

Establecer Intenciones: Setting Intentions

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Source:

Bienvenido, shalom, welcome to Seder A La Mexicana: a journey from exilio (exile) to libertad (freedom.) We start by setting intentions for the event with all of you here tonight. The first one is that of inclusión, Pesach is a time of inclusion.

Tonight we come together to recreate in story and espíritu (spirit) of Moses and the Israelites journey from Mitsrayim (Egypt or a "narrow bridge") to libertad, the land of Israel. Tonight we honor our ancestors, the curanderas (healers,) rabbis (teachers,) and chingonas (bad ass warriors,) who took us from a narrow place to opportunity. The ancestors and elders who punched, swam, ran, picketed, protested, boycotted, sang, cooked and baila esta cumbia'd us to this table today. We invite them and the parts of us that carry their memories to our table tonight in a time of celebration and mourning in our collective journey for freedom. We honor that our liberty is tied together to the liberty of all peoples and we honor that because of structural racism and internalized oppression we have not reached libertad yet.

On seder night, there are two moments where we metaphorically open our doors and invite others in. One is at the opening of the Magid portion of the seder, when we say, "All who are hungry come and eat." There is a beautiful message here: we were all once slaves; poor and hungry, and we remember our redemption by sharing what we have with others.

The other, comes towards the end of the seder, when we have the custom of pouring a fifth cup of wine/grape juice, which we claim is for Elijah the Prophet. This is a statement of faith, a statement that says that although we are a freer people than those still in bondage in our country and world, our redemption is not yet complete until all are free, and we believe that it will come if we commit to fight for libertad.

Everyone is welcome and everyone is necessary tonight. Why is it that we go out of our way to include all at our seder table? Perhaps it is because when we make room for others, we have the opportunity to make room for ourselves as well. In fact, the Mishnah (Pesachim 10:5) teaches us that:

בכל דור ודור חייב אדם לראות את עצמו כאילו הוא יצא ממצרים In every generation a person is obligated to see themselves as if they left Egypt

The seder presents us with the obligation of identifying with the generation that left Egypt and internalize that experience. And through that internalization, we come to feel the redemption as if it was our own as well to - לראות את עצמו. Further, the reliving of the story of the Exodus affords us the opportunity see one's true self. It is only when we are able to see ourselves clearly, that we are able to be redeemed. But perhaps the only way we are able to see ourselves, is when we are truly able to see those around us and the struggles that they and their ancestors face and are facing.

V'ahavta by Aurora Levins Morales

Say these words when you lie down and when you rise up, when you go out and when you return. In times of mourning and in times of joy. Inscribe them on your doorposts, embroider them on your garments, tattoo them on your shoulders, teach

them to your children, your neighbors, your enemies, recite them in your sleep, here in the cruel shadow of empire: *Another world is possible*. Thus spoke the prophet Roque Dalton: *All together they have more death than we, but all together, we have more life than they*. There is more bloody death in their hands than we could ever wield, unless we lay down our souls to become them, and then we will lose everything. So instead, imagine winning. This is your sacred task. This is your power. Imagine every detail of winning, the exact smell of the summer streets in which no one has been shot, the muscles you have never unclenched from worry, gone soft as newborn skin, the sparkling taste of food when we know that no one on earth is hungry, that the beggars are fed, that the old man under the bridge and the woman wrapping herself in thin sheets in the back seat of a car, and the children who suck on stones, nest under a flock of roofs that keep multiplying their shelter. Lean with all your being towards that day when the poor of the world shake down a rain of good fortune out of the heavy clouds, and justice rolls down like waters. Defend the world in which we win as if it were your child. It is your child. Defend it as if it were your lover. It is your lover. When you inhale and when you exhale breathe the possibility of another world into the 37.2 trillion cells of your body until it shines with hope. Then imagine more. Imagine rape is unimaginable. Imagine war is a scarcely credible rumor That the crimes of our age, the grotesque inhumanities of greed, the sheer and astounding shamelessness of it, the vast fortunes made by stealing lives, the horrible normalcy it came to have, is unimaginable to our heirs, the generations of the free. Don't waver. Don't let despair sink its sharp teeth into the throat with which you sing. Escalate your dreams. Make them burn so fiercely that you can follow them down any dark alleyway of history and not lose your way. Make them burn clear as a starry drinking gourd Over the grim fog of exhaustion, and keep walking. Hold hands. Share water. Keep imagining. So that we, and the children of our children's children may live

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