

קדש
KADDESH
קדושה
HOLINESS

1

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What is Holiness?

Have you sensed Holiness in your life?
When?

Can a person be holy?
An object? A place? A time?

Should we strive for Holiness?



What are the most special, precious
people, things and feelings to you?

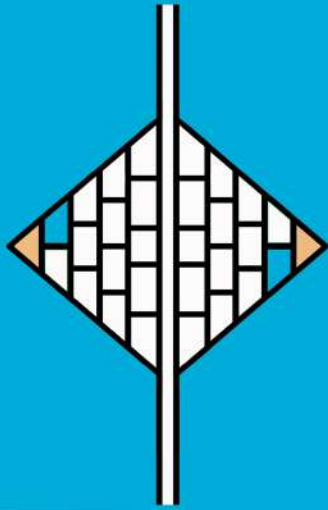
Holiness

Painfully carving away the dense,
Omnipresent
Mundane.

Patently seeking a spark
That can point toward a speck
of beyond,
a speck of above,
a speck of beneath,
a speck of holiness.

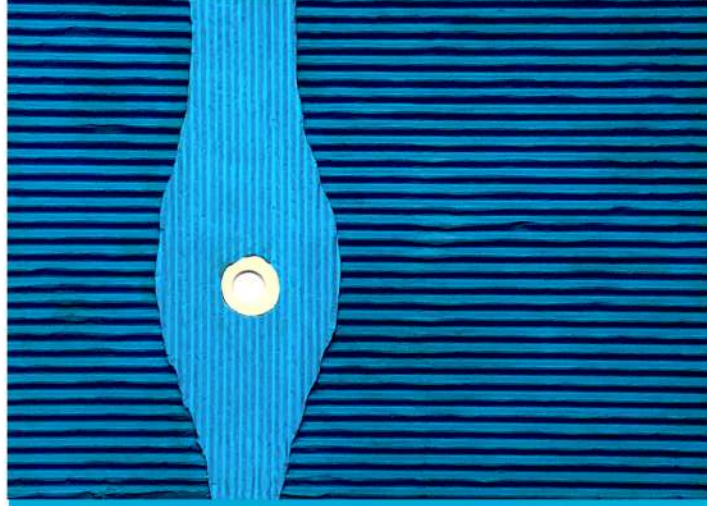
A world but sensed;
A realm known faintly from
dreams
or visions,
or tales of the ancients.

Reaching out and never reaching
This pure pearl of Divine condensation.



הַרְחֵץ
וְרַעְחָצְתָּ
הַתְּחַדְּשֵׁתָּ
RENEWAL

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What do renewal, rebirth,
regeneration mean?

What renews and refreshes you?

When have you felt especially renewed?

Has the Jewish people been renewed?



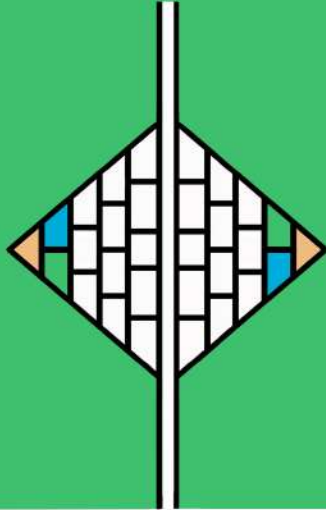
What would happen if someone
pressed your 'reset' button?

Renewal

Living Waters
Flowing freely,
Crystal clear waves
Of regeneration
Stream over us
Ushering in this season
Of renewal.

Surging freshness,
Like dewdrops sparkling
On first buds,
Replenishes us with
Bursting, hopeful
Expectation.

דגל
KARPAS
צמחה
GROWTH



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How does growth happen in nature?

What is inner growth?

Is growth always good?

How can we help others grow?



How does it feel to grow?

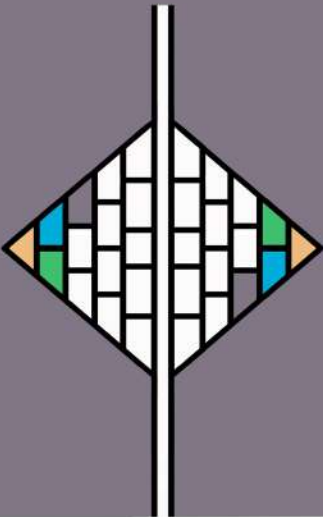
What do you want to grow into?

Growth

Life force
Flourishing
Burgeoning luxuriant
Spreads, nurtures,
Flowers, expands
From the soft, moist, mossy carpet
To the upward reaching canopy
Of the verdant forest.
Growth itself growing,
Chants the expansive
Song of Life itself.



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חַיִּי
YACHATZ
שֶׁבֶר
BROKENNESS



What parts of our world are shattered?

What have you broken and
how have you been broken?

How can I walk through a broken world?

Do you know someone who has
put a broken life back together?

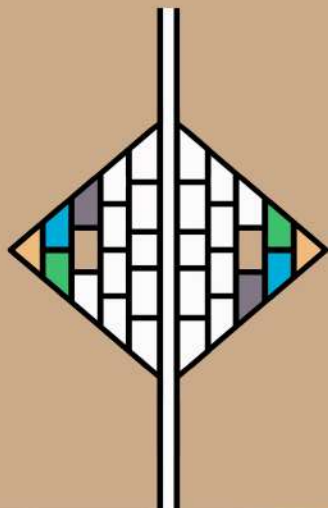


When have you felt your world has crashed?
What happened afterwards?

Brokenness

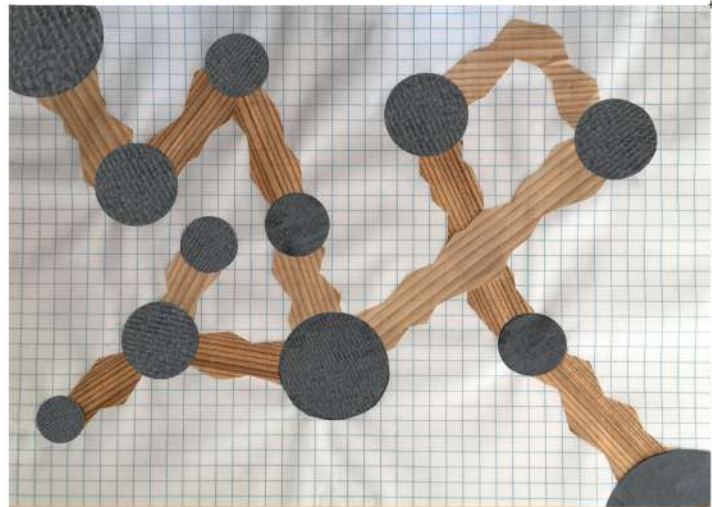
The sliver piercing our broken world
Testifies to a hidden wholeness.
Whether a slight fracture,
Or gaping gap,
The imperfect intimates the perfect.
Incompletion whispers completion.

The holy whole waits silently
While separateness of nature,
Or people,
Or lives torn asunder yearns
For a dimly sensed,
But never wholly-forgotten
Unity.



מגיד
מגידים
MAGGID
MAGGIDIM
STORIES

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Why do all people so love
to create and hear stories?

How do stories create us?

What elements make
a story unforgettable?

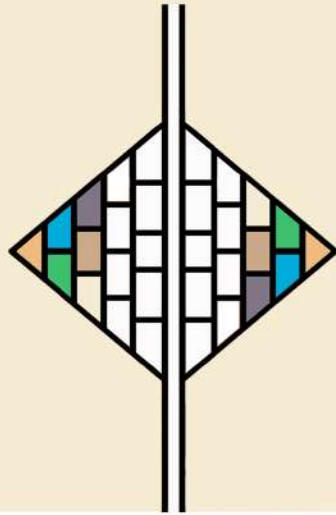
How can we best internalize our
people's ancient tale of redemption now?



What makes a story really cool?
Who tells you the best stories?

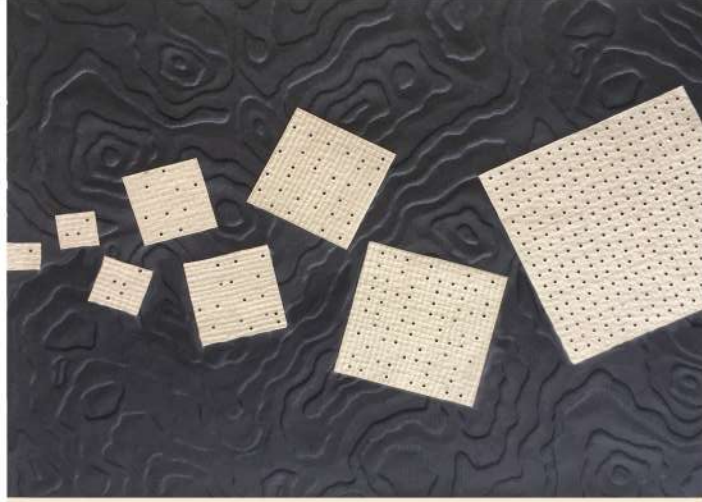
Stories

Whispers from the past
Footsteps of the present
Inimations of what may come.
We tell our tales
And our tales tell us.
Weaving through our lives,
Surging through our veins,
Transcending and transmuted time,
Our stories make us and we make them.
Tell.
Retell.
Listen.



רְחִצָּה
RACHITZAH
רְכִיבָה
PREPARATION

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How does the concept of preparation
apply to your life today?

What do you wish you had been
more prepared for?

When is preparation best
and when is spontaneity best?

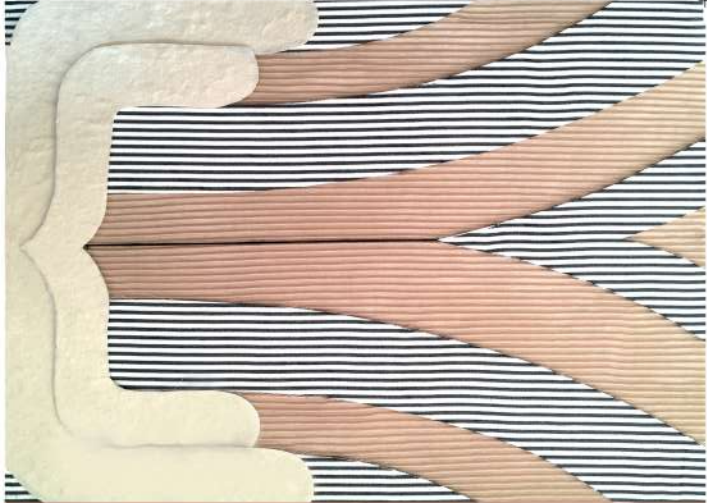
Which life skills might be important
to prepare for an unknowable future?



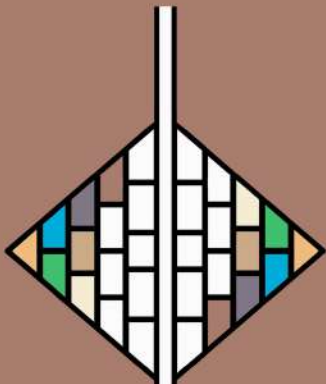
What have you really prepared hard for?
How did it feel?

Preparation

The steps are surely not the goal
Yet how they can steady us.
We wish to soar, to jump,
To skip, to fly—
And yet the familiar steps comfort us,
Assure us, and yes,
Ploddingly elevate us.
The path seems long,
The struggle harsh,
The stepping stones so hard
As silently, patiently, they support us.
We dream of a quicker way;
They smile and wait.



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מִצְוַת
מֹתְצִי
נְתִיבָה • קִבְּלָה
↓
GIVING • RECEIVING



How would you define a gift?

What qualities or things do you feel
you've been gifted with?

How does it feel to give? To receive?

Can you describe someone who
exemplifies compassionate giving?



How does it feel to make
a special gift for a friend?

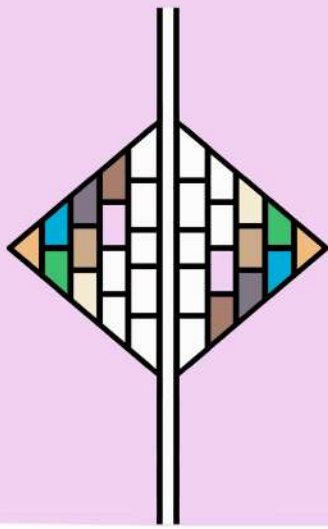
Giving and Receiving

Earthy grains sprouting upwards,
Heavenly sun
And rains streaming downwards
Coalesce to form our daily bread.

Miraculous, unending,
Generous compassion
Flows, pours, streams, floods over us.

This boundless overflow of infinite love
Creates, sustains and fulfills us.

Once humbly received,
These gifts gift us further
And transform us
Into compassionate,
Passionate givers
Ourselves.



מַצֵּה
MATZAH
חֵירוּת
FREEDOM

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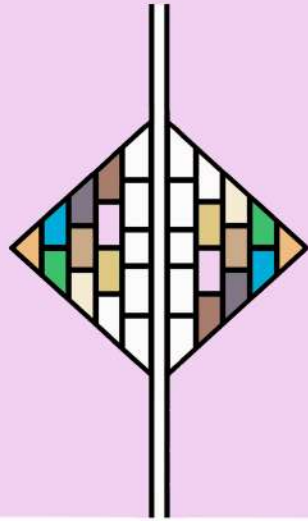
- What does freedom mean to you?
- What are the opposites of being free?
- What would you like to be liberated from?
- Why is the Exodus so important in Judaism?



When do you feel the freest?
Act out how it feels.

Freedom

Freedom is a harsh tyrant.
Relentlessly it has placed its yoke
Upon all those freed,
Binding them,
Obligating them,
With the mandate
That freedom cannot be free
Until shared by all.



מַרְרֵר
MAROR
מַרְרֵר
BITTERNESS

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Are bitter times inevitable?

What have been the toughest periods in your life?

How can we avoid becoming embittered?

Whom do you know who is best able to comfort others at bitter times?

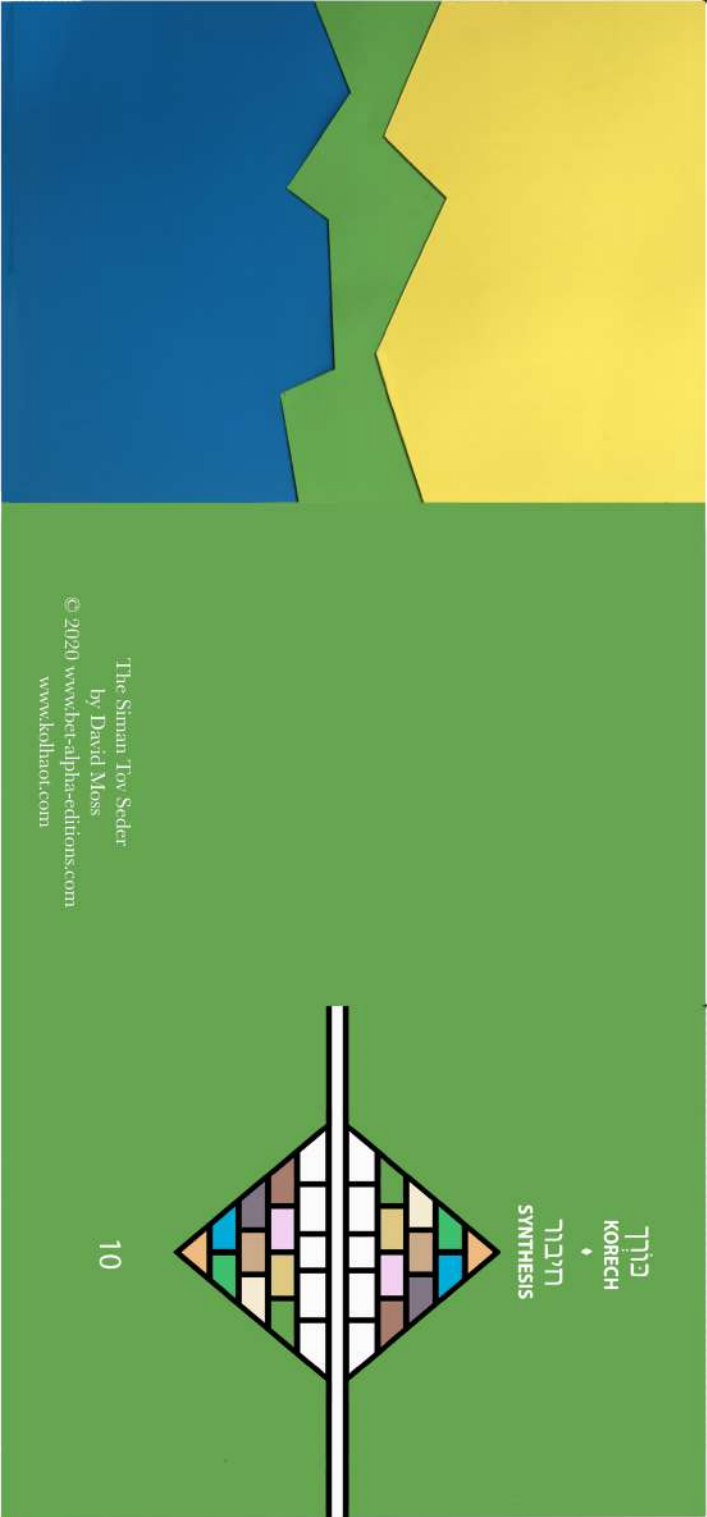


What's the yuckiest bitter-tasting food you know? Describe how it tasted.

Bitterness

How well we know the scenario,
And how we dread it:
Life sails smoothly along
When without warning
The storm shatters all,
Tearing our ordered universe asunder.

We prepare
We plan
We plot
We plead
Yet the bitter, rough stuff strikes,
Shatters us,
Shatters all.



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תורה
 KORECH
 ↓
 תורה
 SYNTHESIS



What is synthesis?

Why do you think traditional Jewish learning is done in pairs?

What are the strengths and weaknesses of one? Two?

Why would we make a sandwich of the symbols of bitterness and freedom?



Think of two totally different things. Now imagine what surprising things you could get if you put them together.

Synthesis

Opposites attract?
 Nope.

Opposites explode.

Sparks fly,

Energy releases,

Insight flashes,

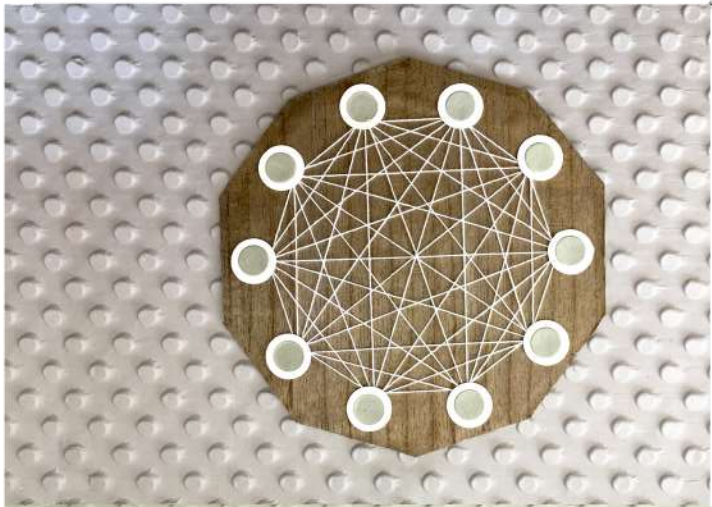
Innovation emerges

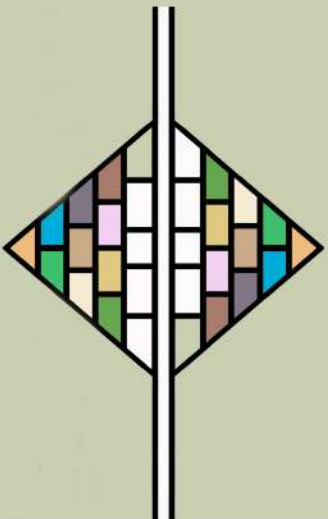
When diversity comes together.

This is the alchemy of creation.

Sameness slogs;

Synthesis sings.





 שולחן ערוך
 SHULCHAN ORECH
 קהילה
 COMMUNITY

11

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Do you have a special, close community?

What do you give to your community and what does it give to you?

How would you imagine an ideal community?

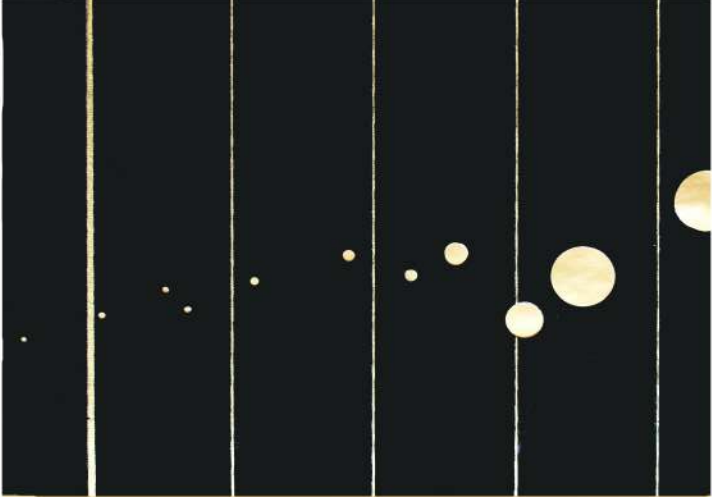
What is your connection to the community of the Jewish people?



How are you different alone, with one friend, or with a group?

Community

And behold, I saw a table.
 And a voice whispered:
 "This is the eternal table of My people."
 And I saw what this table has seen.
 How much sharing; how much nourishing.
 How many songs sung and guests sustained.
 How much Torah learned; minds sharpened;
 Souls elevated; discussions waged.
 How many children's lives formed.
 How many times covering beneath
 As hatred blazed outside.
 How much kindness, connection and warmth.
 And holy days celebrated
 And blessings blessed,
 And praises praised.
 And the voice whispered:
 "This is the community of Israel!"



Concealing • Revealing
 Revealing the hidden;
 Concealing the revealed.
 An infinite dance,
 A divine game
 Of seek and hide
 And hide and seek.

צַפּוֹן
 TZAFUN
 כִּי־סוּרֵי גִלְיָרִי
 CONCEALING • REVEALING

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What is revelation?

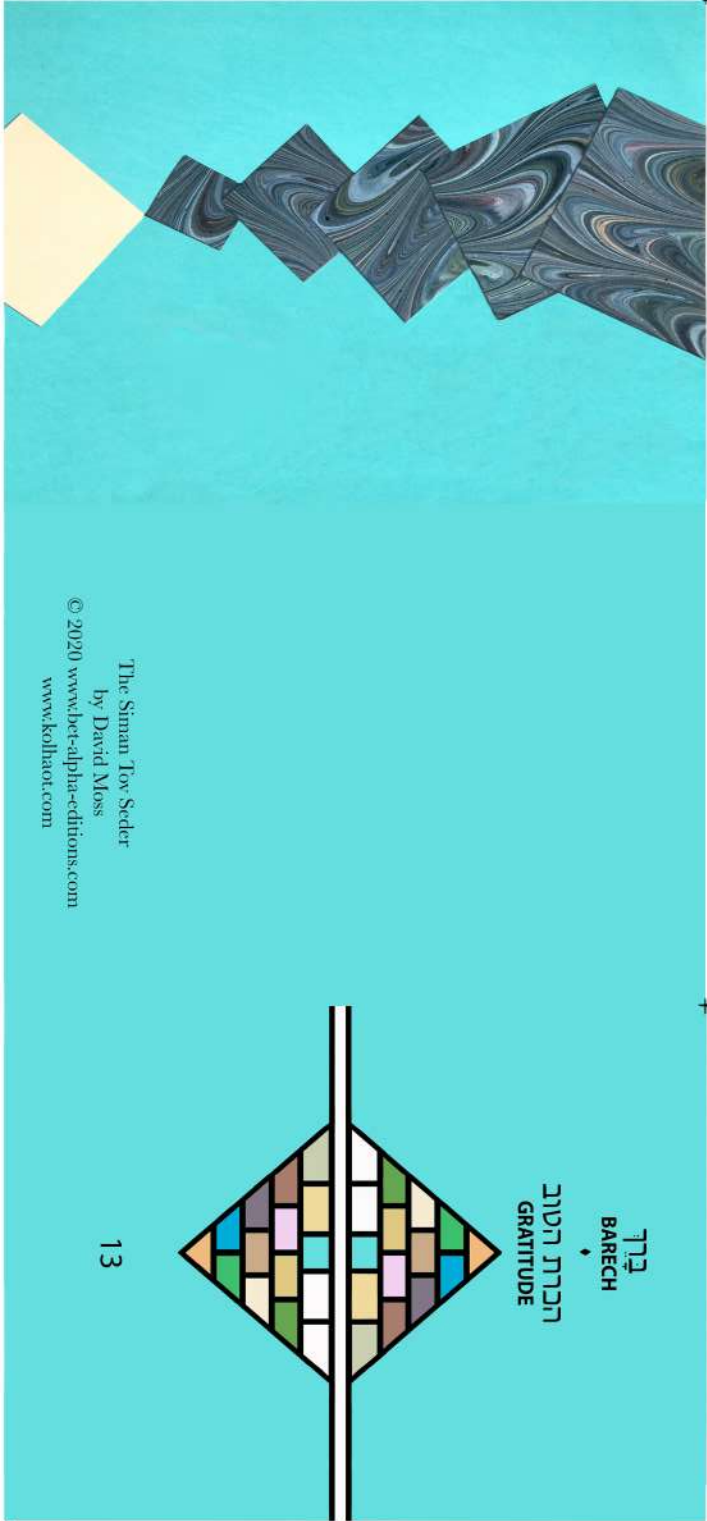
What do you conceal about yourself?

What do you know
 that you wish you didn't?

What is a personal example
 of the delight of discovery?



How does it feel when you've
 discovered something new?



What is Gratitude?

Must gratitude be expressed?

Does gratitude come naturally or must it be cultivated?

Have you ever been overwhelmed with gratitude?



Is it sometimes uncomfortable to always be told to say 'thank you'?

Gratitude

Once the kiss of Divine abundance is kissed,

These pour upward

as naturally,

gracefully,

constantly,

harmoniously,

as water flows downward:

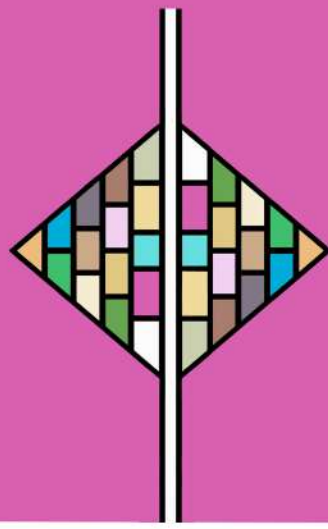
recognition

acknowledgment

joy

gratitude

praise



הלל
HALLEL
שבח
PRAISE

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What is the difference between
praise and gratitude?

When does praise come spontaneously?

What type of praise is
unhelpful or counter-productive?

How does it feel to praise? To be praised?

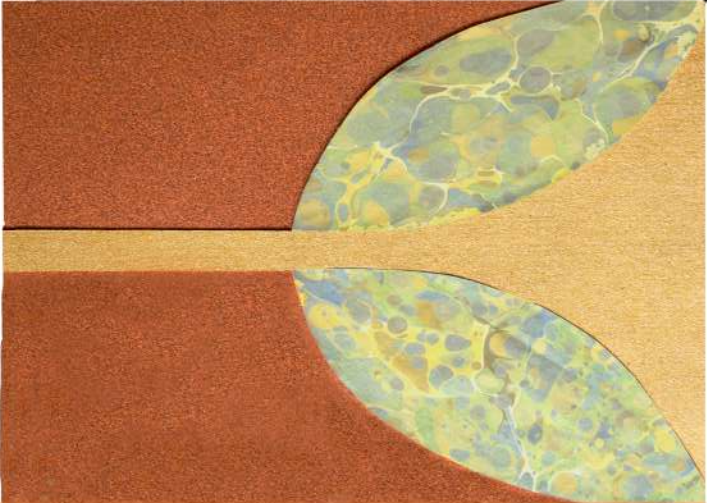


Are you comfortable being praised?

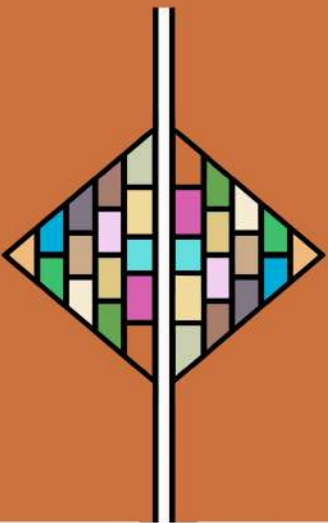
Praise

Somewhere nestled subtly
Among recognition, gratitude and wonder,
Touched by appreciation and reverence,
Surrounded by acceptance and amazement
Dwells the latent seed of praise.

The shower of bounty,
The goodness of things,
Tiny and large
And Overwhelming,
Awakens it,
And when it flowers
Fills us even fuller.



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נִרְצָה
NIRTZAH
קַבְּלָה
ACCEPTANCE



Are you good at accepting others as they are?

Do you accept yourself?

What is the difference between acceptance and resignation?

Why do you think the Seder ends with a request for acceptance?



How does it feel to be accepted or excluded by others?

Acceptance

- Try; fail
- Try; fail
- Try; succeed
- Try; fail
- Try; succeed
- Try; give up
- Try; succeed
- Accept