



Friends - Tomorrow night we'll join family and friends around the table and recite the words *Avadeem Hayeenu l'Pharaoh b'meezrayeem*/we were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt. **We** were slaves, not they were slaves or even our ancestors were slaves. **We Were Slaves. All** of us.

The story of the exodus belongs to us all. Primo Levi writes, *Each of us has been a slave in Egypt; soaked straw and clay with sweat. And crossed the sea dry-footed. You too, stranger. This year in fear and shame. Next year in virtue and justice.* Slavery afflicts the soul. Affirming historical memory and joining the past with the present awakens us to both the call and the weight of freedom.

This year, invite seder participants to share ideas and practices to which they are enslaved. How might we help one another wrest free from what binds us? The Honorable Ruth Bader Ginsburg writes, *On Passover, Jews are commanded to tell the story of the Exodus and to see ourselves as having lived through that story, so we may better learn how to live our lives today.* Passover calls us to know our past and create our future with integrity and intention, for the sake of ourselves, one another and our world.

May this holiday be one of memory and transformation, honesty and joy. And may we all merit the taste of freedom.

Hag Kasher v'Sameach,

Rabbi Lisa Gelber