

# An Introduction to Passover, to Spirituality and the Seder

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Source: Poetry by Yehudi Amichai



## "Passover" by Yehuda Amichai

My father was a god and did not know it. He gave me  
The Ten Commandments neither in thunder nor in fury; neither in fire nor in cloud  
But rather in gentleness and love. And he added caresses and kind words  
And he added "I beg You," and "please."  
And he sang "keep" and "remember" the Shabbat  
In a single melody and he pleaded and  
Cried quietly between one utterance and the next,  
"Do not take the name of God in vain," do not take it, not in vain,  
I beg you, "do not bear false witness against your neighbor."  
And he hugged me tightly and whispered in my ear  
"Do not steal. Do not commit adultery. Do not murder."  
And he put the palms of his open hands  
On my head with the Yom Kippur blessing.  
"Honor, love, in order that your days might be long  
On the earth." And my father's voice was white like the hair on his head.  
Later on he turned to face me one last time  
Like on the day when he died in my arms and said  
I want to add Two to the Ten Commandments:  
The eleventh commandment – "Thou shall not change."  
And the twelfth commandment – "Thou must surely change."

So said my father and then he turned from me and walked off

Disappearing into his strange distances.