

MEDITATION FOR SEDER by Laura Asita Weiss and Rabbi Goldie Milgram

Allow your eyes to close. Inhale and exhale. Listen to the sound of your breath. Do you not hear the distant sound of an ancient sea? Listen to your breath from that part of your heart that remembers being there at the time of the Exodus from Mitzrayim. Inhale and exhale and hear the moving of the waters echoing in your innermost ear as you inhale and exhale.

Keeping your eyes closed, look up as if you were looking at the top of the pillar of cloud that is guiding us out of Egypt. Observe the form and color of the cloud and feel the hope and promise that this pillar of cloud represents. Feel its pull on your soul drawing you toward freedom. Now allow your eyes to slowly slide down the length of the cloud, down and down, until your eyes reach the horizon. Notice the mass of people moving with you.

Feel yourself moving toward the Sea in that ocean of Israelites. Are you leading children by the hand? Or are you a child yourself, moving quickly to keep up with the big people. Wondering that there is no work to be done today. No bricks to be made, no taskmasters with whips.

Listen! In the distance you can hear the dim clatter of spears and shields, horses' hooves and the rumble of chariot wheels. The whinny of a horse, a muffled command barked by one of the charioteers or Egyptian Captains. The rumbling of the chariots. Pharaoh's great army is coming behind us.

We are approaching the sea. Inhale the tangy salty, watery smell of the sea. Feel the sand sift through your toes in your sandals. Listen! Perhaps you can hear the bleating of sheep. And the children saying "Mommy, Daddy, where are we going?" "What will happen to us?"

The familiar, the known, is behind. The sea lies ahead, and the wheels of Pharaoh's chariots are rumbling - coming closer. The wind is picking up. A strong wind from the East. A persistent, steady, seemingly purposeful wind. A wind that could change everything.

Your hair is flying and there are white caps on the sea. And then - Look!! Moshe is holding out his hands - - MY God - the sea is beginning to split. It is a miracle! The Sea has parted and there is a path on dry land before us. There is a huge, quivering wall of water on the left and a wall of water on the right.

What is in your heart at this moment? Will you rush into the Sea with a trusting heart, running toward freedom, praising God Or do you hang back - afraid of the unknown, afraid the walls of water will close and drown you - afraid of being caught - afraid of change. (Pause) This is not an illusion.

Both choosing and being propelled by the crowd. Almost numb with fear, curiosity, hope, and awe you are moving forward into the sea. Even the children and animals fall eerily silent as you walk between the towering walls of water.

You can see the intense blue green of the sea on either side. Perhaps a dolphin cavorts alongside you in the wall of water. What do you see in the wall of water? Light filters through the waters and casts dancing blue shadows on everyone.

Now we're half-way across. The wall of water on the left and right stretch as far as you can see in front and as far as you can see behind. Incredible ! We are walking on dry land in the midst of the sea.

What an exhilarating moment - she-khe-khe-yanu, to be alive at this time to experience this . Even if we drown or Pharaoh's army overtakes us - dayenu. This would have been enough.