

Opening Reading for the Seder

Contributed by [Sh'ma Journal](#)

Source: Rabbi Robert Levy for the Sh'ma Haggadah supplement

Egypt, no sleet or snow for sure, not even rain or the usually hail.

Nourished only from an ancient wide stream,

On which women secretly shared the boy of redemption.

Our Seder recalls the signs and marvels, the plagues, the costly victory.

We will honor our timeless bread and play with sweet mortar; taste bitterness and tears.

We drink past our fill.

God will split their sea.

Egypt will give chase and drown.

The tragedy and the victory mixed like a Hillel sandwich.

Yet, we open with an even more ancient memory, voiced by Solomon.

"For lo, the Winter is past, the rains over and done."

Flowers, figs and grapes; sweet fragrance.

An ancient memory we are so desperate to hear this year.

Even in my sleep I see snow and ice, lashing winds, the toil to dig out.

Solomon speaks of Spring, yet I feel the cold.

This Pesach too is a Hillel sandwich combining our past and future.

May our journey be free and warm.

-Rabbi Robert Levy Ann Arbor Michigan