

A Meditation Before the Seder

Contributed by [Old Forgotten Art Found](#)

Source:

We begin our service in the remembrance of the Holocaust in silence. Let us surround our worship, our community in prayer, with silence in preparation for the presence of G-d. Silence does not just bring to a standstill words and noise. Silence is more than the temporary renunciation of speech. It is a door opening before prayer, toward the very realms of the spirit and the heart. Silence is the beginning of a reckoning of the soul, the prelude to an account of the past and the consideration of the present, may our shared silence lead us to awareness of a time of total evil that degraded out most precious values, the very meaning of religious existence, and life itself. Our silence is to be a committed accounting for other silences that accepted persecutions and were indifferent to debasement and crime. For there was a time when silence was a crime. We think particularly of one night of silence, over half a century ago: Kristallnacht, the night of the broken glass, the 9th of November, 1938. Then, all the synagogues in Germany rose up in flame and smoke to the skies. The churches next to them stood in darkness, and in silence. Glass littered the streets- the broken shop-windows of the Jewish community. The neighbors walked upon the crunching splinters and were silent. A few prayed. Some churches courageously expressed their grief. But a dark cloud of silence filled the world. When will that silence end? When will we speak out on behalf of suffering neighbors? Not until we affirm G-d together, not until we acknowledge that we are all G-d's children. From the silence of uncaring, let us move on to the silence, which is the search for G-d, the search for ourselves. Then we can move beyond that silence and affirm the One G-d, we can proclaim G-d's name to the world.