



תתן שנתך את

NCJCA

PASSOVER

SEDER

SUPPLEMENT

5786/2026

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## Passover Seder Supplement

The North Carolina Jewish Clergy Association (NCJCA) has created this Seder Supplement to be used around your holiday tables. NCJCA is an organization of rabbis and cantors of various streams serving congregations, agencies, organizations, and the broader Jewish community of North Carolina. In its gathering, it seeks to promote the interests of Judaism and the Jewish people in North Carolina and throughout the world and reflect the moral and religious voices of the Jewish community in North Carolina.

The NCJCA wishes to thank all contributors to this year's Passover Seder Supplement. Special thanks goes to Michal Koren (Greensboro) for all graphics and formatting. .



To learn more about the NCJCA,  
visit us at [www.ncjca.org](http://www.ncjca.org).  
Membership information is available at:  
[www.ncjca.org/membership](http://www.ncjca.org/membership)





# THE CROSSING OF THE RE(E?)D SEA

by Cantor Elias Roochvarg  
Cantor Emeritus, Temple Israel of Charlotte

When the children of Israel beheld their emergency,  
They complained to Moses, with frightened urgency!  
"Was it because there were no graves back home  
That you led us here to die, all alone?"  
"Fear not," replied Moses, "just stand and see  
How, once again, God will set you free.  
The Egyptians you now see approaching the shore:  
After today, you will see them no more!?"

Moses stretched his hand out over the sea,  
And the waters parted, miraculously!  
The waters were parted by an East wind from God,  
And the children of Israel walked through, dry-shod.  
The waters stood like walls on their left & their right.  
It must have been an unforgettable sight!  
And when the last Hebrew got to the other side,  
Moses again stretched his hand out wide.  
The water returned to its place again,  
Drowning each & every one of Pharaoh's men.  
The horses, the chariots, all Egypt's host;  
Not one of them survived. They all were "toast"!

Thus God saved the Hebrews from Egypt's horde,  
And they believed in Moses and, of course, in the Lord!  
They sang, as they stood at the shore of the sea:  
"I will sing to the Lord, who has triumphed gloriously!  
Both horse and rider He has overthrown!  
Down to the depths they went like a stone!  
He is my strength, my song, my salvation!  
My father's God, to Him exaltation!



Your right hand, O Lord, did shatter the foe  
Who rose up against You; To the depths they did go!  
You send forth Your wrath: The enemy falls!  
With a blast from Your nostrils the Sea turns to walls!  
The enemy said, 'I'll pursue, overtake.  
I shall draw my sword, my lust I shall slake.'  
You blew with Your wind, and they were all dead!  
They sank in the mighty waters like lead.

Who is like You, Lord, among the divine?  
Who can compare to You? Holy, sublime!  
Fearsome in praises, doing great wonders!  
You stretched out Your hand: The foe all went under!  
In love You have led Your redeemed nation,  
Guiding them to Your holy habitation.

The people, they tremble as soon as they hear!  
The Philistine nation is quaking in fear!  
The chiefs of Edom, and every Moabite,  
The Canaanites, too, are melting with fright.  
Let them, in terror, be still as a stone,  
Till Your now-redeemed people pass through, going home.  
Then You will plant them in Your sanctuary sublime.  
The Lord our God will reign for all time.





# *Yachatz is only the beginning*

by Rabbi Andy Koren  
Temple Emanuel, Greensboro

How is this Passover so different from last year's festival?

Last year, Hamas terrorists and their collaborators were still holding living and dead hostages taken from Israel, most notably on October 7, 2023. This past October 13<sup>th</sup>, all living hostages came back to Israel in an unforgettable moment of liberation.

Last year, we were security conscious. This year, we are on even greater alert following attacks on synagogues and Jewish gatherings worldwide including the deadly shootings at a Hanukkah gathering at Bondi Beach in Australia, the break-in and torching of the Beth Israel Congregation in Jackson, Mississippi, and the truck driven into the building of Temple Israel in West Bloomfield, Michigan by a terrorist who was stopped by hired security professionals.

Last year, there had been regular attempts by the Houthis in Yemen to strike Israel with drones and missiles. Twice, Iran had also sent attack drones and missiles towards Israel. Since last year, there have been two extended periods of direct military engagement between Israel and Iran. The first, lasting 12 days, took place last summer.

As I am writing this, the United States together with Israel, are actively fighting against Iran. There is so much more that could be written about this moment in the Middle East and beyond.

The practical impact is that Israelis have been in and out of bomb shelters, often many times each night and day, for over a month now as Iran has attacked civilian areas with their remaining arsenal of ballistic missiles. Unless there are major changes, this will be the year when the majority of seders worldwide will take place in areas that can withstand the impact of an enemy warhead.



At the start of each seder, we take a whole piece of matzah and break it.

This year, let that act remind us of what is broken in our world.

For some, it will be the brokenness of immigration policy and enforcement here at home. For others, the focus will be on broken leadership or broken civil discourse. Others will draw our attention to what is broken about housing, affordability of food and other necessities, health care, education, and/or access to the ballot box.

To quote from Bob Dylan's 1989 song: Everything Is Broken.

And yet, Passover also tells us not to overlook wholeness.

Our freedom festival begins on the night of the full moon. Even if we open the door for Elijah without the message that peace is about to break out, on a clear night we can see fullness in the sky above us.

It is telling that as the night progresses, our cups are emptied. Each time that this happens, what do we do? We refill our cups. We do so four times. We break something only once. It takes four times the effort for us to symbolize restoration. Which is not a bad description of what our people have learned in the three-thousand-plus years since the Exodus.

We are a people who don't only dare to dream about redemption, liberation, and even wholeness; we put in the extra effort to translate our aspirations into reality.

Think about it...the final words of the Haggadah are not about Last Year or even This Year. They imagine Next Year. Next year...when we will once again hold a full piece of matzah in our hands. Next year...when we hope that the brokenness of our world will finally give way and we, together with all people, will live in true fullness and peace.



# אֵלֶּא שְׁבָכֵל דּוֹר וָדוֹר עוֹמְדִים עָלֵינוּ לְכַלּוֹתֵנוּ, וְהַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מְצִילֵנוּ מִיָּדָם.

In every generation people rise up to destroy us –  
but the Holy, Blessed One saves us from their hands.

by Rabbi Charlie Cytron-Walker  
Temple Emanuel, Winston-Salem; NCJCA Co-Chair

At the end of each book of Torah, we offer *chazak, chazak, v'nitchazek* – *be strong, be strong, and let us strengthen one another. Whether we feel strong or not, throughout the generations we have supported our people with “ – חֲזַק strength.”*

ח(chet) – *Chayim/Life* – *We are commanded to choose life. We have chosen life century after century after century. After despair, after overwhelming loss, after expulsion, after destruction we still choose life. Amid crushing oppression or attempted extermination, we still choose life. When we've been targeted, discriminated against, and offended, we still choose life. With defiance, with resilience, with hope, we still choose life.*

ז(zion) – *Zikaron/Memory* – *Tradition tells us to remember. Remember that we were strangers in Egypt. Remember the Exodus from Egypt. Remember Amalek. Remember that Jewish existence has been fragile and that memory has sustained us. Remember that we have grown, adapted, suffered, survived, and started over and over and over again. Remember that baseless hatred leads to ruin and acts of loving kindness lead to redemption. Remember that God may not grant wishes and God hears all our prayers.*

ק(koof) – *Kedusha/Holiness* – *In a world that can be cruel, we are called to be holy. As we strive for holiness, we are beautiful and messy and constantly searching – one People across many communities and many disagreements. We are so much more than anyone's hatred or ignorance, even as we struggle with our own prejudices. Holiness is not separation from the world, but a way of standing within it – doing all we can to bring compassion and integrity, meaning and purpose to our lives and our world.*

Yes, in every single generation people rise up to destroy us – and we pray that with *Chayim, Zikaron, and Kedusha, the Chazak we offer will indeed strengthen each other. And may God be with us always.*



# וְכַתְּבֶתֶם עַל־מְזוֹזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ

Write them upon the *mezuzot* of your home

You say	אַתָּה אוֹמֵר
This is my house	זֶה הַבַּיִת שְׁלִי
The ceiling the roof	הַתְּקֵרָה הַגַּג
The air between them	הָאָוִיר שְׁבִינֵיהֶם
You scream	אַתָּה צוֹעֵק
This is my house	זֶה הַבַּיִת שְׁלִי
The windows and the walls	הַחַלּוֹנוֹת וְהַקִּירוֹת
You threaten	אַתָּה מְאַיֵּם
This is my house	זֶה הַבַּיִת שְׁלִי
And lock the door	וְנוֹעֵל אֶת הַדֶּלֶת
And close the windows	וְסוֹגֵר אֶת הַחַלּוֹנוֹת
And draw the curtains	וְיַמְסִיט אֶת הַוִּילוֹנוֹת
And fear that someone will burst inside	וּפּוֹחֵד שְׁמִיּוֹשֶׁהוּ יִפְרֹץ פְּנִימָה
And fear to go outside	וּפּוֹחֵד לְצֵאת הַחוּצָה
Fearing and knowing	פּוֹחֵד וְיוֹדֵעַ
That a fearing heart	לֵב פּוֹחֵד
Never	אֶף פְּעַם
Will be	לֹא יִהְיֶה
Home	בַּיִת



# וְכָתַבְתֶּם עַל-מְזוֹזוֹת בְּיַתְרְךָ

## Write them upon the *mezuzot* of your home

by Rabbi Daniel Greyber  
Beth El Synagogue, Durham  
(*reflections on Adi Kesar's poem and more*)

More than three thousand years ago, our people marked the doorposts of our homes in Egypt for God's protection (Exodus 12:13), but in doing so, we also made ourselves vulnerable, recognizable to marauding Egyptians. This Passover, we will open our doors again, to strangers and those who are hungry - "Let all who are hungry come and eat" - and to passing neighbors as we sing to Elijah and Miriam. We will send our children to school with matzah to eat on the playground. In good moments, friends will ask, "What are you eating?" and our ancient bread of affliction will become a bridge for mutual understanding. In worse moments, it will make our children vulnerable to menacing stares or even bullying.

Our synagogue doors are now marked on many moments with an armed police officer. As our Israeli family has known for too long, and as the poet reminds us, security is not so simple, and its costs are not just paid in money. We do what we must - and Temple Israel in West Bloomfield is just the most recent reminder of the need - but we do so פוֹחֵד וְיוֹדֵעַ, fearing and knowing. On the one hand, fearing because the threats are real and we must take precautions and protect ourselves, on the other hand, knowing that our fear alienates us from our best selves, and that we are called to more than survival. As Passover begins, we are reminded that redemption will only truly come when we have a home, free from fear. We deserve such a home, for from a holy home, we can fulfill our mission: to feed those who are hungry, to give hope to those who are in need, to shine a light on the world.



# מה נשתנה?

by Rabbi Lucy H.F. Dinner  
Emerita Rabbi, Temple Beth Or, Raleigh; NCJCA Co-Chair

The Passover Festival is the story of each generation of Jews. The depth of oppression ebbs and flows. The Four Questions our ancestors asked are now our questions. The Haggadah ultimately reminds us that the answers rest in our hands. Several years ago the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism published its own answers to the Four Questions. [<https://rac.org/sites/default/files/Living%20Talmud%20Four%20Questions%20Mar%202016.pdf>] Herein I share adaptations of those answers for today. What answers will arise at your own Seder tables?

On all other nights, we eat *chameitz* and *matzah*. Why on this night, only matzah? We eat matzah as a symbol of the immediacy of injustice. Injustice then — the Israelites had to flee in haste with no time for their bread to rise. The window to freedom opened for a moment, the Israelites' response frames the immediacy of each generations' directive for justice.

What injustices in today's world call us to act in haste, lest the opportunity for freedom be lost?

On all other nights, we eat all vegetables. Why, on this night, *maror* (bitter herbs)? We eat *maror* to ingest the bitter resonance of oppression, lest we look at slavery only as a defining era of Jewish history and not a metaphor for the subjugation pulsing through our times. Consider the treatment of those fleeing oppression today? How does that bitterness cast a shadow over your point of view?

On all other nights, we don't dip even once. Why on this night do we dip twice? We dip twice to highlight our own affluence. Our own blessings contrast with the efforts to impede the right for others to thrive that diminishes democracy. Voter suppression enacted here and around the world divides humanity into the haves and have-nots. How can we uplift voter rights as the foundation for a thriving, just, and fair, society for all?

On all other nights, we eat either sitting upright or reclining. Why on this night do we all recline?

We recline to experience the importance of comfort. With the worries that weigh on us as individuals, too often we overlook our own comfort. Engaging in joy, even in the midst of oppression or especially in the midst of oppression, instills hope. What are the sources for hope and rejuvenation that you bring to the Seder table and beyond?



# אין שירה

## Eyn Shira (No Song)

by Cantor Rabbi Jacqueline Marx  
Oranim: A New Jewish Community in North Carolina

Cancel the Exodus. Turn back the march.  
Tell the hoi polloi we're unsteady.  
Stop all the miracles. Give back the gold.  
Thank the neighbors, but we're not ready.  
Clean up your doorjambs. Leaven your bread.  
Uncross your ankles and go back to bed.  
Put on your sackcloth and cover your head.  
For Sarah is missing her children.  
Banish the pillars of fire and smoke.  
Unsplit the waters, remain on the shore.  
Miriam, batten the dancing and song,  
Lead us in cheering and praising no more.  
Un-beat the timbrel and unstring the lyre  
Lower the chorus and silence the choir.  
Unravel the fine-twisted linen like wire  
For Rivkah is missing her children.  
How can we cross over dry land on feet?  
How can we cross into freedom at all?  
Can't you all see that we're so incomplete  
And those treacherous tunnels yet echo the call  
Of the voices we pray have not silenced their tone  
Do they comfort each other from feeling alone?  
Let Rachel, Leah, Bilhah, Zilpah, now moan  
That Israel misses her children.  
Who is like You, Merciful and most High  
Creator of oceans of tears that we cry  
Who is like You? Havayah, Tzim'tzumai!  
I know You are there, for You're weeping.  
Leave the sea shut 'til it opens once more  
Restoring our lost ones, from Hell to safe shore.  
Let Chavah and Na'amah fling open that door  
To welcome back, Gd willing, our children.

# יש שירה, יש ריקוד

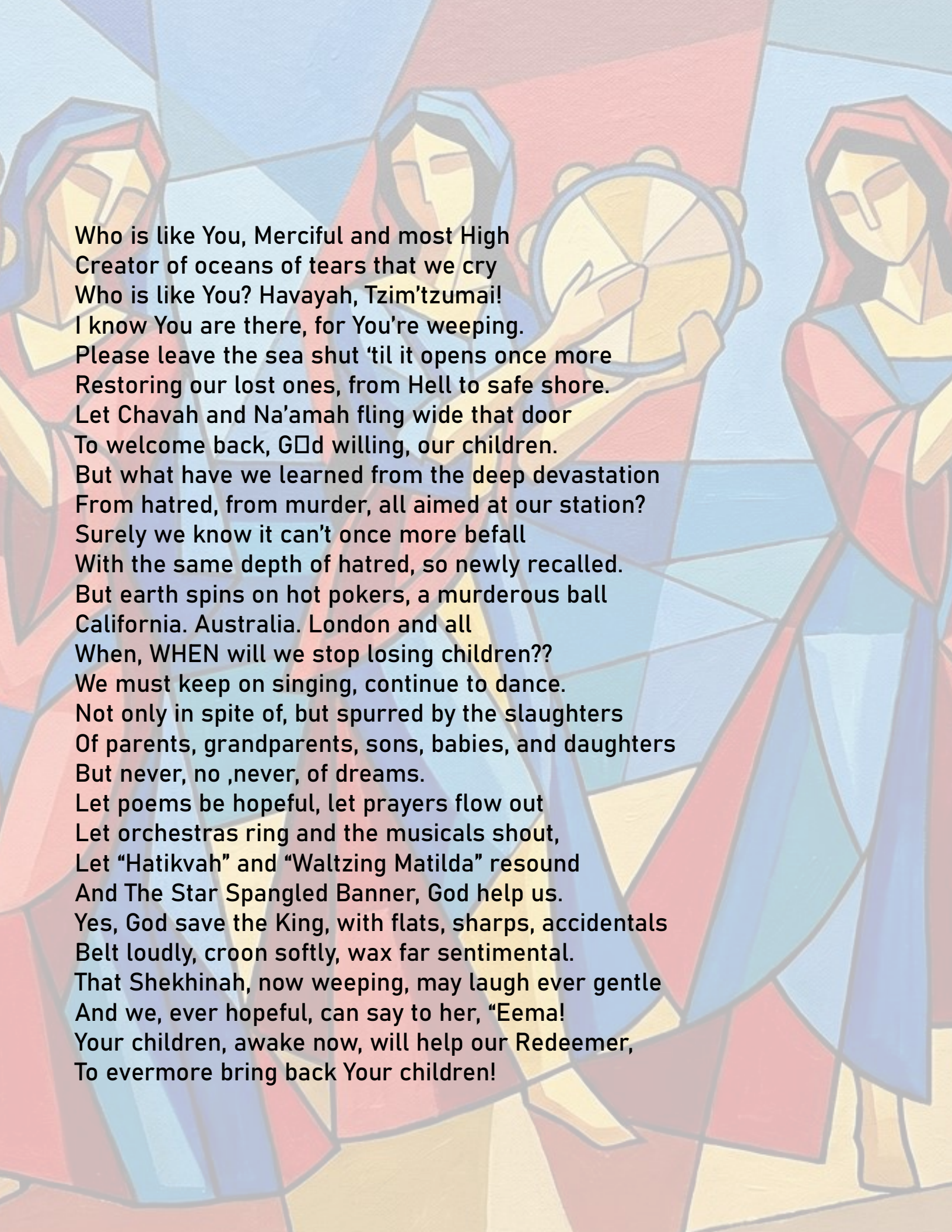
Yesh Shira, Yesh Rikud

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I know You are there, for You're weeping.  
Please leave the sea shut 'til it opens once more  
Restoring our lost ones, from Hell to safe shore.  
Let Chavah and Na'amah fling wide that door  
To welcome back, G♫d willing, our children.  
But what have we learned from the deep devastation  
From hatred, from murder, all aimed at our station?  
Surely we know it can't once more befall  
With the same depth of hatred, so newly recalled.  
But earth spins on hot poker, a murderous ball  
California. Australia. London and all  
When, WHEN will we stop losing children??  
We must keep on singing, continue to dance.  
Not only in spite of, but spurred by the slaughters  
Of parents, grandparents, sons, babies, and daughters  
But never, no ,never, of dreams.  
Let poems be hopeful, let prayers flow out  
Let orchestras ring and the musicals shout,  
Let "Hatikvah" and "Waltzing Matilda" resound  
And The Star Spangled Banner, God help us.  
Yes, God save the King, with flats, sharps, accidentals  
Belt loudly, croon softly, wax far sentimental.  
That Shekhinah, now weeping, may laugh ever gentle  
And we, ever hopeful, can say to her, "Eema!  
Your children, awake now, will help our Redeemer,  
To evermore bring back Your children!

A stylized, cubist-style illustration of Jerusalem. The scene is composed of various architectural elements like domes, arches, and walls, rendered in a palette of warm yellows, oranges, and blues. The perspective is from an elevated position, looking down into a courtyard or street. The overall style is graphic and artistic, with bold outlines and flat areas of color.

לשנה הבאה  
בירושלים

NEXT YEAR IN  
JERUSALEM