

# Urchatz

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Source: Rabbi Michael Lerner

## Ur'chatz

As we wash our hands, we imagine washing away all cynicism and despair. We allow ourselves to be filled with the hope that the world can be transformed in accord with our highest vision of the good. We wash away our own sense of powerlessness—because powerlessness corrupts. The irony of systems of oppression in the contemporary world is that they usually depend upon the participation of the oppressed in their own oppression. Rather than challenging the system, people accept their place within it. In capitalist society, it is not just external coercion but also the internalization of worldviews of the powerful that make the oppressed willing participants in the system. As we do the Ur'chatz on Passover, we symbolically wash our hands of this participation in our own oppression.

(Symbolically wash hands)

As we wash all of this away, we take a look at our cleansed hands and remind ourselves to use our hands and our bodies in acts of healing, repair and transformation because we know that simply symbolic acts of cleansing are only one step on the path to tikkun olam, actions are critical to manifest this cleansing