

"הִיְהוּ סָכֵל תְּרַמְּשֶׁמֶל דַּע הָעֶבְרָא רְשַׁע מִי שְׂדָחֵל הַזֶּה"

“Keep careful watch leading up to the fourteenth day of this month.”

Pre-sah VRitual Gatherings for 5780

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This year, many of us will not be able to gather with the group of people (family, friends, loved ones) we might have spent the Passover seder with. Below is a proposed schedule of preparatory rituals/activities to do as a group, by remote, during the week or so leading up to Passover. Each day is centered around one element of the seder table.

March 31 יוֹן סִינַי Haroset תּוֹרוֹחַ

חֹפֶתֶל יַעֲבֵב רַעִיָה נֶפֶס יִדְוֵד יֵיב מִיְגִבָּה וְלִצְבֵי יִתְדַמַּח וְיִתְבָּשִׂי וְיִרְפוּ קִנְתָּם יִכְחֵל וְיִאִיְבָה תִּיבְלָא יֵיָהּ וְלִגְדוּ יֵלַע
הַבְּהָא יִבְנִיחֵם תְּוֹשִׁישָׁאב וְיִנְדַּפֵּר מִיְחֻפְתָּב תְּלוֹתִיכֵי הַבְּהָא יֵינָא (רִישׁ מִירִישָׁה בִּגְגֵה)
הַנְּאִתָּה הַטֶּנַח הַיֵּגֶפ מִיְנִפְגָּהוּ | הַדְּמַס וְגִתָּנ חִיר יִמְזִק יֵכֵל [ל] יִתְיַעַר יִתְפִי לִי־כֵלָו : (בִּגִי)
נְפִי־הֵם יִדָּב יִתְחָא הֵלֵךְ וּבִט־הֵם יִדָּב יֵינִימ חִירוּ יִנְמַשׁ : מִיְמִשְׁב־לֵכֵם תִּפְנֵי הַנְּפִטָּת יִתְוֹתְפֵשׁ הֵלֵךְ שְׂבִד בְּלַחוּ
תִּחַת נוֹשֵׁל חִירוּ יִתְמַלֵּשׁ חִירָב : וְנִבְל (דִּי־אִי)
יִתְלֵשׁ סְדַרְפֵי מִינוֹמֵר מַע יִרְפֵי מִיְדַגֵּם מִיְרַפֵּס : מִיְדַרְבָּה־מַע דְּרַב | מִכְרָכֵוּ הַיֵּק וְנִמְנָקוּ מַע יַעֲבֵלֵךְ הַנִּבְל רַמ תּוֹלֵהֵאוּ
מַע יִשְׁאֲר־לֵךְ : מִיְמִשְׁבֵי נִיעַמֵי מִיְנָג רַאֵב מִיְיַח מִיְלִזְנוּ : וְנִבְל־וּם (דִּגִּי־הִי)
תְּלַפֵּס וְנִמְרָה תְּקַר דַּעֲבַם תְּמַצֵּל : (וִז)

Like an apple tree among trees of the forest, So is my beloved among the youths. I delight to sit in his shade, And his fruit is sweet to my mouth. He brought me to the banquet room And his banner of love was over me. Sustain me with raisin cakes, refresh me with apples, for I am faint with love. (Song of Songs 2:3-5)

The green figs form on the fig tree, the vines in blossom give off fragrance. Arise, my darling; my fair one, come away! (2:13)

How sweet is your love, my own, my bride! How much more delightful your love than wine, Your ointments more fragrant than any spice! Sweetness drops from your lips, o bride; Honey and milk are under your tongue; the scent of your robes Is like the scent of Lebanon. (4:10-11)

Your limbs are an orchard of pomegranates and of all luscious fruits, of henna and of nard— nard and saffron, fragrant reed and cinnamon, with all aromatic woods, myrrh and aloes— all the choice perfumes. A garden spring, a well of fresh water, a rill of Lebanon. (4:13-15)

Like an open pomegranate shows your brow behind your veil. (6:7)

👉 We meet online or correspond to agree which household will feature which ingredient of the haroset on their Pesah table. This way “all together” we have a complete haroset, and the haroset is shared among us.

April 1 יוֹן סִינַי Karpas כּוֹרֵס

מִיָּה מִתָּא מִיָּאֲצִי שְׂדַחֵב : בִּיבָאָה (תּוֹמַשׁ גִּי־ד)

On this day you go free, during the month of spring. (Exodus 13:4)

👉 By video chat or by sending pictures and descriptions, we show each other how Spring is expressing itself in each of our locations. This can be through a window or within your house. We each choose a particular natural element which we intend to check in on every day during the counting of the omer, to notice its progression through the weeks. We introduce each other to this personal, natural omer-counter.

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...יגשנו ויגשבת... (הנשמ מיחספ יג)

בר פסו רמא... דחא רכז חספל דחאו רכז הגיגחל (ילבב מש---מיחספ דיק):

...and two cooked items... (Mishna Psahim 10:3) ... Rav Yosef said ... one in memory of the Pesah sacrifice and one in memory of the Hagigah offering (Talmud Psahim 114b)

⊥ The egg is one of the elements of the seder plate, but it gets no mention in the script of the “seder”. Roasted, it is apparently meant to memorialize the Hagigah offering in the temple, and, eggs being a food for mourners, meant to mourn it.

☞ We individually consider, and write/draw for ourselves memories of our group---What are the gifts we have offered? Received? Who and what have we lost? Who or what do we mourn? What, like the egg on the seder plate, is present in our group, but spoken of little or not at all? We each make a selection from what we have written or illustrated, to share with the group for the others to read.

April 3 Shabbat Eve יי Wine ט' וסין ברע תבש

תבשו נשדק הבהאב ווצרבו ונליחנה, ונרפז השעמל תישארב, הלחת יארקמל שדק, רכז תאיציל מיבצמ.
(שודיק לילל תבש)

And God's sanctified Sabbath, willingly and lovingly bequeathed to us, as a reminder of the act of creation, the first among the holy times, reminder of the exodus from Egypt. (Kiddush on Friday night)

⊥ In the Talmud (Rosh Hashana 10a), there is a debate whether the world was created in Tishrei, the month of Rosh Hashana, or Nisan, the month of Passover. The Kedushat Levi explains that this disagreement reflects the dual nature of God's active presence in the world---on one side as an independent creative force, reflected in the Creation narrative and Rosh Hashana, and on the other side, working in reaction to/relationship with *us*, reflected in the Exodus narrative and Passover. The above statement from the Friday night kiddush suggests that Shabbat merges both of these aspects, and is a chance to dwell both in independence and in relationship, in creation and in liberation.

☞ Each of us sends a message to our group during the day on Friday to share one thing we created this week, one thing we intend to rest from over Shabbat.

Before the next Shabbat comes, we will be observing Passover.

תבש שדק

April 5 א"י וסין Bitter Herb חרמ

יהיו מימיב מיברה פהה תמיו למ מירצמ ונחאיו לארשייגב הדבעהזן וקעזיו לעתו פתעוש אהלא סיה
(דכ): הדבעהזן עמשינו א סיה שתקאנתא רכזיו א סיה ותירב-תא פהרבא-תא קחצי-תא: בקעי-תאו (תומש
ב:גכ
המאיו הוהי האר יתיאר ינע-תא ימע רשא מירצמב שתקעצ-תאו יתעמש ינפמ וישגנ יכ יתעדי: ויבאכמ-תא
(תומש ג:ז)

And on these many days, the king of Egypt died, and the Children of Israel groaned from the labor, and they howled, and their cry for help rose to God from the labor. (Exodus 2:23-24)

And God said, 'I have truly seen the suffering of my people who are in Egypt; their shouts I have heard before their oppressors, because I have known their pain. (Exodus 3:7)

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place of our longings.

☞ We each write our personal cries, complaints, and demands to God, humanity, or reality. Entering them into a chat, or holding them up to our video screen one at a time, each individual reads aloud the cry of another member of our group, so that we can each hear our own cries in the voice of another. We mark the end of our cries by singing or listening together to a version of an “Anenu” piyut or another song of longing and expectation. For example:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50bSEQBlxmE>

<https://www.hadar.org/tefillah-element/e-sn-mi-sheanah-hu-yaaneinu>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RakC87sVfYU>

April 6 ב"י ניסין Orange זופת

Reflecting on when she added the orange to her seder plate in the 1980s, [Prof. Susannah Heschel] says it was to be eaten "as a gesture of solidarity with Jewish lesbians and gay men, and others who are marginalized within the Jewish community," including widows. The seeds, symbolizing homophobia, were to be spat out. Bottom line: There's room for more symbols on the seder plate — and room for more participants around the seder table. (from “The Orange on the Seder Plate” by Alexandra Silver in TIME, April 18, 2011)

☞ Each of us is assigned another person in the group (either pairing off or in a circular chain) to learn a story from: something about liberation or other themes of Pesah---it can be serious or silly. The one who is listening and the one who is telling come up with a food item or object to add to the seder plate for this year, to remind us of the story. If it is hard to acquire the actual object, we can draw it or print a picture instead, to have on the Pesah table. We get together on video chat to share what each of the new objects are we will be adding.

☞ Or: We all come together virtually to pick a single new food item or object that represents our group or an aspect of the holiday we choose together to focus on this year. Each separate seder plate will have this object present this year as a shared sign of connection and solidarity.

April 7 ג"י ניסין Shank Bone or Beet עורז

מתחללנו תבגא בזא מתלבטו מדב פסברשא מתעגהו פוקשמה-לא! יתש-לאו תזוזמה סדה-נמ כשא פסב מתאו, א נאצת שיא זתיב-חתפמ ר-קב-דע (תומש בי:בכ)

“Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and apply some of the blood that is in the basin to the lintel and to the two doorposts. None of you shall go outside the door of his house until morning.” (Exodus 12:22)

⊥ A central element of the traditional Passover seder is inviting others, even strangers, in to join us. “לכ ניפכד.” “All who are hungry should come and be satisfied; all who are in need should come and partake in the Pesah.” This year, we are not able to be welcoming.

☞ While on a video call with our group, we each decide what messages we want to put on our respective doors this year, for our neighbors to see. We make signs conveying those messages using the materials we have at home, and then show each other the hung signs.

☞ We discuss as a group what can we be doing this year to support our neighbors, virtually welcoming them to our tables. Who should we reach out to this year? Who needs a “spot” at the table?

April 8 Passover Eve ד"י ניסין ברע חספ Matza הצמ

⊥ Destroying the last of the hametz (leavened food items) from one's possession is a ritual designated for the morning before Passover begins.

👉 We gather in a digital space, each household in their own personal space, to take part in this ritual together. We each perform the ritual destruction of the hametz, according to our particular tradition(s). Each of us lets the video dwell on the fire, and takes in the view of a screen full of flames. Those of us not in a time zone for burning hametz light a candle to join the group's virtual communal fire.

⊥ הנשל האבה דחיב מלועב אירב! ⊥

Next year together in a healthy world!

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