

Cc :  
Attchmnt:  
Subject : the journey re(begins)!!!  
----- Message Text -----

## PASSOVER

Good morning! One thing we can say for sure on this eve of Passover, is that WE ARE WHERE WE ARE! Whatever life has given us, health, relationally, environmentally, at this moment, is where we start (you know, that today is the first day of the rest of your life stuff!).

So, taking a breath, being where I am, where we are, I want to wish all of you love and wise beginnings for our new journey's beginnings.

One way to look at Passover is about taking a snapshot of where we are, right now, and with gentle awareness, acknowledging those places where we are not feeling free, are feeling constricted---whether by our own habits and narrow places, by the habits and narrow places of others---e.g., relationally---, and even spiritually.....

The journey is eight weeks, from March 27, this evening to Shavout, May 22. The first week is a self-reflection about our narrow places, and a conscious effort to leave them. The next seven weeks are time "in the wilderness"---leaving a narrow places is not the same as creating a new higher vision. SO, those weeks "in the wilderness" are time to explore, create a new, deeper vision.

As you may remember, each week has a "theme"; the first week is trying to experience and feel love; the next week to understand the theme of boundaries; the third, aesthetics, beauty.

These eight weeks can be a special, sacred time. You may want to pay close attention to the events, thoughts, feelings that occur during them. See if some special learnings and wisdom comes forth.....

At least, for the next week, or some part of it, enjoy the taste of matzah!!!!

Again, much love to my children, grandchild, and siblings, and those that love them! Peace and blessings....

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Attchmnt:  
Subject : recognizing enslavements: Part One!  
----- Message Text -----

Hi gang,

It's Friday afternoon pre-Sabbath. I'm sitting at my desk looking out of the first pink blossoms of our peach tree. The blossoms normally come at the end of January, and, to me, signal the beginning of spring. This year the tree remained dormant, and I kept looking to see when or if the blossoms would bloom. There was simply nothing I could do but wait patiently (I thought about breaking open a small limb to see if the blossom was somewhere inside, but thought, hmmm, I doubt the pink blossom rests inside waiting to pop out. It's more of an organic unfolding, and I simply had to curb my impatience, and, as it turns out, lack of trust.

But now the blossoms are exploding with the visual fury of popcorn kernels; spring has come, and I'm inspired to honor a task Shauna asked of me in preparation for our Tucson visit next month: to write a few lines about the "inner" meaning of Passover.

Simple.

Passover, on the inner level, is about recognizing where we are enslaved to habits, ways of thinking and being, that keep us bound. The word "Egypt"

in Hebrew is "mitzrayim" and means "narrow place." Metaphorically, what are the "narrow places" in our life that keep us stuck, that

limit us.....for me impatience and lack of trust rank right up there! (probably donuts and chocolate chip cookies are a close second). Getting hooked and upset over petty, trivial annoyances, ego slights, etc, certainly are up there---you get the idea.

To begin a journey out of our "narrow places" we first must acknowledge them. Looking at our narrow places, or weaknesses, or places we feel enslaved and might want to change can be done with a non-judgmental lightness. We can observe, not with guilt or judgment, but just with a soft noticing. We can't start to leave a place of slavery unless we can first recognize, even accept ourselves just as we are, where we are.

SO, let's call this our week one lesson together. Try to pick a couple specific "narrow places" where you feel enslaved. IF it starts to feel like too big or tender an area, pick a smaller one, something you can look at with some ease, but still feels like a behavioral or cognitive habit that you feel is not in your best interest (or the best interest of those around you---we'll see later on in our journey that for those that we love, there is no difference between the two!)

Next week we'll explore a bit more what some of the first steps out of slavery are, according to the Passover tradition.

Love to you all

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Attchmnt:

Subject : The journey continues, Part Two: Motivation, ambivalence  
----- Message Text -----

So, once upon a time, so the story goes, .....

where we last left our minds was in becoming AWARE of areas which enslaved us. Once we can be aware, the next task is to decide if we want to make changes....Most of us are ambivalent. Though part of us might want to change, another part may like what we are getting out of the habit or enslavement (e.g., comfort, known, etc), and also may not be sure it's worth the effort, or even that we have the ability to make change.

We can see these different aspects of ourselves represented by Moses, and Pharaoh. Rather than think of them as separate people, try to imagine that they are aspects of our "Self." Moses is to lead us forth, Pharaoh keeps us enslaved.

When God says to Moses, go lead the people to freedom, Moses says "God, I am slow of speech, I am not the right person." God says, Moses, I made you. I know who you are. You are the right person!

The message here is to trust ourselves, that we do have the ability to make change. That we have all that we need within ourselves, ("made by God"), the Buddha nature within....

So, Moses tries to make changes. The Pharaoh within us resists. We probably know that feeling, that sometimes when we try to change, doubts, fears, feelings of deprivation, etc, come up. It's like our resistance stronger.

And yet there are consequences for lack of change! We might understand the plagues in this light. The first plague frightens Pharaoh, and he agrees to allow change to be made;. Then the plague disappears, and he changes his mind.

Enslavement continues. Another, more painful plague. Motivation to change increases, "Yes, Moses, go." The plague disappears. He changes his mind again.! In Buddhist terms, we can understand this as samsara. We keep creating pain in our lives by our enslavements, our narrow places, and until we learn our lesson, the "plagues" continue and even get worse."

So, let's leave our lesson at this point. We saw an area we wanted to change, where we were enslaved in Part One: Awareness. Now, we start to make the effort to change, and can become aware of our resistances, our ambivalent motivation, and how we keep getting faced with negative problems (plagues) which increase in severity, the more we resist.

Until next week!

Love, Namaste, Poppers Deane  
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Subject : just do it.....matzoh and all, PART THREE

----- Message Text -----

Another window of opportunity occurs for change, for leaving the slavery of the narrow places. This time we seize the opportunity, and act decisively. We choose to go forth. After all the ambivalence and ego/self battles between Pharaoh and Moses, our Moses side acts. Like in Zen (or the Nike commercial), there is not a lot of time for further reflection (not enough time to let the bread back), just go forth.

Yet, even as Moses goes forth, lo and behold, Pharaoh says oops, I don't really want to make this change, allow this freedom, and the narrow place once again begins to chase Moses (our higher self).

Moses, our higher self is now trapped (seemingly) between being chased by the lower impulses the restrictions of Pharaoh, and a vast body of water. Moses stands and Prays to God, oh wonderful God, I know you are great, powerful, etc. And God says, basically, Moses, stop talking and go forth into the water (action).

There is a story that the water does not part until we take the first step...a leap of faith into the unknown, the risk of change. Then, the water parts. We, our higher self, go forth to the other side; the water returns, and Pharaoh is drowned, left behind.

There are three lessons, and feelings here. One is some sadness at leaving Pharaoh behind (symbolically at Passover, there is the placing of wine of the plate for each of the ten plagues....tears for the hurt our cause, both ourselves and others; tears at the pain it takes to learn certain lessons; tears even at losing a known, even if problematic side of ourselves.) This is the mourning part.

The second lesson, is symbolically, the crossing of the sea is shifting to a new level of consciousness. An altered state, one which occurs by crossing barriers that seem insurmountable. That takes faith, and action. Even in the face of fear.

The third lesson, and final one, will be Part Four , next week. (Heh, we've got to keep a little literary device to keep reader interest!)

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Subject : PART FOUR: CELEBRATION.....!

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When we last left our adventurous seekers, they had just crossed the Red (reed) sea into a new state of consciousness, leaving the narrow places of enslavement behind.

Crossing the sea had been the culmination of considerable effort:

- 1) Becoming aware of enslavements, narrow places, which meant overcoming resistances. Learning to accept that we are where we are
- 2) Seeking change: examining our motivations, ambivalences, the Pharaoh and Moses sides of us fighting for supremacy; seeing the pain of the plagues unless we agree to go forward
- 3) Going forward, taking a leap of faith into the water...
- 4) Now, on the other side, what to do!

People are a bit confused. They have left the narrow place, and with the water behind them, realize they can't go back. So, partly they have found freedom: i.e., freedom from slavery; \*(the message of Passover); but they haven't found freedom to: i.e., how should they live their life; to what should they commit, now that they are free; in fact, as they look ahead, all they see is a vast and somewhat dangerous looking, barren desert. (ah, we're starting to get ahead of ourselves: the 49 days in the desert between the holiday of passover and the holiday of Shavuot at Sinai---the 49 days that involve counting and observing different energy patterns like love, boundaries; love in boundaries, boundaries in love, etc---yes, there will be more messages after passover!)

but who can give wisdom in the here and now moment, having just crossed the reed sea; who knows how to begin.

The answer comes in the bible from feminine energy. Moses' sister, Miriam, recognizes the confusion, the uncertainty between the past enslavements which are history, and the future, which appears to be a vast wilderness. What does she do,? She begins to dance!! To celebrate the here and now, the progress made. It is time for a rejoicing in the moment, and Miriam leads the Israelis in a dancing celebration!!

Can't wait to celebrate with you guys next week!

Love, poppers

PS 1) there is a ritual, called cleaning the house (and ourselves) of chametz (which is both leavened bread, and also leaved (inflated ego). It's like a physical and psycholological spring cleaning!

Take a breath, nice and slow. As part of the cleaning internally, recognize that whatever is done is done. Relax into that deeper, peaceful, accepting side of yourself. In buddhist terms, trust the buddha within; in jewish terms, trust God's guiding hand, feel the God within. We are now on a psychollogical/spiritual journey, looking to cleanse ourselves of those narrow places, asking for guidance to be that person, the One we both can be and already are....

2) Note events that are hapening in our life around this time that seem evidence of a deepening committment to wisdom, well-being, generosity of spirit, self-exploration.

My own belief is that these are not random, but are occuring for a reason during this time. From a spiritual perpspective, this is a wonderful time for increased and enhanced wisdom; from a narrative therapy perspective, it may be a helpful story to frame events of searching and exploring at this time as part of a larger opportunity, and in a larger framework, backed by the energy of 1000's of years of "going forth" from narrow places" during this holy day season

Love love