of Fringes:
a feminist non-zionist havurah*

Because Jewish tradition is that nothing is drunk or consumed without first being blessed, we bless the water and the salt before dipping the karpas.

BLESSING WATER

All:

*N'varekh et mey ha'ayanot—
umey han'chalim umey han'harot—
mayim chayim hamarvim kol chay*

— נְהַרְךָ אֶת מֵי הָעֵינֹת —
— וּמֵי הַנְּחָלִים וּמֵי הַנְּהָרוֹת —
מֵיִם חַיִּים הַמְרֻוּיִם כָּל חַי

Let us bless the living waters—
fountains and wellsprings, rivulets, rivers and streams
— that sustain all life
(Marcia Falk)

Reader: In tonight's sacred community, we cannot say "water" and not also say "Gaza," where Israeli apartheid had already severely limited clean water for 2 million people for years, even before this horrendous campaign of utter destruction.

Reader: We know that, tonight in Gaza, people have almost no water to drink, to cook, to bathe their children, to mix formula or medicines or to clean wounds.

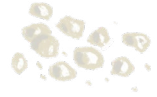
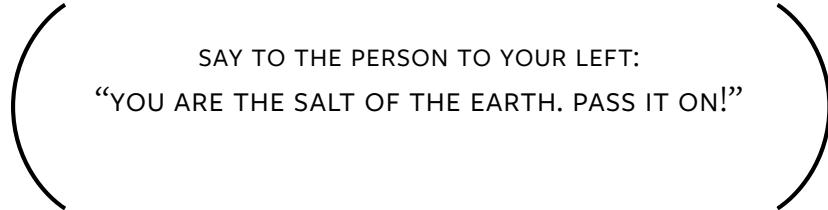
Reader: Before we drink water now, and any time we raise water to our lips tonight, we say:

All: Gaza! We will never forget you, we will never forsake you, we will never stop fighting for you until all of your people live safe and free.

DRINK WATER

BLESSING SALT

Reader: Our sage Elana Dykewomon, z”l, teaches: I had a dream: I spilled a sack of salt in the road. No matter, my friends said, we don’t need salt. But I remembered my grandmother sending me little burlap bags of salt from Florida, and I said: that’s the trouble with us. Salt is an electrolyte, we need it to conduct electricity, the good feelings between us. No wonder we don’t have the connections we need. We don’t have enough salt.



BLESSING KARPAS

Reader: Life as we know it on this planet exists because of a few inches of top soil and reservoirs of fresh water. In our ancestors’ days, deforestation created massive soil loss and drought that upended empires and civilizations. Some anthropologists believe the story of the expulsion from Eden is a cultural memory of the devastation that happened when land was first clear-cut to grow wheat and barley—when an Eden gave way to floods, drought, and cyclical starvation.

Reader: In our day, in our empire, commercial agriculture is decimating top soil, staggeringly large and inappropriate development is draining and salinizing fresh water, fossil fuel extraction is so vast it is causing tectonic shifts, polar ice is melting so quickly that time itself could change on the planet, and both land and water are being poisoned. Permafrost is melting, our continents are on fire, animals are being driven by need into human areas, and Covid-19 is just the first huge global pressure we are going to be facing.

Reader: And so on this night, different from other nights, we dip parsley, child of that razor-thin layer of top soil, into salt water. This is not only for the sweat and tears of our ancestors in Mitzrayim, but also to know the taste of Gaza’s drained and destroyed aquifer filling now with salt water.

All: Gaza! We will never forget you, we will never forsake you, we will never stop fighting for you until all of your people live safe and free.

*B’rucha at Shekhinah, b’tocheynu ruach ha’olam
borayt p’ri ha’adamah.*

בְּרוּכָה אַתְּ שְׂכִינָה בְּתוֹפִינוּ רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם
בוֹרְאֵת פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה

Blessed is the Source of Life which brings forth the fruits of the earth.

ALL EAT KARPAS AND THEN CONTINUE SNACKING ON ANY VEGETABLE OR PLANT



יַחַצְצֵי | Yachatz

Offered by R. Jessica Rosenberg

This Pesach, when we come to Yachatz, what else is there to break? Our hearts are shattered, our worlds torn, our faith and hope in pieces on the floor. We have witnessed so much death and destruction, we feel powerless, it continues, the violence goes on, we break, and our broken pieces break, we crumble.

This Pesach, when we come to Yachatz, we have the opportunity to break with intention. To break what needs to be broken. We break the silence, every day, we break through the thick layer of complacency. We break through all that keeps us frozen in fear, inside of us, and all that keeps us separate, all that comes between us. May this moment of ritual be a time of creative, visionary, revolutionary breaking.

You're invited to take the middle matzah, break it in half. One half becomes the afikomen, we hide it away; we will later search for what remains. With the first half, this year, you're invited to break it again. In half again. And again. The systems of empire and domination that tell us to proceed as if nothing is wrong, we break their spells over us. The ideologies and oppressive institutions that want us to stay asleep, we break them. We break down the stories limiting what is possible. We let them crumble. We offer them to the earth. We break what needs to be broken. Until all are free.





מַגִּיד | Maggid

Raise the Seder Plate

Offered by Simha Toledo

This is the point in the seder where, in my Sephardic Moroccan family, we would do the Moroccan ‘Bibhilu’ ritual. My dad z'l would walk around the seder table waving the seder plate over the heads of each person at our seder table while chanting: *Biv-hi-lu ya-tsa-nu mi-Mits-ra-yim!* (In haste we left Egypt!) To which everyone would respond: *b'nei chorin!* (A Free people!).

It is a fun and potent ritual. My favorite parts, growing up, was the performative quality of the ritual and the anticipation it created. I remember watching the seder plate make its way around the table, like a floating UFO, until it finally made it over my head where it seemed like time slowed down and the chanting muffled in the background. Instinctually, I would tilt my head back to look up at the bottom of the plate, as if it were a natural wonder, like an eclipse. I felt special and uplifted under its gentle shade, as if the Great Liberator was paying me personal attention under its canopy of peace.

I later learned that the Sephardic custom of arranging your seder plate is based on the teachings of the Kabbalah. The mystical arrangement mirrors the ten sephirot, channels of divine life force that make up the body of God, as represented by the Tree of Life. On the right column we have the shank bone and charoset, corresponding to the sacred divine attributes of kindness and victory. On the left column we have the egg and celery with saltwater, corresponding to the sacred attributes of strength and splendor. In the center column we have bitter herbs and romaine lettuce, corresponding with the sacred attributes of beauty and foundation. The three matzot on top correspond with the higher attributes of understanding, wisdom, and crown, and the seder plate itself corresponds with Kingship/Queenship or manifestation.

When arranged in this pattern, the seder plate is elevated to represent the holy Shechinah in our midst. Her traveling presence over our heads is a blessing as we set out on a pilgrimage to the past to stretch our capacity for empathy, connection, healing, creativity, and humility. In Her midst we are instantly connected to the sacredness of all life, for she teaches that in each of our hearts is a sanctuary of the eternal flame.

I hear the Shechinah whisper through intuition, I see Her in the many ways we show our love and solidarity with Palestinian freedom, the multitude of ways we love and express ourselves as Jewish people, and the ways we love the land, wherever we dwell. In the past twenty-nine months, through

calling our electeds, organizing and attending actions, posting on social media, getting arrested, fund-raising, supporting Palestinian businesses, disrupting business as usual, raising awareness whenever possible, deepening relationships with each other, and so much more we have been actively seeking and liberating the light of Oneness from the fragmentation of ongoing genocide, occupation, and apartheid. The world we live in may be bitterly torn and broken, but it is the divine spark within each of us, layered with our collective story of enslavement and liberation, that we call out now as free people, to all who are oppressed, to say that liberation is possible. And it is perhaps with a painful irony this year that we recall that as in haste we were liberated, in haste our oppressors, too, were overthrown.

As I lead us in this ritual, I will call and you will respond, like this:

Call: *Biv-hi-lu ya-tsa-nu mi-Mits-ra-yim!*

Response: *B'nei cho-rin!*

I will repeat the chant four times. I encourage you to welcome the holy indwelling presence into your field, by lifting your seder plate, or any object, above your head and the heads of those with you, above your camera, if it's on, and above an empty space that signifies Gaza. So that the Shechinah may bless the land and people of Palestine with protection, nurturance, and strength. So that Palestinians may be a free people in their liberated homeland, speedily in our days.

We ask that the Shechinah guide our hearts and hands towards manifesting love and wholeness, justice and peace. May we all be blessed and transformed on our journey through the telling and re-telling of the story.

The 4 Questions

Countless Questions

Offered by aaron moore ellis

Tonight our tradition invites us to ask questions. Tonight I wonder, what Pesach questions are fit for a time of genocide, continuing under the guise of a “Ceasefire?” Continuing in the swelling shadow of a “Board of Peace”? We need questions that inspire transformative answers and liberative action—in us and in our communities—shake our world, our representatives, our communities, our organizations, ourselves, into new modes of activity, relationality, radicality.

Q1: Why is this Passover different from other Passovers?

Genocide. The unique scale, and devastating brutality is still being measured; the dead are still being counted, while the death toll continuously climbs. At this very moment. Israel is dropping bombs on Iran, on Tehran, on Lebanon, on Beirut; while Palestinians in Gaza try to retrace their spiraling Exodus back to what? As we, Jews of conscience, try to go retrace our spiralling back to ritual,

back to Passover, back to what? To a Passover practice before October 7th? To a Passover practice before 2021? Before 2018? To a Passover practice before 2014? Before 2008? To a Passover practice before 1993? Before 1982? Before 1973? Before 1967? Before 1948? Palestinians return to demolished homes; do we return to an intact Celebration? “Time-honored” and relatively undisturbed? As it was commanded, that we tell the story as if it is us who were freed – who are freed – by god?

Perhaps the better Pesach question is: Is the “promised land” a settlement? A beachside resort ethnically cleansed of Palestinians?

The biblical Exodus ended in ethnic cleansing. Ethno-nationalism.

Just. Like. Now.

In a time of “Peace”? A time of “Ceasefire”? Taking our eye off the ongoing catastrophe – or keeping an eye on the ongoing catastrophe – as “Celebrate” Passover? How can we even read the Passover story? Should we actually honor the commandment to retell the story? Right now?

No rest, no justice, no peace, no ceasefire, no respite for Palestinians in Palestine, in so-called 48, in Gaza, in Galilee, in the West Bank, or across the world. Ongoing horror.

And... celebration?

Does this year’s Passover finally show that Pesach can not be a collective celebration—but rather, must be a collective acknowledgment of shame?

This year, like last year, like the year before, Pesach is a shonda (Yiddish=shame), begging a different kind of commemoration

Q2: Why do we eat bitter herbs / maror on this Passover—amidst genocide?

This is a time for mourning. Not celebration. White phosphorus; other chemicals and residue from bombs and bullets, tear gas, and debris from destroyed buildings; all pollute the air, water, and soil; pollute the earth; pollute Palestine; pollute us all. Forever chemicals. Their toxicity saturates Palestine. Their toxicity renders our celebration bitter.

This year we do not celebrate our liberation. Instead, we mourn ongoing genocide in which our so-called “liberation story” is complicit, and in which we are intertwined, through our tax dollars, our religious, cultural, and political institutions, our identities, our everyday banalities, our apparent powerlessness to stop it.

This genocide, this mourning, this bitterness, will not end when Pesach ends.

So perhaps, when Pesach ends, we should not cease eating bitter herbs / maror?

Last year the question was: “should we eat only bitter herbs/maror until a permanent ceasefire that actually protects Palestinians? The cessation of settler and soldier pogroms across Palestine? When a ceasefire comes—if a ceasefire comes?—when a cessation comes—if it comes?—what will be left to celebrate then?”

Tonight, under the guise of a “Ceasefire,” in the swelling shadow of a “Board of Peace,” our questions remain. Bitter still.

Q3: Why do we dip twice this Passover?

Palestinians are starving and they are gunned down waiting for flour.

They are thirsty and do not have access to potable water.

Palestinians are thirsty. For potable water. For justice.

Adding salt to water is an insult in times of blockade, strategic and intentional famine plaguing Gaza, surrounded on all sides by borders and bombs—and salt water.

Can dipping twice manifest a deeply self critical reflection on our privilege? Can it inspire us out of our de-escalated malaise? Can it inspire us to end the siege? To feed the hungry? To quench years-long thirst? If it can't—why dip?

If we think it can, then let us not stop dipping.

Until Palestine is free.

Let us dip over and over again. Let us not forget our responsibility—our call to respond. We need so much salt in the form of the sweat it will take to do the work.

Let us dip repeatedly. Until Palestine is Free.

Q4: Why do we use pillows and recline on Pesach during mass displacement?

How can we recline while millions of Palestinians stand and sit and weep, prostrate, displaced yet again, camp on the sides of roads, in tent-cities, outside their destroyed homes? In the midst of how many forced migrations?

What counts as a pillow to those displaced, homes demolished, in Gaza?

Perhaps we should recline—but only on items plausibly found for such a use in Gaza City? In Khan Yunis? In the betwixts and between and on the wrong-sides (both sides) of Rafah?

And if we reach the limits of our imagining – not, of course – being able to imagine the unimaginable, and not wanting to do the depressing research of watching videos and scrutinizing photos of what people use to recline – perhaps we could default to reclining on rocks this Pesach? After all, it's only for a “holiday”— it's only for eight days.

The Children In Us All

Offered by aaron moore ellis

With Pesach this year impugned by a shameful Ceasefire charade, and surrounded by the fog of war, we should consider: how can we process, much less begin to answer the pressing question of what to do, if not together? In process, in community, with a whole host of others and with ourselves? How can we do so with love? And care? And accountability? And efficacy?

Our traditions invite us to ask Pesach questions of our young ones, and times of genocide invite hard conversations. Having hard conversations, especially around Jewish celebrations of liberation in times of genocide, perhaps invites child's-mind positioning. Not posturing, no. But re-thinking whatever assumptions and positions and processes and practices have led us to where we're at?

Kid 1: The wise child: knows that without listening deeply to our collective, abject failure, we are doomed to remain doomed remain powerless. The wise child knows that only by acknowledging our failure, can we do better.

Kid 2: The oppositional child: knows that shit's fucked up, but resists surrendering ego; resists the obvious: the need to embrace a transformative reframing. They don't think we need to change.

Kid 3: The simple child: sees it clear as day. The Jewish state, Jewish communities, Jewish institutions, and Jewish family members—by our tax dollars and elected representatives—are in cahoots and complicit. In a STILL ongoing genocide. They see that the "Ceasefire" line was never enough. They know we don't know what to do now. That we don't know how to get where we want to be. Simple. Clear as day.

Kid 4: The child who doesn't know how to ask: is scared. How can they ask those of us who have been advocating, agitating, educating, organizing, acting up, as best as we can, to acknowledge their failure? How to ask the people who they love, the people who they admire, the people with whom they struggled and still struggle right alongside, to admit that the time to open up for total reframing is past due? How can they invite us to consider that though too late in so many ways, we can be right on time, to fundamentally reframe and reshape our approach, today?

These children are alive in our communities, in people of all ages.

These children are alive within each of us.

They are alive in people of all political persuasions.

We all have tendencies to be wise: to acknowledge our shortcomings and seek transformative alternatives.

We all have tendencies to be oppositional, to deny the realities in front of us, and insist on our entrenched modes of resistance.

We all have the tendency to be simple: to see what is clear as day without knowing what to do with the horrors in front of us, or our collective inability to achieve our goals.

We all have the tendency to not know how to ask for what we need; to not know how to let everyone know that something isn't working; that we've got to find another way.

If we carry all these tendencies within us – which part of ourselves will we lead with?

At the next Pesach, when we look back at the intervening year, will we see that we spent the year exactly as we did the year before? What will have changed?

Questions from Palestinian Children in Gaza

When we are asked to think of the four children, we remember the thousands of Palestinian children in Gaza martyred in this genocide.

More than 20,000 Palestinian children in Gaza have been reported killed by Israeli attacks; more than 18,000 have been treated for malnutrition because of the Israeli enforced starvation; an estimated 4,000 children have lost at least one limb due to Israeli use of heavy explosions in densely populated areas.

Surviving Palestinian children in Gaza are asking questions no child should have to ask. These questions are hard to hear. The mental health workers at the Palestine Trauma Center-UK clinic in Gaza collected these questions and feel strongly that they should be heard.

We honor these children by bearing witness to some of their questions.

“When I die, will they put me in a grave with my mom and dad?”



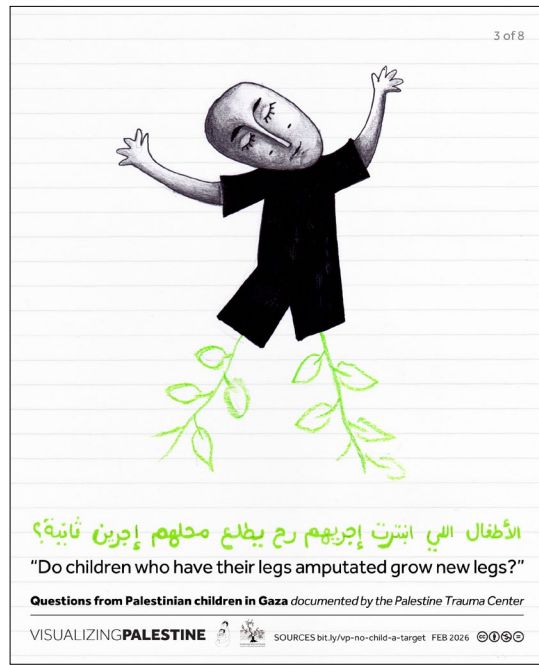
“When it rains, will we drown in the tent?”



“When will we go back to school?”



“Do children who have their legs amputated grow new legs?”



Visualizing Palestine’s latest series created in collaboration with the [#NoChildATarget](#) campaign, features Palestinian children’s questions documented by staff at the [Palestine Trauma Center-UK’s](#) clinic in Gaza. The campaign, spearheaded by the [Palestine-Global Mental Health Network](#) in collaboration with international counterparts, also calls on governments to stop supplying Israel with weapons and advocates for immediate protection, humanitarian aid, and trauma-informed care for Palestinian children.

<https://visualizingpalestine.org/visual/questions-children-gaza/>

All Eyes on Rafah

Offered by Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb

It is written in the torah
diverse multitudes left mitzryim,
diverse multitudes resisted oppression together
grassroots ruby rousers
made beautiful trouble inside the house of the oppressor,
defiant doulas refused to cooperate with the hands of death.
They had their own plans.

The diverse multitudes stood at Sinai.
The exodus story was never about one people,
it was always about a universal common cause,
pushing together against freedom's gate
shouting to the rest of the world and each other,
'Open, open the gates of freedom.
Do you see us? We are human beings.'
Like the people of Gaza,
watching their children die
and the shores of the red sea seem far away,
and they have already walked and walked
like Mother Hajar who ran from place to place
With her dying child in her arms, crying out.
The divine heard her cry and water rose from the ground under her feet.



But, Israel has turned off the tap of life and there is no water to drink,
No food to eat, no safe place to sleep, no sanitation, no medicine, no rest from the smell of
death.
In our name, the Mashkheet stalks the land of the
the innocent and Israel has become a destroyer of worlds,
Creator of an assassination zone, a death camp, a ruined world,
Where no child is safe.

To what can this be compared: to the ancient oral narrative
that sparked an uprising, as our ancestors tell it, as it was passed down and came to rest
in Pesikta De Rebbe Eleazar,

A young mother named Rachel bat Shutelah was one of the poor Hebrews forced to gather and mix
straw and mud to make bricks for the granaries of Pharaoh. The coarse stubble pierced their heels,
mingling their blood with clay. A task master with a hard heart beat Rachel without mercy, even
though birth pangs shook her body and she cried out in labor. As the rod fell upon her back, Rachel
bat Shutelah's infant child fell from her womb into the mud and drowned. The defiant doulas and

their guardian angel pulled the child from the mud and began keening and “Shekinah heard our cry— saw our affliction, our misery, our oppression,” and the time of freedom was soon upon us.

Nisan 5875, we step into the task of defiant doulas
And refuse to turn away from the cry of the people of Gaza,
Tonight we consecrate the spirit of people rising up
Born in the desire of liberation from oppression
Like Miriam who was called Puah because of her defiant voice
We unleash the roar of solidarity’s thunder, loud as the crashing waves of the sea upon the shore. We
pledge our faithfulness and will not surrender our resistance until Palestine is free from the river to
the sea.

Tonight, renew the ancient spirit of the mixed multitudes
singing open the waters of the sea, so everyone can pass through.

Don’t Step On My Feet Again

by Gazan poet Basman Aldirawi

Under the constant buzzing
Of drones
The roar of F-16’s over my head
While I play hide and seek
With peace
Whispering, *Don’t just be a break*
In between assaults,

The electricity goes off.
Total darkness.
While I dance with hope,
Whispering, *Don’t step on my*
Feet again.

At the border crossing
Between earth and sky
I still stand for hours.
My legs are shaking,
The sweat all over my body,
A voice inside my head, whispering
You’re a full human, even if

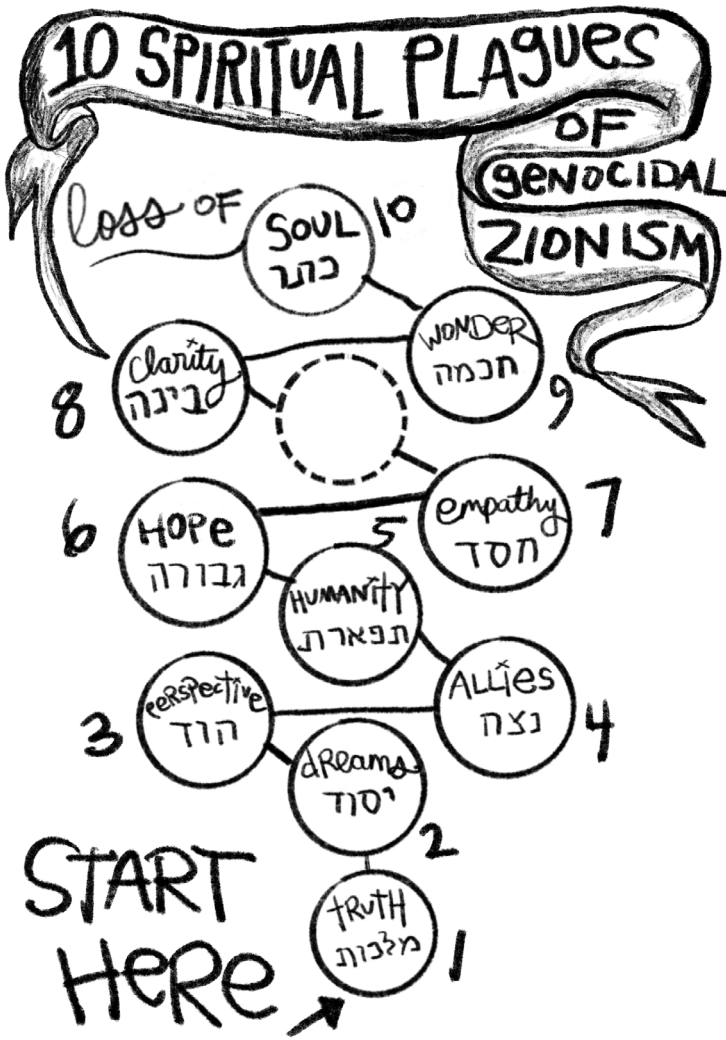
you feel like half.

10 Spiritual Plagues of Genocidal Zionism

Offered by Nomy Lamm

The ten plagues of biblical times were material plagues that targeted the oppressors who held the Israelites captive. As American Jews, we have been conscripted into the role of complicity with those oppressing, murdering, and destroying the Palestinian people and their history. To accept this role is to sacrifice our own divinity.

There are kabbalists who have mapped the ten biblical plagues onto the ten sephirot (faces of the divine), starting at the bottom of the tree of life and working upward. I used the same method to map out 10 spiritual plagues that befall those who benefit from and support the occupation of Palestine. As you read these, ask yourself which of these plagues do you feel in your body, mind and spirit? Consider what you may have lost, and what it might take to repair it. I offer that the antidote to each plague may be held in the energy of the sephira it is mapped onto, and invite you to connect with each divine portal as you read.



1. Loss of Foundational Connection to Truth

~ Malchut/Shechinah, Presence

This plague separates us from our foundational truths as inhabitants of this planet. Where do we belong? What is home? How do we ground into connection with the earth and what does it mean to do so? *Connect with your feet and feel the ground.*

2. Loss of Ability to Trust our Dreams

~ Yesod, Portal

This plague impacts our ability to dream as a Jewish people. The level of violence that we are witnessing and being asked to be complicit in requires us to separate from the messages of our subconscious and the magic of our dreams. *Connect with your lower belly and feel your aliveness.*

3. Loss of Perspective ~ Hod, Pacing

This plague impacts our ability to have a clear perspective on what has happened, what we want, and where we are going. We become confused, unclear, and difficult to understand or relate to. Our perspective becomes dissociated from our lived experience. *Connect with your hips and feel your stability.*

4. Loss of Allies ~ Netzach, Power

This is the plague of isolation. Our greatest fears position us as victims, justifying any actions we may take. To the rest of the world, we become terrifying and dangerous, which further entrenches our sense of isolation. *Connect with your knees and feel your momentum.*

5. Loss of Humanity ~ Tiferet, Beauty

This plague removes us from our place in the human family, the interconnection and common destiny that we all share as inhabitants of this planet. When we attempt to place ourselves outside of and above others, we sacrifice our own humanity. *Connect with your heart/solar plexus and feel your tenderness.*

6. Loss of Hope ~ Gevurah, Boundary

This is the plague of despair. Despair crumbles our belief in the possibility of transformation, severing connection with a loving god, sacrificing our faith to a punishing supernatural dictator. *Connect with your shoulders and feel your edges.*

7. Loss of Empathy ~ Chesed, Opening

With this plague, we lose our ability to feel anything for those who are suffering. We find ways to blame others for their misfortunes, and believe that superiority will protect us. *Connect with your palms and feel your attunement..*

8. Loss of Clarity ~ Binah, Understanding

This plague impacts our ability to make sense of complex sensory input and to know ourselves as part of the world, operating by the same laws of the universe as every other sacred fragment. *Connect with your ears and feel your attunement.*

9. Loss of Wonder ~ Chochmah, Wisdom

This plague annihilates our ability to experience the world with openness and wonder, to appreciate the wisdom of child mind, and to merge with the infinite. *Connect with your forehead and the back of your head and feel your magic.*

10. Soul Loss ~ Keter, Source

Those who have experienced all these plagues without consciously unwinding them become lost to ourselves. This plague allows humans to commit and justify gut wrenching atrocities. *Connect with the top of your head, place your hand on your head and feel the blessings pour through you, connecting you back down to your roots, to the earth.*

May our naming of these plagues allow us to return to ourselves and the basic dignity of our lives on this planet, connected to all life. Amen.

The Well of Deir Yassin — A Pesach Ritual

created by Elliott bat Tzedek with inspiration from the “Ten Plagues & Elijah’s Cup” ritual by Rabbi Miriam Geronimus and “Nakba Dayunu” credited to Jews Against the Occupation-NYC in a 2015 Jewish Voice for Peace Haggadah



“Deir Yassin Map”, wikipedia.org

This ritual begins after the ten plagues and before “Dayenu.” It uses the same cup of wine from which drops have been taken to symbolize our grief about the violence done to the people of Egypt in order for the Hebrews to be liberated. The “well” can be a large bowl placed on the table for this purpose.

Reader: This year we break another silence too long held—the acts of horrific violence done to Palestinians in order to found a Jewish state. The consequences of these actions still define and entangle all of our hopes for a just peace in the land between the river and the sea. We cannot fully understand this year’s ongoing genocide in Gaza without understanding that the nation of Israel was founded on expulsion and ethnic cleansing.

Reader: The drops we take out from our cup of wine in the Ten Plagues are a symbolic way to acknowledge the violent acts done to the people of Egypt in our story. But these are symbols from myth, when we have in our own time actual violence done to actual people in the process of founding a Jewish nation state. Those ten drops of wine on a plate cannot account for all of the murders, expulsions, and theft of land that made up the Nakba. And that continue even to this day in the West Bank and Gaza.

Reader: As we read each of these crimes, we pour from our cups, already lessened by naming plagues, until they are drained completely.* As each is read aloud, all echo the chorus, and pour into The Well of Deir Yassin.

Reader: This well is named for the village of Deir Yassin that was destroyed on April 9, 1948, when three Jewish militias attacked, blowing up houses with TNT with residents still inside, lining up residents against walls and shooting them, and then burning the bodies or throwing them in the well or into a nearby quarry to try to hide the crime before journalists arrived.

When, in villages throughout Palestine, Jewish brigades implemented a systematic expulsion of the Palestinian population,

we should have said Enough!

When the Jewish terrorist groups massacred 125 Palestinians at Deir Yassin,

we should have said Enough!

When Jewish soldiers rounded up Palestinians and massacred them, then forced neighbors to dig their graves,

we should have said Enough!

When Palestinians were forced into labor camps and their labor included destroying Palestinian homes,

we should have said Enough!

When on Erev Pesach in April 1948, in an operation nicknamed “Pesach Cleaning,” the Haganah forced 90% of Haifa – 70,000 humans – to flee the city,

we should have said Enough!

When the 10,000 Palestinian residents of Majdal, now Jewish Ashkelon, were enclosed for two years in a militarized ghetto, then forced onto trucks and transferred to Gaza,

we should have said Enough!

When, after villages were depopulated, the IDF bulldozed and bombed houses and mosques, destroying all evidence of Palestinian life there, including by the Jewish National Fund’s tree-planting campaign,

we should have said Enough!

When thousands of Palestinian homes were confiscated by the Israeli government and given to Jews, with food still in the kitchen and linens on the beds,

we should have said Enough!

When Israel and much of the leadership of the U.S. Jewish community denied that the forced expulsions happened,

we should have said Enough!

When for over 15 years Israel has turned Gaza into the world’s largest open-air prison, repeatedly waging military invasions, building deadly surveillance weapons, blockading food and medical aid, and destroying access to water and power

we should have said Enough!

Though Israeli & U.S. Jewish communities continue to deny the Right of Return to the Palestinian refugees of 1948

WE SAY: ENOUGH!

Though Israel, with the financial and military backing of the U.S. government, wages a brutal campaign of genocide and expulsion on the civilian population of Gaza

WE SAY: ENOUGH!

Reader: Tonight, in our annual recounting of the increasing acts of destruction and murder that our story tells us were necessary for our ancestors to be freed, we must pay attention. We must stop accepting Israel's propaganda that they have a right to self-defense but that Palestinians do not.

Reader: To fully honor our own story, we must be able to recognize who is living while dispossessed, whose children are under threat of murder, and who has empire and vast armies.

Reader: Tonight, in this well on our table, we together have made a space big enough to hold complicated truths. The truth that our people have lived dispossessed and vulnerable, subject to attacks and genocide, and that we carry that grief with us. And the truth that our people created a nation state founded on violence, murder, expulsion, and ethnic cleansing.

Reader: This year, different from all others, we have poured out the wine that represents our historical liberation into the Well of Deir Yassin. We cannot honestly taste freedom until propaganda is undone, until we can collectively hold and somehow reconcile all the complicated truths, and until all people between the river and the sea can build a secure future for their children.

Reader: Look upon this Well, which stands full while your glasses stand empty.* Carry this image in your mind just as our ancestors carried all they could gather into bags before fleeing.

Two Endings

1. After the seder tonight, we will gather outside and pour this offering on the ground as a sacrifice—an offering pulled from what is most precious to us and offered as a hope for, as a small step towards, the future we want to build. After the wine is poured, all will respond, “Finally, we say ENOUGH!”
2. After the seder tonight, the wine of this well will be stored until Tashlich, when it will be poured into the water along with the stones we throw in regret and apology for the ongoing injustice of the occupation and dispossession of the Palestinian people.



“Orphaned Girls from Deir Yassin after the 1948 Massacre”
commons.wikimedia.org

**If you are hosting a large seder, or doing this with a large crowd, having everyone empty their glasses may not be possible. In that case, modify the text ritual to simply pouring a small amount of wine for each crime listed*

2nd Cup of Wine

Offered by Rooted in This World Network

Palestinian poet Ghassan Zaqtan (here, translated by Robin Moger) brings that spirit of carefully retracing our steps to a poem that could almost be a children's rhyme, which doubles as testimony to the deadly danger of being stuck in a pattern.

By Force of Habit

*The soldier that the squad left in the garden,
the squad that the border guards left at the checkpoint,
the checkpoint that the occupation left at the crossing,
the occupation that the politician left in our lives,
the politician who was a soldier in the occupation,*

*the Merkava that the army left at the school,
the army that the war left in the city,
the war which the general left in the bedroom,
the general whom the peace left in our sleep,
the peace that was driving the Merkava,*

*still snipe at our heads without orders,
just so,
by force of habit.*

We drink the second cup to the rejection of certainty, to the motion and change that are life.

L'khayem.

Dayenu

Offered by Taya Mâ

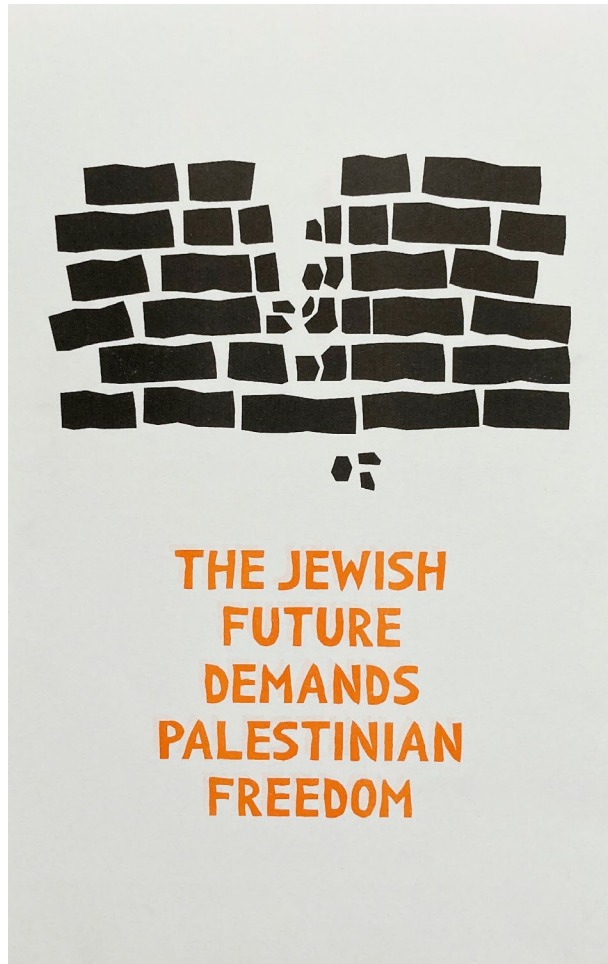
As we work for Palestinian liberation
Not In Our Name, a sacred incantation
May there be full end to genocide and occupation
Dayenu

Let us pray that it comes to be
From the River to the Sea
Palestine will be free
Dayenu

(Taya Mâ adaptation of traditional Dayenu song)



AIM YOUR PHONE CAMERA
AT THIS CODE AND OPEN
THE LINK THAT APPEARS





רַחֲצָה | Rachtzah

Offered by Ollie Schwartz

Framing:

At the start of the seder, we washed our hands during Urchatz, without the blessing over handwashing, as a ritual cleansing. Before our meal, we now wash our hands with the traditional hand washing blessing for the practical purpose of preparing to eat.

As Lakota Water Protectors fighting against the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) reminded us at Standing Rock in 2016, *Mní wičhóni* // Water is life! Our sacred rivers, tributaries, and oceans nourish the more than human world around us. As humans, we co-exist with water: amniotic fluid holds us in utero before we emerge into the world, water holds our brains to float safely in a cocoon of cerebrospinal fluid, water holds our tears, and our bodies are 75% water. A human body can only live for about three days without drinking water. Water is our life.

Water theft as a tactic of colonization

In Palestine water theft is a key tactic of colonization. 90% of the regions water is controlled by the state of Israel. (Al Jazeera, “50 Years of Land Theft Explained”)

From the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, only 44% of Palestinians were connected to water sources before the war on Gaza, which has decreased since Oct 7th due to Israeli settlers damaging water systems and terrorizing Palestinians at checkpoints who are traveling to obtain water. (“Palestine, not enough water to survive” Norwegian Refugee Council)

In 2023 Gaza, only 10.5% of Palestinians had access to reliable clean drinking water before the war on Gaza. Israeli siege on Gaza’s water after Oct 7th has resulted in a 95% drop, due to targeted destruction damaging the majority of water treatment facilities.

At the time of this writing in 2025, Israel had cut off the electrical supply causing the desalination plants to close.

In 2026, the Alliance for Water Justice in Palestine, produced “Draining Palestine: Water, Power, and Genocide” a 3 min video which can be viewed (and shared) on youtube documenting the continued weaponization of water by Israel. <https://youtu.be/fZQTZ4ydumY>

Blessing:

We give thanks for potable, safe, and accessible running water at our seder tables, as we say together:

*Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'Olam,
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al nitilat yadayim*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נִטְיַלַת יָדַיִם

Blessed are You, Queen of the Cosmos, creator of water,
who has sanctified us with stewardship and has directed us on the washing of hands.





מוֹצִיא-מַצָּה | Motzi-Matzah

Offered by Felipe Ventura

Matzah embodies the enduring spirit of liberation, and it does so in a broken way. Before the blessing, we break one matzah on purpose as lechem oni, the bread of the poor. It is the bread over which many things must be spoken.

We cannot bless what the earth brings forth while pretending wholeness is ours to claim.

Gaza is still in emergency hunger. In the West Bank and southern Lebanon, farmers cannot reach their fields. In southern Iran, the Shajareh Tayyebah girls' elementary school was completely destroyed, the bodies of its students under the rubble waiting for their parents to find them. All across this country, our neighbors are afraid to walk their children to school and go to the grocery store because ICE agents disappear them. On unceded Dakota land less than a mile from where George Floyd was murdered, they killed Renee Good and Alex Pretti too.

And that same month, hundreds of clergy joined neighborhood patrols through icy streets, listening to the rapid response network, watching for vehicles used to abduct their neighbors. One woman arrived late because she was delivering breast milk to an infant whose mother had just been taken away. Later, the city held a general strike from the grassroots, built from years of solidarity organizing, migrant defense networks, and faith communities practicing what it means to show up for each other.

Solidarity is a practice that builds the capacity to meet a crisis when it comes.

Brokenness, tended together, becomes the shape of resistance.

The federal budget that funds genocide and displacement can be redirected to our community needs. The weapons used to commit genocide can be stopped. Here on unceded Lisjan Ohlone land, the [Oakland People's Arms embargo](#) has demanded that the Port of Oakland stop shipping military cargo to Israel and is making real progress.

We refuse to bless the bread from a position of wholeness while the machinery of war runs through our streets.

The broken piece in our hands is a question. What are we doing, with our hands, with our neighbors, with our city, to stop the breaking? We hold the broken piece and work toward the day when all who

hunger can bless bread, all who are displaced can go home, all whose children are taken can hold them again.

Hamotzi:

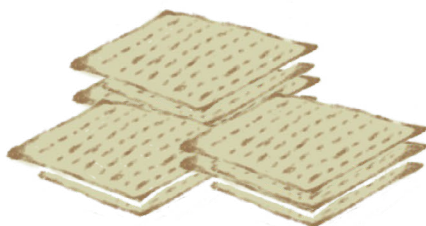
*Brukhah At Yah, Eloheinu Ruakh haolam,
hamotzi'ah lechem min haaretz.*

בְּרוּכָה אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם
הַמוֹצִיָאָה לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ

Al achilat matzah:

*Brukhah At Yah, Eloheinu Ruakh haolam,
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al achilat matzah.*

בְּרוּכָה אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מַצָּה





מרור | Maror

Embittered and Inspired | מרור & צמור

Offered by Shula Etta Pesach with words from Alexa Rosengaus

Alexa Rosengaus: When I was a young girl celebrating Pesach with my family, my cousins and I devised a new plan every year as to how we would get rid of the maror section of our plate. We tried everything—giving the leaves to the dogs, hiding them under our chairs, wrapping them inside of napkins and sneakily throwing them away. I was convinced maror was only there to make the evening less palatable, and I was always determined to go straight into the sweet, crisp apples and honey. But every year, after everyone caught wind of our nefarious anti maror plans, my mom would sit me down and, rather than tell me off as she usually would, explain that recognizing our people’s ancient suffering before appreciating our own modern privilege was the only way to make those apples and honey taste oh so sweet. That profoundly stuck with me—Recognition. Awareness. Knowing that that bitter bite is intended to hold space for those who suffered.

This year, Maror doesn’t just taste bitter. It tastes intensely of grief, of sorrow, of mourning, of screaming into a void with an aftertaste of impotence. But this year, unlike those seders of my childhood, Maror is so much more—enduring the bitterness in a continued fight for liberation, holding profound space for our brothers and sisters in Gaza, and persisting through the bitter leaves so we may all one day enjoy our apples and honey.

Shula Etta Pesach: I’ll be honest: Maror has always confused me. In most Ashkenazi Jewish communities, the spicy horseradish is conventionally used as Maror. Horseradish is both an ingenious substitution for the bitters and a blatantly different aromatic. Originating as a diasporic adaptation, and a later rabbinic interpolation, horseradish arrives on the Seder Plate in the absence of seasonally available wild bitter greens like lettuces, dandelion leaves, and wild radish. But horseradish is not bitter—it is hot. To me, horseradish’s presence is a sign of cultural hybridity and the changingness of tradition. But it is also an invitation. What if I honor the horseradish with ritual power and elevate it beyond a substitution?

This Pesach, I invite you to combine the truly bitter greens of Maror with a new introduction to the Seder Plate “Tzamor”— a spicy, fiery element. Join me in integrating remembrance and clarity, grief and action, the sharp sadness of Maror with the enlivening power of Tzamor. We need both bitterness and heat this year. Because in the midst of the continued siege on Gaza, in the ongoing fear of hostages unreturned, with the devastation of displacement disease and famine, as we witness the atrocity of complacency, with the excruciating upheaval of it all... we must dwell with the bitter grief of calamity while feeling the heated urgency of action.

(COMBINE MAROR WITH TZAMOR AND RECITE THE FOLLOWING:)

Note: If Horseradish is not available or desired, Tzamor could be any spicy food of cultural significance, locally availability, and/or ritual meaningfulness. Tzamor: from the root צמר, meaning 'to cause fever, to fire, to animate, to inspire,' and related to סמר indicating 'to shiver, to shudder, to bristle up.'

A Prayer:

We place these hearts
firmly and gently
on the nightmare.
We recall this year's
bitterness: bondage,
bombs, an utter betrayal
of care—compassion
contained within borders.
We taste the sharpness
of lives lost and dreams
deferred. But we twine
such despair with
dedication.
Empty, speechless, afraid,
our numbness, our ache
is bound up in strength
with clarity, a readiness
for not just ceasefire but
freedom,
flourishing, return, repair.
...May it be so.

Embittered and inspired.
Let this sharp sadness,
the potency of our lament
turn to power and
motivate us. Grief become
a fever of insistence on
life. *May it be so.*

Bricks and rubble,
collapsed concrete,
ruins reforged into flint
—our grief a fire
starter. We tend the

embers of resistance
with tears as fuel.
...May it be so.

Our hearts are broken
wide—and wider.
In the expanse
of the unimaginable,
a wind stirs and stokes.
We bring an even breath
to the embers, oxygen
for the beginnings—
a flicker of the future
burning brighter
and warm enough
for a circle holding us all.
May it be so.

And on sidewalks and
windowsills, on tables
lined with tin foil, on
classroom benches and
temple bimahs, on our
bedsides, on the steps
of the congress office, and
along the corridors
of our intricate hearts:
We set a blaze
of candlelight so
our votives burn
together to become
a brilliant vision,
a heartbroken
constellation guiding
the way for this grief.

May it be so.
Grief become a fever
of insistence on life.
May it be so.

Legacies of division
undone through this:
a dedication, an
undeniable
vision of liberation.
Shivers of indignant anger
say: Not in our name.
We say: Not in our name.
Grief become a fever
of insistence on life.
May it be so.

These trembling frayed
parts of us are steadied.
Tired bones bearing
memories of martyrs,
the clenched story
of our suffering revenged
no matter the cost,
and the weight of it
all—it's too much.
Amid the shattering
let our wails be
unburdened with this:
an animation for justice.
May it be so.

Grief become a fever
of insistence on life.
And so it is.



פּוֹרֵךְ | Korech

Offered by Shir Lovett-Graff

BREAK OFF TWO PIECES FROM THE BOTTOM MATZAH, AND MAKE
A SANDWICH OF THE BITTER HERBS AND CHAROSET

Korech—known as the Hillel sandwich, named after the Talmudic scholar—is, if we want it to be, an encapsulation of how it feels to sit in the present. We feel the sweetness of coming together in community, to hold and be held by others in this moment of fracturing and despair. At the same time, bitterness lies heavy on our palate—the daily death, displacement, and violence in Palestine.

It feels impossible to hold these two tastes in our mouths. How can we feel the joy of connecting with others like us—Jewish and non-Jewish comrades fighting for liberation—while also recognizing the painful reasons we have found this community in the first place? For many of us, ostracized from the Jewish world, rejected by our families and friends, then threatened and doxxed by powerful institutions, there is bitter goodness in finding anti-Zionist Jewish home. There is sacred relief that comes with being in spaces—virtual or in-person, across generations and ancestries—where we can look across the room and know that someone is there to accompany us in this moment.

With *korech*, each bite is mourning. We mourn Jewish communities lost to the power of domination and ownership; to control and unhealed trauma. With *korech*, each bite is connection. We have built, are building, and will build the communities we need to sustain our journey to justice, freedom, and healing. Let this be the taste that lingers.



שִׁלְחַן עֹרֵךְ | Shulchan Orech

How Can We Eat a Festive Meal Tonight?

How can we fulfill the requirement of Shulchan Orech by eating a festive meal while the Israeli regime enforces a blockade of all that is essential so that life may thrive: water, food, medicine, fuel. The US government supports Israel in the weaponized starvation of the Palestinian people in Gaza?

As Palestinian writer/poet Mohammed El-Kurd has written:

...this consequential moment calls on us to raise the ceiling of what is permissible, and demands that we renew our commitment to the truth, to spitting the truth, unflinchingly, unabashedly (and cleverly), no matter in what conference room, no matter in whose face. Because Gaza cannot fight the empire on its own. Or, to use an embittered proverb my grandmother used to mutter at the evening news, “They asked the Pharaoh, ‘Who made you a pharaoh?’ He replied, ‘no one stopped me.’”

Voices of Palestinians

If I Must Die

By Refaat Alareer

(killed by an Israeli airstrike, 12/6/23)

If I must die,
you must live
to tell my story
to sell my things
to buy a piece of cloth
and some strings,
(make it white with a long tail)
so that a child, somewhere in Gaza
while looking heaven in the eye
awaiting his dad who left in a blaze—
and bid no one farewell
not even to his flesh
not even to himself—
sees the kite, my kite you made, flying up above
and thinks for a moment an angel is there
bringing back love
If I must die
let it bring hope
let it be a tale

I Grant You Refuge

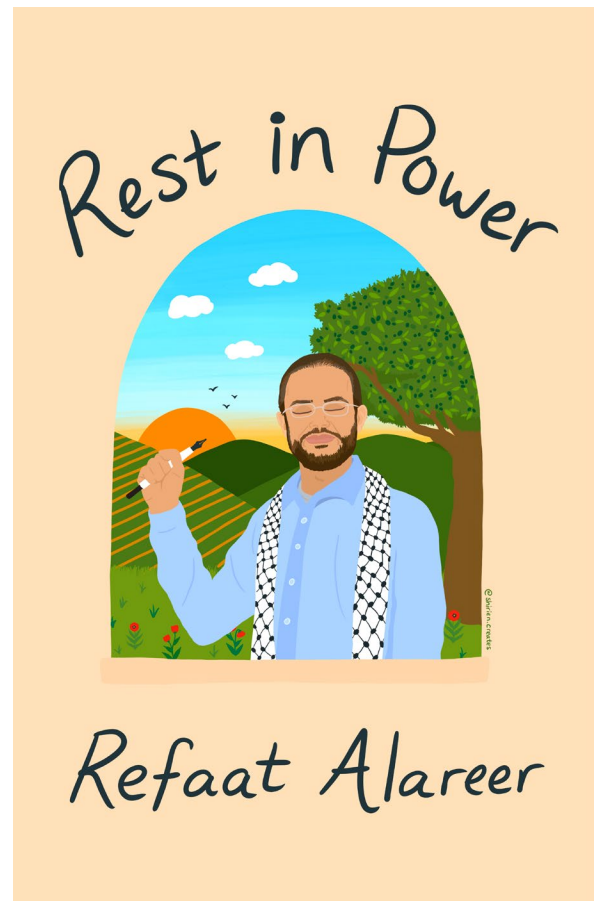
Hiba Abu Nada

(killed by an Israeli airstrike, 10/20/23)

translation by Huda Fakhreddine

1.
I grant you refuge
in invocation and prayer.
I bless the neighborhood and the minaret
to guard them
from the rocket

from the moment
it is a general's command
until it becomes
a raid.



Artwork by Shirien Damra
@shiriencreates

I grant you and the little ones refuge,
the little ones who
change the rocket's course
before it lands
with their smiles.

2.
I grant you and the little ones refuge,
the little ones now asleep like chicks in a nest.

They don't walk in their sleep toward dreams.
They know death lurks outside the house.

Their mothers' tears are now doves
following them, trailing behind
every coffin.

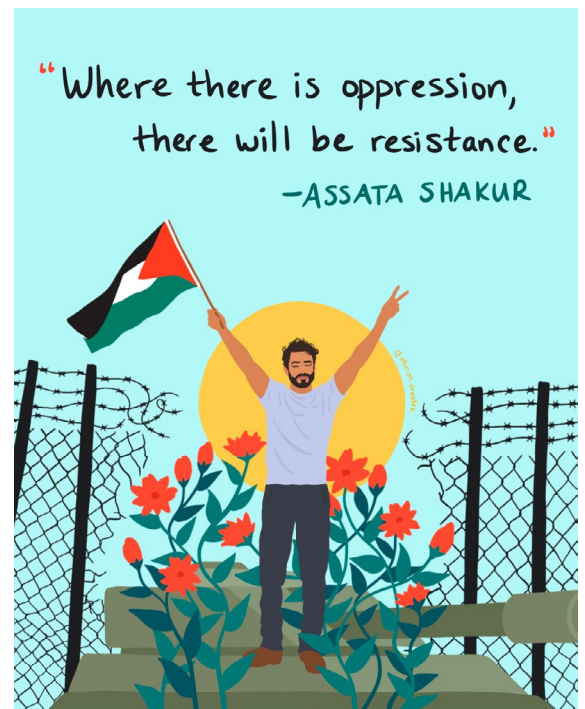
3.
I grant the father refuge,
the little ones' father who holds the house upright
when it tilts after the bombs.
He implores the moment of death:
"Have mercy. Spare me a little while.
For their sake, I've learned to love my life.
Grant them a death
as beautiful as they are."

4.
I grant you refuge
from hurt and death,
refuge in the glory of our siege,
here in the belly of the whale.

Our streets exalt God with every bomb.
They pray for the mosques and the houses.
And every time the bombing begins in the North,
our supplications rise in the South.

5.
I grant you refuge
from hurt and suffering.

With words of sacred scripture
I shield the oranges from the sting of phosphorous



Artwork by Shirien Damra
@shiriencreates

and the shades of cloud from the smog.

I grant you refuge in knowing
that the dust will clear,
and they who fell in love and died together
will one day laugh.

Drawing Class

By Salim Al-Nafar

(Killed by an Israeli airstrike, 12/7/23)

*Translation by Danielle Linehhan Kiedaisch
and Lorna MacBean*

If we stopped
would the endlessness stop too?
Screaming from the fire,
I shout into darkness.
Did you hear me?
Did you answer?

The children dipped their bread in my tears
while we wrestled the chains of time
drawn to drag war onto beauty.
A child told me
'They took my father...can you see them?'
I looked, but could not see.
But I am tired
from seeing
from journeying
from anxious days
Mother, I am tired.
Delirious our joys: delirious our sorrow
And the travel nips, nips, nips, nips...

When we stop
life becomes memory.
When we sleep,
with time
to talk.

At drawing class
time is mapped onto the contours of our homeland

and on takes of knights who kick time with their souls.
Our teacher tells us the story
And colours our minds.
Putting place into heart into the question:
What happened to our teachers?

My teacher was made absent.
No drawings, no stories, no beautiful dreams.
Tired from my travel and my question
and from a life lived in pain,
I wander.
Who will see these footsteps?
Denied in love, exhausted of anger,
they stood on clouds and took
the stars from the sky and changed
the rhythm of time.

If we stop,
will time walk on?
Never thought we would lead the young into the waves.

...

What happens to us?
Are we to learn from the absent?
That wilderness does not protect life?

I battered the door of death
and found no answer.
From this small land, we grew.
From the water came our life.
Argue with this:
The skies crush our land:
our song sings on.



צפון | Tzafun

Tzafun

Offered by Rooted in this World Network

As we search for the hidden afikomen and reunite it with its separated half, we pause to consider searching itself. There is both an expansion and distillation that occurs with searching: expansion as we see and discover new things we weren't expecting; distillation as we come to know more precisely what it is we are searching for.

Our minds may go to the hundreds of thousands of Gazans searching for family members, friends and colleagues buried beneath rubble. To the millions of Gazans displaced from their homes, searching for somewhere safe to be. To the uncounted Tehranis and other Iranians forced into flight from the Israeli/U.S. bombs that have buried still more people in their schools, homes, and workplaces.

What are we searching for, what are we uncovering in our commitment to Palestinian liberation, our resistance to the other murderous projects that Zionism and U.S. nationalism embrace, our efforts to embody Jewishness beyond Zionism?

We will spend time reflecting and sharing in the chat — you may want to think about the following questions as you search:

- 1. What are pieces of history, and ideas for the future, that you draw from when imagining our collective Jewishness beyond Zionism?*
- 2. What is something that you'd like to reflect on further from tonight's seder?*



בָּרַךְ | Barekh

Third Cup of Wine

Offered Rooted in This World Network

Yet another beginning is to openly name the inadequacy of our preparations for this moment. Our movements have not been able to stop the wars of this century. At times, we may have slowed them, but too often our actions have been symbolic rather than concrete, in the sphere of images rather than the material world where bombs fall and blood flows.

Just before traveling to Palestine, the Jewish feminist anti-Zionist poet Marilyn Lowen Fletcher met Kamal Boullata, a Palestinian painter and art historian then studying in Washington DC; in 1972, she published this poem about their meeting:

For Kamal of the Old City

*there comes a point
where the past will not serve
and unprepared, our research incomplete,
our ammunition inadequate, our
loved ones scattered,
we
begin at this moment. now.*

We drink the third cup to stepping away from dead-end paths, to leaving behind what does not serve us, to living and struggling nonetheless.

L'chayem.

PRAYER FOR OUR HUMANITY

Offered by Rebecca S'manga Frank

When was the last time I was hungry?

Tired?

Really sweating? My heartbeat pulsing through my skin...?

What was the last thing I broke?

The last thing I mended?

What was the last stamp I licked?

The last letter I wrote?

When was the last time I played hide and seek?

Who was the last baby I held?

When was the last time I laughed with a group of people? When did I last build a sandcastle?

What was the last thing I got high off of?

When was the last time I watched a pot until it boiled?

What was the last thing I blew on until it cooled...

Thank you.

Thank you for taking care of yourself

Thank you for taking care of your mother, your partner, your neighbor, a child Thank you for going to the doctor with a Beloved

Thank you for giving a new friend a ride home

Thank you for inviting people over for a meal

Thank you for caring about their dietary restrictions

Thank you for sending someone a song

Thank you for getting that sweet treat at the farmers market

Thank you for wiping down the equipment at the gym

Thank you for remembering to go for a walk...

in the park, at the beach, in the hills, around the block

Thank you for visiting an elder

Thank you for your patience

Thank you for letting go of toxic relationships, with love

Thank you for walking your healing journey

Thank you for doing your laundry
Thank you for washing your hair
Thank you for speaking up so loudly:

HANDS OFF OUR FRIENDS
HANDS OFF OUR FAMILIES
HANDS OFF OUR BODIES
HANDS OFF THIS LAND
HANDS OFF OUR HOME

Thank you

For asking a question
Thank you for showing up
Thank you for staying home
Thank you for resting
Thank you for being honest
Thank you for trusting...the goodness in yourself and others...
Thank you for changing the filter
Thank you for taking out the recycling, and putting in a new bag...
Thank you for suggesting we go out, it was awesome
Thank you for dancing
Thank you for coming
Thank you for all your help with the move
Thank you for listening
Thank you for reading
Thank you for holding the door
Thank you for holding the space
Thank you for reaching out for help

Thank you for coming back
Thank you for telling me to
Breathe...
Close my eyes...
And think of the most beautiful thing I can imagine...

Radiate that feeling...
And send it wherever it needs to go...
To Rafah
To Sudan
The Congo
Ukraine
Iran
Down the street

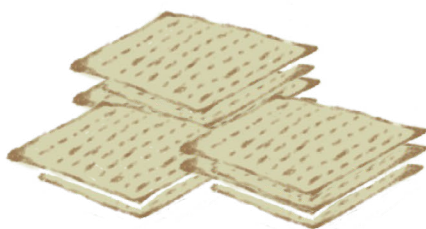
(you know where it needs to go)

Send it to someone who feels like they've been abandoned
Someone sick, suffering, or afraid
Someone who needs a little (or a lot) of love.

Breathe...
Share your visions to bring them closer to Now.

Let all of our actions be infused with a radical presence of love,
and may that love keep us coming back
to ourselves and each other.

-written originally for JVP Power Half-Hour for Gaza 1/14/2024





הלל | Hallel

4th Cup of Wine

Offered by Rooted in this World Network

And tonight's final beginning is to return to the start. To ask – as part of our search for Jewishness beyond Zionism, as we head towards the end of the seder, as we continue through the ongoing Nakba and the khurbn 'aza [destruction of Gaza] – is this a holiday of liberation?

Can this be a holiday of liberation when it rests upon the fantasy of a divine land grant and colonial project whose death toll we cannot count? When the story it tells (both in its broad arc and specific gestures) is one of many from our ritual cycle and mythological canon that feed the genocide?

Can this be a holiday of liberation when it invites us to treat the mass slaughter of children as (in the words of many recent progressive Haggadahs) an “escalation of tactics”? Can this be a holiday of liberation when the “mighty hand and outstretched arm” that supposedly bring freedom are the same force that ten times over prevents peaceful escape from the narrow place, insisting on plague, environmental devastation, and massacre? Can this be a holiday of liberation when the triumph it introduces is first the slaughter of those who insist that democracy must be a part of liberation, and then the genocidal conquest of the land of Canaan – of Palestine – under the leadership of a hereditary priestly caste?

None of these are incidental details that can be reinterpreted away. Removing ten drops does not make a full glass of wine into less of a celebration; it just provides the thinnest of emotional alibis. These genocide warrants, these celebrations of genocide, these acts that enable more genocide, are the core of the story.

Hallel sums up the message in the prayer that accompanies the opening of the door. Here is a part of what the holiday asks the divine to do to entire peoples defined as “enemy”, in the words of two of the oldest versions of the text:

May their palace be desolate; in their tents let there be no dweller.

Give them a bereaving womb and dry breasts.

Pursue them with anger, and destroy them from beneath the heavens of the Lord.

You shall break them with an iron rod; like a potter's vessel you shall shatter them.

May their table before them become a trap, and [their hope] for peace become a snare.

We know these details. They are Khan Younis, Susya, Qibya, al-Quds, Al-Shifra Hospital; they are the Shajareh Tayyebbeh school in Minab, the Dahieh neighborhood in Beirut, the unarmed ship IRIS Dena; they are all the places whose names we will not know. They are part of this holiday's songs of celebration. They are what this holiday's central text praises and seeks, heartening the Israeli (and often American-Israeli) settlers who openly embrace its implications.

So this is a fourth cup of four questions for us to carry home:

What in this story can we keep – what does not endorse, enable, praise, justify, nor demand genocide?

What in this story should we discard completely, and cease to include in any way within our practices?

What in this story do we need to set aside, but continue to name in our practice, so that we don't forget the complexities of our ritual histories and context?

What would it look like to create a Jewish liberation holiday that is not wrapped around genocide warrants and theocratic state-building?

A liberation holiday that doesn't trade other people's freedom, other people's lives (in Mitsraim, in Canaan, in Shushan, in the Greek-speaking Jewish world the Maccabees sought to annihilate, in Palestine, in Tehran) for those of some self-appointed, hekshered "pure" set of us? We don't yet have one. And we should.

We drink the fourth cup to the questions we must return to even when we have come to answers that work for a particular time and place, to the cyclical life that keeps us honest to our commitments.

L'chayem.

*Before opening the door to Elijah & Miriam you may consider performing **On Our Doorposts: A Ritual For Resisting Fascism & Protecting Our Neighbors Near & Far**, listed at the end of this Haggadah in *Additional Resources for Passover*.*

Elijah's Cup

Offered by Rooted in this World Network

The harbinger of freedom does not attend our seders. His absence defines them; the open secret of a surreptitious sip from his goblet admits as much.

The stories about Eliyohu are about him not being welcomed, about even the promise of oylem ha-bo [the world to come] not being enough to make lip service to hospitality real. And how can we blame

those who turn him away? The promise is about another world, not the world we live in, the world where we hurt and love and struggle.

Let's tell another story. A story that says our lives in this world, our lives now, our lives with our neighbors and with strangers, are the point. A story that looks at the world to learn from it.

Let's drink the cup together. It isn't Eliyohu's, it is ours. Because he doesn't attend our seders, we do.

PASS ELIJAH'S CUP AROUND THE TABLE, WITH EACH PERSON POURING A DASH FROM IT INTO THEIR OWN GLASS.

Together, we drink to the reinvention of Jewishness, not just beyond Zionism, but without the things that make Zionism possible. To the living, changing Jewishness that we make ours.

L'khayem.

Miriam's Cup of Water Liberation

Offered by Kohenet Luna Liebling

FOR THIS RITUAL, PREPARE A CEREMONIAL WATER CUP IN DEDICATION OF MIRIAM THE PROPHETESS. FILL UP A GLASS, A GOBLET, A SHELL, OR AN IMAGINARY VESSEL, WITH WATER. PLACE IT IN FRONT OF YOU. LET THIS LEARNING AND RITUAL BE IN SERVICE OF A WORLD WHERE WE ALL REVERE WATER AS SACRED.

Water in Occupied Palestine

The water of Palestine has been occupied since well before October 7th. Since 1967, all Palestinians have had to retrieve permits from Israel for any water projects. Any existing non-authorized water wells were destroyed. The process for retrieving the permits was virtually impossible, with less than half of all applications for new water projects or for fixing old water wells approved. In 2017, the UN reported that 96% of the water in Gaza was "unfit for human consumption." I saw with my own eyes this past summer water tanks that had been installed by Israeli settlements tapping into the water supply of various Palestinian villages in Mussafar Yattah, in the South Hebron hills of the West Bank. The water towers loomed high, casting shadows over the expanse of the desert, mocking us down below. The installment of these water systems breaks international law.

And now, the water situation in Gaza is unspeakable. The vast majority of Gazans are forced to drink dirty, salty water. There have been attacks on water sanitation facilities, and a near total blockade on all water getting into Gaza. The scope of this crisis goes well beyond the thousands of people dying

from thirst and water-related diseases; the destruction of waste treatment facilities eventually causes waste to leach into the groundwater, which can cause spread of diseases and lead to potential epidemics not only in Gaza but afar, including, ironically, Israel.

What does Miriam have to tell us about water liberation?

Miriam embodied the truth that water is inherently intertwined with liberation. She watched Moses float down the Nile, she led the emotional exaltation after crossing the red sea, and her divine connection to *mayim hayyim* caused the waters to spring forth while she wandered in the desert.

We are taught then when Miriam took out her timbrel to dance, it was to praise G-d in complete celebration. But I think that when Miriam took out her timbrel, she was terrified. The other women were terrified. They were afraid and grieving, and when they danced, they danced with their fear. They sang through their grief, their rage, their overwhelm. I like to imagine that the tears streaming down their dust-caked go faces were not only tears of joy, but also tears of anguish for those who did not make it, tears of grief and utter confusion as to why we must live in a world with such violence. They stomped their feet to the rhythm of the tambourines not only to celebrate but also to rage, to flail, to prepare to fight the next enemy who could come from around the corner at any moment. The wisdom of Miriam in that moment was not that celebration comes first, but that one can feel absolute joy alongside absolute grief without diminishing the other. They can exist together, inform the other, enhance the magic of the other's medicine. Perhaps they must.

Miriam understood the Divine importance of moving through experiences with grace, honesty, and feeling. For her, to steal water not only takes away physical life, but it also takes away spiritual well-being. Pharaoh enacted water theft onto himself when he hardened his heart—he stole from himself his very own resources of feeling his own soft heart, the waters in his body flowing. What would have happened if Pharaoh had been able to grieve, to weep, to release his waters instead of hoarding them? What would happen if those monstrous perpetrators of war crimes could also feel? The crimes they are committing start with the damming of their own waters, the destruction of their own rivers. Let us say a prayer for Miriam, our Prophetess ancestor who teaches us that to be in sacred relationship with water is to be in sacred relationship with freedom and with G-d.

A Prayer for Water

Hold Miriam's Cup close to your heart. Take a moment to feel the waters of your own body—your blood, your marrow, the interstitial fluids between your cells. Invite your feelings in—grief, sorrow, joy, numbness, rage. How do the waters of your body interact with your feelings?

Ask yourself—What kind body of water are you? Perhaps you are a raging sea, crashing and foamy. Perhaps you are a river, ice cold with glacial melt. Or a lake, a pond, a trickling stream, barely dripping, a small puddle on a city sidewalk. Whatever you are, let yourself fill up with your own waters. Find a commitment in yourself to liberate your own waters by feeling the vast expanse of your experience.

Let us recite this prayer from Dori Midnight:

*Zot Kos Miryam, kos mayim hayim.
Zeikher l'yitziat Mitztrayim.*

This is the Cup of Miriam, the cup of living waters.

Blessed are You, Source of Life, who blesses us with the capacity to imagine beyond the narrow places, emboldens us to resist and speak truth, and guides us to dance our way, together, towards an emancipated future.



Sources

The Siege on Gaza's Water, Commentary by [Natasha Hall](#), Anita Kirschenbaum, and [David Michel](#). Published January 12, 2025, Center for Strategic and International Studies

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/siege-gazas-water#:~:text=The%20United%20Nations%20estimates%20that,emergency%20standard%20of%2015%20liters.>

Miriam ha neviah

Adapted by Taya Mâ and Ibrahim Baba

Miriam, Miriam ha neviah

Miriam, Miriam ha neviah

Shalom alayich, shalom alayich

Ha neviah shel shechinah

Miriam, Miriam the prophet

Miriam, Miriam the prophet

Peace be upon you, Peace be upon you

The prophet of shechinah



AIM YOUR PHONE CAMERA
AT THIS CODE AND OPEN
THE LINK THAT APPEARS

(substitute names of people in your presence, i.e. Melissa, Melissa ha neviah... if substituting names of masc/male people you may want to change to the masculine Hebrew, ie Eliahu, Eliahu ha navi, Eliahu, Eliahu ha navi, shalom aleichem, shalom aleichem, ha navi shel shechinah...)

Zog Nit Keynmol / Hymn of the Partisans/ זאָג ניט קיין מאָל!

Offered by Rooted in This World Network

Poem written in the Vilne Ghetto by Partisan Hirsh Glik (1922-1944)

Melody from the “Cossack March” set to music by Dmitri Pokrass and Daniil Pokrass (Jewish Soviet composers)

Published by Yehude Ayzman in 1945.

Popularized beyond the yiddish-speaking world by Paul Robeson.

This song became the hymn of the United Partisan Organization in 1943. It was written in response to the news of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and spread to all the camps in Eastern Europe and later to all Jewish communities the world over. It was translated into several languages. Today it is sung at memorial meetings for martyred Jews and at seders in honor of the Uprising by many survivors & their families & communities, especially among secular leftist Jews.

Never say that you are going your last way,
Though lead-filled skies above blot out the blue of day.
The hour for which we long will certainly appear,
The earth shall thunder ‘neath our tread that we are here!

From lands of green palm trees to lands all white with snow,
We are coming with our pain and with our woe,
And where’er a spurt of our blood did drop,
Our courage will again sprout from that spot.

For us the morning sun will radiate the day,
And the enemy and past will fade away,
But should the dawn delay or sunrise wait too long,
Then let all future generations sing this song.

This song was written with our blood and not with lead,
This is no song of free birds flying overhead,
But a people amid crumbling walls did stand,
They stood and sang this song with rifles held in hand.

Translated by Elliot Palevsky

*Zog nit keyn mol az du geyst dem letstn veg,
Khotsh himlen blayene farshteln bloye teg.
Kumen vet nokh undzer oysgebenkte sho —
S'vet a poyk ton undzer trot — mir zaynen do!*

*Fun grinem palmenland biz vaysn land fun shney,
Mir kumen on mit undzer payn, mit undzer vey,
Un vu gefaln s'iz a shprits fun undzer blut,
Shprotsn vet dort undzer gvure, undzer mut.*

*S'vet di morgnzun bagildn undz dem haynt,
Un der nekhtn vet farshvindn mitn faynd,
Nor oyb farzamen vet di zun in dem kayor —
Vi a parol zol geyn dos lid fun dor tsu dor.*

*Dos lid geshribn iz mit blut un nit mit blay,
S'iz nit keyn lidl fun a foygl af der fray,
Dos hot a folk tsvishn falndike vent
Dos lid gezungen mit naganes in di hent!*

*To zog nit keyn mol az du geyst dem letstn veg,
Khotsh himlen blayene farshteln bloye teg.
Kumen vet nokh undzer oysgebenkte sho —
S'vet a poyk ton undzer trot — mir zaynen do!*

זאָג ניט קיין מאָל אַז דו גייסט דעם לעצטן וועג,
כאָטש הימלען בלייענע פֿאַרשטעלן בלויע טעג.
קומען וועט נאָך אונדזער אויסגעבענקטע שעה —
ס'וועט אַ פּוּיק טאָן אונדזער טראָט — מיר זיינען דאָ!

פֿון גרינעם פֿאַלמענלאַנד ביז ווייסן לאַנד פֿון שניי,
מיר קומען אָן מיט אונדזער פּיין, מיט אונדזער וויי,
און וווּ געפֿאַלן ס'איז אַ שפּריץ פֿון אונדזער בלוט,
שפּראַצן וועט דאָרט אונדזער גבֿורה, אונדזער מוט.

ס'וועט די מאָרגנזון באַגילדן אונדז דעם היינט,
און דער נעכטן וועט פֿאַרשווינדן מיטן פֿיינד,
נאָר אויב פֿאַרזאַמען וועט די זון אין דעם קאַיאָר —
ווי אַ פֿאַראַל זאָל גיין דאָס ליד פֿון דור צו דור.

דאָס ליד געשריבן איז מיט בלוט און ניט מיט בליי,
ס'איז ניט קיין לידל פֿון אַ פֿויגל אויף דער פֿריי,
דאָס האָט אַ פֿאַלק צווישן פֿאַלנדיקע ווענט
דאָס ליד געזונגען מיט נאַגאַנעס אין די הענט!

טאָ זאָג ניט קיין מאָל אַז דו גייסט דעם לעצטן וועג,
כאָטש הימלען בלייענע פֿאַרשטעלן בלויע טעג.
קומען וועט נאָך אונדזער אויסגעבענקטע שעה —
ס'וועט אַ פּוּיק טאָן אונדזער טראָט — מיר זיינען דאָ!

My Arabic is Mute

By Almog Behar

My Arabic is mute
Strangled at the throat
Cursing itself
Without uttering a word
Sleeping in the airless shelters of my soul
Hiding
From relatives
Behind the Hebrew shutters.

And my Hebrew is raging
Running among rooms and neighbours' balconies
Making its voice heard in public
Prophesying the coming of God
and bulldozers
And then it holes up in the living room
Thinking itself so open in the language of its skin
So hidden between the pages of its flesh
A moment naked, a moment later dressed
It curls up into the armchair
And begs itself for forgiveness.

My Arabic is petrified
It quietly pretends to be Hebrew
And whispers to friends
Whenever somebody knocks at her gate
“Ahlan Ahlan, welcome”
And whenever a policeman passes it in the street
It produces an ID card
And points out the protective clause
“Ana min al-yahud, ana min al-yahud” – “I am a Jew, I am a Jew”.

And my Hebrew is deaf
Sometimes very deaf.

© Translation: 2017, Dimi Reider
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Publisher: PDF, Jerusalem, 2017

[Poem Link](#)

Let My People Go

Adapted by Emma Alabaster, Mare Berger and Leo Fergman

[Music Video Here](#)

(Verse 1)

Together we will take a stand
Let my people go
For folks locked up across the land
Let my people go

(Chorus)

Rise up, neighbors!
Let aid into Gaza now —
No more, oh no!
Never again means now!

(Verse 2)

We won't let ICE choose life and death
Let my people go
Shout, "LIBERATION!" with every breath
Let my people go

(Chorus)

Rise up, neighbors!
Close all the camps and jails
No more, oh no!
Let my people go

(Verse 3)

No estaremos bien hasta todxs son libres
Deja ir a mi gente
Deja mi gente volver a lugar
Deja ir a mi gente

[We won't be healed 'til all are free
Let my people go
Send home our stolen fam-ily
Let my people go]

(Gaza chorus)

Rise up, neighbors!
Let aid into Gaza now —
No more, oh no!
Never again means now!

(Verse 4)

All children safe, in loving arms
Let my people go
Now part the seas, now right the wrongs
Let my people go

(Chorus)

Rise up, neighbors!
Close all the camps and jails
No more, oh no!
Let my people go

(Verse 5)

Blow the horn, bring down the walls
Let my people go
No more cages, Free Them All!
Let my people go

(Chorus)

Rise up, neighbors!
Close all the camps and jails
No more, oh no!
Let my people go

(Verse 6)

We won't let Gaza starve to death
Let my people Go
Shout "never again" with every breath!
Let my people go

(Gaza chorus)

Rise up, neighbors!
Let aid into Gaza now —
No more, oh no!
Never again means now!

(Verse 7)

Together we will stop the wars

Let my people go

Now hear us sing, now hear us ROAR

Let my people go!

(Chorus)

Rise up, neighbors!

No ... more bombs and war!

No more, oh no!

Let my people go!

No more, oh no!

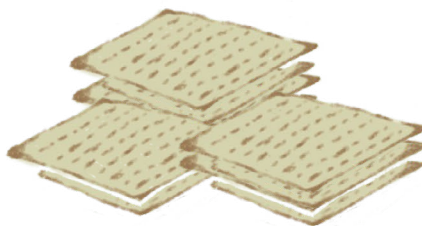
Let my people go

No more, oh no!

Let my people go

No more, oh no!

Let my people go





נִרְצָה | Nirtzah

Blessings Over Organizing

By Shelby Handler

Blessed are we, betrayers of all counterfeit kinships,
whose estrangement moves us toward an ancient & urgent togetherness.
May we organize our ghosts to join us in the streets.

May we wrench our shimmering multiplicities
from the maw of militarism.

May new homes be formed between our marching shoulders.

And may we bless the Signal threads & the spokes councils & care teams!
Bless the interest form, the QR code, the recruitment spreadsheet
with its infinite containers brimming with affinities

that never existed until now! Bless all the sacred architectures we craft
to catch our people, how our efforts stretch
across time & space to weave a place for our folks to land in.

Bless all the mundane work it takes for us to be dangerous together.
Bless calling our friends & family to ask, “Do you want to get involved?”
Bless what we really mean:

Do you want to build a new world together? Do you want to build a new ‘us’ together?

Bless how we refuse to leave the sterile offices
of those who could stop a genocide but are choosing not to.

Bless the children & grandchildren of refugees
scaling the walls of warships to stop weapons from leaving the port.
Bless how we link arms & lock ourselves to buildings

to forge a chain that pulls us closer to the world we need.
May we win real safety this time.

May we create new kinships along the way—
kinships that can outlive all forms of supremacy.
May we reach a belonging our ancestors never got to have.
And may we call out to those who are not yet with us:

*If your heart is broken, may that breakage be a doorway.
There is a family waiting for you
called a movement.*

Closing

There is a custom, upon completing the study of a book of Torah, to proclaim “Chazak, Chazak, V’nit-chazek” which translates as strength, strength, and may we be strengthened. So too, may we be strengthened in ourselves and with each other in our remembering, activism, and solidarity.



We return to our work now fortified and nourished. We know there is a path out of the narrow place. We have traced our ancestors’ steps; we have listened. It is our sacred obligation to find and walk the path to safety and liberation.

Our work continues, in song and prayer, in the streets, with our tribe. We are in this together for a future where all people live in safety and lasting peace.

We do not take our eyes off of Gaza or the Palestinian struggle for freedom, justice and equality. We will never kneel to fascism.

Next year in safety and liberation for all.

Contributor Bios

aaron moore ellis (they/them) phd – working at the intersections of theory, embodiment, and radical ethics, toward collective liberation. Program Design at Descolonizarte Teatro @descolonizarte_teatro; Artist at Colectivo Granadillas @g.r.a.n.a.d.i.l.l.a.s and DOCBLOC @docblocprojects; Board Member at National Queer Theater @nationalqueertheater

Alexa Rosengaus (she/her) is a Mexican-Israeli actress and writer based in LA.

Aurora Levins Morales is a writer, an artist, a historian, a teacher and mentor. She is also an activist, a healer, a farmer, a revolutionary. She tells stories with medicinal powers. Herbalists who collect wild plants to make medicine call it wildcrafting. She wildcrafts the details of the world, of history, of people's lives, and concentrates them through art in order to shift consciousness, to change how we think about ourselves, each other and the world. Support Aurora's work at www.patreon.com/aurora-levinsmorales

Dani Noble works on strategic campaigns at JVP after a decade in the labor movement.

Elliott batTzedek – poet, bookseller, liturgist, and co-leader of [Fringes: a feminist, nonzionist havurah](#), founded in Philadelphia in 2007. That seder tradition where the olive on the seder plate represents the olive groves destroyed in Palestine? She wrote that, and other liturgy that now feels “traditional.”

Felipe Ventura (he/him) builds community networks while being an unschooling parent to twins and organizing with the [Black Jewish Liberation Collective](#). He lives with his partner and children in xučyun (Huichin) the home territory of the Chochenyo speaking Lisjan Ohlone people in the East Bay.

Rabbi Jessica Rosenberg is a teacher, writer, organizer and calendar-maker based on Dakota land in Minneapolis, where she is honored to be part of the magic and power of doing very regular things at this moment in her neighborhood of Powderhorn Park.

She is co-author, alongside Rabbi Ariana Katz, of For Times Such As These: A Radical's Guide to the Jewish Year, and a member of the JVP Rabbinical Council and Signal Fire Radical Jewish Artists Cooperative.

Liv Kunins-Berkowitz (they/them) is the media coordinator for Jewish Voice for Peace. They can be found telling stories, crafting ritual, and feeding people.

Luna Liebling (they/them) is a feelings witch, antizionist movement chaplain, ritualist, student of grief and joy, Kohenet, and clown. They currently make home in Lennapehoking, land originally and still tended to by the Lenni Lenape, in so called Philadelphia.

Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb is Project Director of Shomeret Shalom Ordination program, a visual & performing artist, and author of Shomeret Shalom: Replanting Seeds of Jewish Revolutionary Nonviolence available thru Pushcart Judaica.

Mare Berger (she/they) is a singer-songwriter, teacher, song leader, and activist organizing with JVP Western Mass. Mare writes songs about grief, nature, healing, and collective liberation. You can follow her on instagram at [@maremoonsong](https://www.instagram.com/maremoonsong) or hear more of her music at <https://marielberger.bandcamp.com/>

Melissa Nussbaum Freeman is the Spiritual & Cultural Life Manager at JVP and has been running JVP's Power Half-Hour for Gaza since Oct 2023. She edited this Haggadah.

Miranda Cohen (she/her), who designed the Haggadah and interior illustrations, is a graphic designer and illustrator based in Philadelphia. Her illustrations can be seen at [@mirandacohenmakes](https://www.instagram.com/mirandacohenmakes) and her graphic design work on mcohendesign.com

Nomy Lamm is the Creative Director of Sins Invalid, a co-creator of the [Dreaming the World to Come planner](#), the [Omer Oracle deck](#), and a member of the Signal Fire Radical Jewish Artists Cooperative. Nomy is a member of the JVP Olympia, WA Pod.

Ollie Emmes Schwartz (no pronouns | Long River Valley Western, MA) Founder of [Pushcart Judaica](#), core team of [Radical Jewish Calendar](#), and queer chandler, facilitator, ritualist, and lover of shtetlcore as embodied de-assimilation practice.

Rebecca Maria Goldschmidt (she/they) is an artist and cultural worker with Queer Mikveh Project & the Hiroshima Palestine Vigil Community. It's their honor to offer Urchatz for the third year in a row from Hiroshima 広島. Currently finishing their PhD in Hiroshima. [@bigbigbigthings](https://www.instagram.com/bigbigbigthings) or [patreon.com/rrrebecca](https://www.patreon.com/rrrebecca)
Palestine is a nuclear issue!

Rebecca S'manga Frank is a writer, actor, and culture-worker based in Brooklyn and Los Angeles. Her work centers identity, community, and transformation. Rebecca is a member of the Black Jewish Liberation Collective. Her poetry will be featured in an upcoming exhibition on Black Jewish ritual by filmmaker Ella Cooper, touring museums next year. Rebecca teaches writing and storytelling with The Make Good Project and others. rebeccasmanga.com

Rooted in this World Network: We are an intergenerational group of rad/left, anti-zionist, (mostly) queer, secular jewish educators, activists, cultural workers, and artists, primarily based in North America. Some of us use "secular" and/ or "cultural" to define ourselves (while others do not), and all of us are interested in building Jewish community that de-centers rabbinic, priestly, and prayer-focused Jewishness. We share resources and co-create meaningful ways of being practicing secular Jews (including internal education around secular histories and futures, workshops with/for the broader Jewish left, shared rituals, reading groups and art-making). If this resonates, please fill out this [interest form](#) or email us at rootednetwork@proton.me

Shelby Handler is a writer, translator, and organizer with Jewish Voice for Peace.

Shir Lovett-Graff (they/them) is a writer & community organizer and the Executive Director at [Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative](#)

Shula Etta Pesach (she/they) is a community ritualist, Jewish educator, and trans theologian. She is the program director for Taproot and co-director of [Re-Calling Our Ancestors](#). Shula is the founder and Rosh Beit Midrash of B'yameinu, a queer Jewish learning space in Western Massachusetts. Shula is an apprentice of bird-language, astrology, and stretching strudel dough.

Simha 'Simi' Toledano (she/they) is a hypnotist, spiritual adviser, ritualist, performer, award winning writer and filmmaker, and heart centered activist for collective liberation. Simi lives in Lenapehoking aka Philadelphia, her birthplace and hometown, and enjoys hiking and creating collages in their free time.

[Taya Mâ Shere](#) (she/her) is a ritual artist embracing embodied, earth-honoring devotion as liberatory spiritual practice. She is a professor of multi-religious ritual at [Starr King School for the Ministry](#), host of [Jewish Ancestral Healing](#) and co-convener of [Makam Shekhina](#) and the [House of Dates](#) at the intersections of Judaism and Islam. She co-founded the Kohenet Hebrew Priestess movement & is a [chant artist](#) offering online courses and support in connecting with ancestral blessing through [From the Deep](#).

Wendy Elisheva Somerson (Wes) is a queer non-binary, disabled, cat-loving Ashkenazi Jewish somatic healer, writer, activist, and visual artist residing on Duwamish and Coast Salish land. They are the author of *An Antizionist Path to Embodied Jewish Healing: Somatic Practices to Heal Historical Wounds, Unlearn Oppression, and Create a Liberated World to Come* (North Atlantic, 2025). One of the founders of the Seattle chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace, they have been active in Palestinian solidarity work for more than two decades.



Additional Resources For Passover

Liberating the Seder Table: How to Have Hard Conversations, Passover 2026

As the genocide in Gaza continues far from mainstream media's cameras, and as we fight fascism here at home, the call to engage our loved ones around Palestinian and collective liberation and the urgency to move them away from Zionism and fascism has never been greater. Yet, many of us still struggle with how to approach these conversations effectively. With Passover around the corner, JVP-NYC and JVP Bay Area Hard Conversations teams invite you to join us on Sunday, March 29 for a virtual workshop on How to Have Hard Conversations. This workshop intends to empower you to have these crucial dialogues in your communities. This event is open to anyone receiving this email. There will be a capacity of 30-36 attendees, so please RSVP here if you are interested in joining.

<https://actionnetwork.org/events/liberating-the-seder-table-how-to-have-hard-conversations-passover-2026/>

On Our Doorposts: A ritual for resisting fascism & protecting our neighbors near & far

https://docs.google.com/document/d/14hqgc4MX4MzKIX5CMC-Xu_d-wZ47PQNIjTgUy2jKj2M/edit

Mimouna

Mimouna is a North African and Middle Eastern Jewish holiday concluding the liberation holiday, Passover, that has been celebrated by Jews and their non-Jewish neighbors for centuries. Since 2018, Mizrahi leaders in NYC have been reclaiming the holiday, planning and offering mimouna as part of a left agenda for justice for all and collective liberation. We have been doing so independently and/or with support from organizations such as JFREJ's Mizrahi caucus, JVP SWANA & the JVP-BIJOCSM network, INN's BIJOCSM caucus, and the Egalitarian Sephardi Mizrahi Kehilla. Over the years, the event became a staple celebration in NYC, drawing Jews, SWANA non-Jews, left organizers, and others, always sold out in advance. Uplifting Palestinian liberation more robustly every year, the NYC team began to fundraise for Palestinian organizations as part of mimouna in 2023. In 2024, the JSWANA Bay Area community celebrated mimouna with a Palestinian fundraiser as well. Further, that year, students encamping all across US campuses incorporated political education about and/or ritual for mimouna on their lawns, resisting its Zionist cooptations and weaponization against Palestinians, and uplifting our shared cultural heritage to demand justice and liberation for Palestinians and for all of us.

SWANA Bay Area Passover Zine- Passover during the Plague of Genocide, Fundraiser for our comrades at Prosthetics for Palestine – JSWANA Bay & Friends

<https://heyzine.com/flip-book/032f28ae5e.html#page/1>

For more Questions from Palestinian Children in Gaza - Visualizing Palestine & Palestine Trauma

Centre, UK <https://visualizingpalestine.org/visual/questions-children-gaza>

Spoon on the Seder Plate for Disability Justice – by Rabbi Elliot Kulka
<https://www.recustom.com/clips/spoon-new-to-the-seder-plate-4133141>

Black Lives Matter Haggadah Supplement – by Jews for Racial and Economic Justice
<https://ritualwell.org/ritual/blacklivesmatter-haggadah-supplement/>

Mango Charoset recipe speaks to the tangled histories of Jews of color in the Americas – **Aurora Levins Morales** is a writer and poet, who was featured heavily in this Haggadah. <http://jocsm.org/mango-charoset-recipe-speaks-to-the-tangled-histories-of-jews-of-color-in-in-the-americas/>

Contribute to her patreon here www.patreon.com/auroralevinsmorales

Miriam and the Tachash story by Dori Midnight adapted from Sins Invalid Disability Justice Primer
<https://dorimidnight.com/writing/miriam-and-the-tachash/>

An Acorn On The Seder Plate–Jews on Ohlone Land
<https://kehillasynagogue.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/An-Acorn-on-the-Seder-Plate-5780.pdf>

1919 Socialist Haggadah, A translation published by the Galician Bund.
<https://jewishcurrents.org/hagode-shel-peysek-h-with-a-socialist-twist>

