



YOUR RED SEA, YOUR PURSUERS, AND YOUR NACHSHON MOMENT

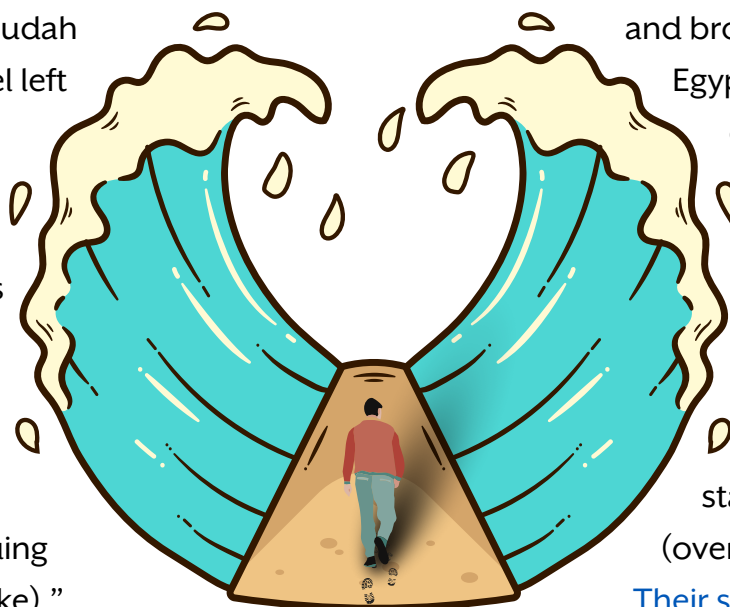
On Passover, the Jewish people celebrate freedom.

The freedom is multilayered. On one level, the b'nai Yisrael (the children of Israel) were enslaved in brutal working conditions, and we celebrate salvation from this physical bondage.

On another level, the b'nai Yisrael were not yet am Yisrael, the nation of Israel. Culturally, the group was fractured and fractious, with nothing to unite them. The Passover story celebrates freedom from this dynamic in the form of the union between the people, Moses and God.

And on still another level, it anticipates an ideal freedom — one not fully actualized in the story, as the experience of slavery still lingers in the people, insecurity and doubt ebbing and flowing. [Yet we see this freedom emerging profoundly — the experience of spiritual emancipation, an awakening of self. It is this freedom so many of us chase.](#)

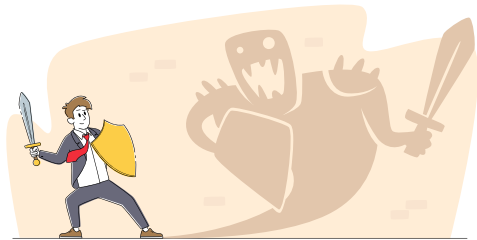
[We can't find freedom by outrunning anxiety, anger or grief.](#) This lesson is captured in the compiled rabbinic teachings called midrash, which preserves the memory of Nachshon, prince of the tribe of Judah and brother-in-law of Aaron. When the b'nai Yisrael left Egypt and reached the Red Sea, only to discover they were being pursued by the Egyptians, they panicked, cried out to God and complained to Moses (Exodus 14:10-13). The sea only splits, according to the midrash, when a person steps forward and enters the sea, "since they were standing and taking advice/debating/arguing (over what course of action they should take)." [Their salvation came at the hand of a brave person's choice to step forward.](#)





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Modern wisdom tells us this too. “We are not imprisoned by our circumstances, our setbacks, our history, our mistakes or even staggering defeats along the way,” articulated Jim Collins in his book, *Good to Great*, “We are freed by our choices.”



Developing ourselves and our mental well-being is tied to making active choices. Rather than choosing the path of least resistance — which is a choice — facing our demons head-on empowers and frees us.

We have dozens, if not hundreds, of opportunities daily to practice making these active choices. We are not standing paralyzed in front of the Red Sea, but many of us face our own Red Seas, with pursuers closing in. I know so many people haunted by traumas or frozen with anxiety who don't know how on earth to move forward.

Are you ready to take those first brave steps? Are you ready to free yourself?



Consider using this resource as you pursue your own spiritual emancipation and well-being to help you identify the Red Sea holding you back, the pursuer pushing you forward and the Nachshon moment you can have as you take your first step. Consider writing this information down on the following page and keeping it somewhere as a reference for your progress. You can use it as many times as you would like to. For example:



I feel uncomfortable in my relationship with food. (RED SEA)

Every time I think about my RED SEA, I feel shame and fear that I have no self-control. (PURSUER)

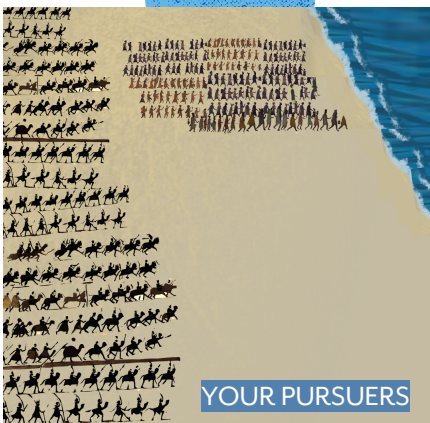
An active choice I can make as I face my RED SEA and my PURSUER is committing to preparing healthy dinners at the start of each week. (FIRST STEP)



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My Red Sea is...



My Pursuer is...



My Nachshon Moment will be...
