

The Environment is a Broken Window

Rosh Hashanah 5764 — Rabbi Zoë Klein ©2003

Temple Isaiah, Los Angeles

Lavender Eucalyptus
Tree moss opium
laurel mint rose
Irish Springs
Dead Sea Salts
Indian Gardenia
And 52 gallons of bath water
(Which started as snowmelt
in the High Sierras
traveling over a thousand miles [\[1\]](#)
born of a chrome faucet
Into two capfuls of
Grapefruit jasmine
liquid bubbles
Terrycloth
Tile
Green tea bath beads
Sandalwood bath gel
Ivory Cream non-slip bath mat)
This
is the natural habitat
Of the North American
Rubber Duck.
The embryonic stage
Of the Rubber Duck
Is intriguing
In that unlike most animals
It begins its life
As a plant
(As you know
From the song about the ant,
The rubber plant
And his high hopes)
In the pungent soil
Of the Amazon rain forest.
Discoverers
distributed the Rubber Duck seedlings
To farms
Where the trees are
Pared and stripped.
Their latex fluid shipped
Hundreds of miles
To autoclaves
A far cry from the rain forests...
Which bodes very well for the Rubber Duck species,
Since 25 million acres of rain forest

are destroyed every year
25-50 acres cut every minute
of your waking or sleeping life.
So any time you're feeling low
'stead of letting go
just remember that ant
Oops there goes another...
(-- 3,500 acres of rain forests
since we've been worshipping here
wildlife habitat
wet flowers and painted insects
with medicinal properties
God only knows
leveled and shipped to be processed
at the air polluting
river waste spewing
Rubber-Duck-factory --)
...plant.
Remarkably, there is also
a mutant subspecies of Rubber Duck
That's petroleum-based,
oil...
It is a wonder of science:
The highly mysterious Rubber Duck,
(Which incidentally,
Doesn't quack, but squeaks
like a carbon-based mouse)
has never been recorded *eating* anything
and yet,
How much it consumes,
That sticky substance out of which it's born,
The United States consumes
its entire weight in oil every week,
drilling through pristine systems.
The same year the world's tallest skyscrapers fell
the world's largest floating oil rig sank off Brazil,
in Ecuador more oil has leaked
into the ground
than in the Exxon Valdez disaster
the whole land reeking of oil,
large black drops forming
on vegetables when it rains,
when Saddam Hussein ordered
700 Kuwaiti oil wells
to be set on fire
he became history's most uncontrolled

experiment on the effects of air pollution,
black clouds still hovering ominously
over Arabia, chemicals fusing
in ways scientists could never imagine
The Gulf war, truly a war against the gulf,
500 miles of coastline awash in oil,
From above
NASA photographed
A poisonous paisley of black and blue swirls
Tens of billions of gallons on water and land
rosy hued shorebirds drawn
by ancient memories from Africa
pausing in the fragrant marshes
and inter-tidal flats,
feathers glued,
nostrils clogged,
searing bright eyes
entombed in asphalt
We are squandering millions of years of fossil wealth
in a geological moment.[\[2\]](#)
During a storm
In 1992
A giant crate
filled with thousands of Rubber Ducks
upon a container ship
fell overboard,
and for 11 years,
these thousands of Duckies
have sailed the world's oceans
and any day now they are expected to wash up
on the coast of New England.[\[3\]](#)
And what of our marine cradle,
How is the sea faring?
If there is anyone to tell us
Rubber Ducky,
You're the one.
Having bobbed over
humpback whales
Sharks on their way to the
Santa Monica pier
Leafy tresses of kelp sprawled over the sea
Forty mile drift nets sweeping through the sea
Taking everything in its path
From targeted tuna
To fragile jellyfish
Turtles whales,
Mega trawlers scraping entire ecosystems
Acoustic fish finders,
Nuclear waste,
Nerve gas disposal sites,
Plastic debris,
Pesticides,
Herbicide,
Fertilizer run off
From millions of acres of farmlands,

Sewage sludge,
the living network of microorganisms
that shape the basic ingredients of the ocean's living
soup
Growing up we never ate tilapia,
All of a sudden
Everyone is serving tilapia,
Any time that happens in the market,
It is because another
Commercially valued fish species
Has been nearly wiped out,
The stocks depleted,
Chilean Sea Bass it endangered,
So you only see it plated
At weddings and fundraisers.
I am pretty sure in the Book of Revelation
there is something written like
"The face of Armageddon is tilapia."
And I believe there is a verse
In that same chapter:
"When bottled water appears, the end is near."
And also:
"Ionic air purifiers are the precursors of doom."
From the haunted reefs where Dodo's roamed
To the Pearl Islands where Survivor is filmed
Finally washing up
In a foaming froth
Tinged a mucus green,
here ends the migration of the Rubber Duck
quite a journey from the Amazon
to Sesame Street.
In the Duck's 11 year journey
How the world changed.
Millions of acres gone,
Hundreds of our fellow species
Become extinct every month,
45,000 people die of starvation every day
Add it up and
We are destroying our marble
With its beautiful swirling
cloud-swept atmosphere
Like a slow-hitting meteor.
Why talk about it?
What does war and cancer
And disease and dis-ease
And loneliness and A.D.D.
Suicide bombings
And anger management
And clinical depression and autism
And Israel
And all the stuff we care about
Have to do with the environment?
Researchers studying urban decay
Conducted a simple study.
They took a Jaguar

Put it in the South Bronx
 Then they ducked
 And watched.
 Four days nothing happened.
 Then they broke a little window
 on the side of the car,
 and within an hour
 It was turned upside down,
 Torched,
 stripped.
 They did the same with
 An apartment building
 Broke a window on the side.
 Soon graffiti appeared,
 Dealers started hanging around,
 Prostitutes appeared,
 The building decayed,
 Tenants moved out
 Crime moved in.
 Our window is broken.
 A frozen lake
 Just under our feet
 With a long crack in it,
 Our environment is a glass house
 And we won't stop throwing stones,
 Our window is the environment,
 Window into our past, future,
 Into ourselves,
 Into the soul of the universe,
 Into God,
 And it is shattering.
 And it's right there,
 We don't even see it,
 Because of the drone of motors,
 Air conditioners and climate control that mask
 seasons,
 Lights that mask the night,
 We don't see it...
 We don't even see it,
 We are not connected to it at all any more
 Except through nature preserves and pets.
 We have no connection to the sensuous surroundings,
 and shivering entities.
 We don't even see it.
 The environment is the broken window
 We look but we only see ourselves,
 Locked in our mirrored cities,
 People dying in Iraq every day
 In this war,
 Every month,
 In Israel,
 The recall circus,
 Premier week,
 If you come to Friday night services,
 You know,

We talk about current events all year,
 If something strikes you in the news,
 Don't wait for High Holidays
 Come to Friday night services,
 Be with a loving community
 But this is big picture time.
 The environment is the broken window
 That we have not been talking about
 And no one wants to see or fix.
 And yet, it is the reason for it all...
 we can hardly be surprised
 by the amount of epidemic illness
 in our culture,
 widespread psychological distress,
 suicides,
 household killings, mass murders.
 We are as sick as we make the world around us,
 No less.
 We are violent by nature
 Because we are violent with nature
 We are violent with nature
 And it is making us sick.
 When Cain murdered Abel,
 His blood cried out to God from the ground,
 And God cursed Cain from the ground.
 What did Cain do?
 He built a city,
 He could no longer work the land,
 It would not yield to him,
 So he built a city,
 And legend says that because
 Abel's blood cursed the ground,
 The trees which once each produced
 all kinds of fruit,
 now each only bears one kind.
 It is an amazing legend,
 For it faults man's violence
 For diminishing nature's bounty.
 The first city was built
 By a man with the blood
 of his brother on his hands
 that bloody fingerprint
 in every concrete city.
 The breathing ground is corrupted,
 The earth is a broken window,
 And this whole city of graffiti and violence
 Is built upon it.
 It is an American problem,
 We are beastly
 The way we consume resources
 And the pollution we contribute to the world,
 It is shameful.
 The rabbis say of the character Lavan,
 Whose name means "white"
 that the only thing pure about him was his name,

And we have a President
 The only thing environmental about him
 Is his name
 Pillaging fragile ecospheres
 As if they harbor terrorists
 It is an American problem
 And it is about religion,
 And it belongs on this Rosh Hashanah
 Which is also Shabbat
 Which is the birthday of the world
 the beginning of creation
 And simultaneously Shabbat, its end.
 In many oral cultures
 On the outskirts of the community
 Lives the shaman,
 Never living in the people's midst,
 Never too deep into the woods,
 Separate from the people,
 Straddling the line between the tundra of nature
 And the habitat of man,
 He is the window between the two.
 The people are a little afraid of him.
 They often wonder if he is causing
 The very ailments he heals.
 Western culture sees the shaman
 As a magician,
 His potions, dances, sleight-of-hand, and spells.
 But what we think of as magic
 Is actually a keen understanding of the natural,[\[4\]](#)
 We have magicians in our history,
 Honi the circle Maker
 In the first century
 Could make it rain,
 Elijah the prophet
 Had power over rain and ravens and fire.
 Moses drew water from a rock
 And had power
 Over seas like the Red
 Rivers like the Nile.
 And volcanoes like Sinai.
 Abracadabra
 Is from ancient Hebrew
Abara, I create
C'dibra, as I speak.
Abara C'dibra
 I create as I speak.
 It is interesting
 That Judaism
 With all of its tomes of literature and law,
 Has always considered itself an Oral culture.
 We've held onto that pretty fiercely,
Abracadabra
 I create as I speak,
 The magic of the spoken word,
 Though Talmud was written by the year 450,

It is always referred to as the Oral Law.
Abara c'dibra
 I create as I speak.
 The world was created by God'speak,
Vayehi Or.
Let there be light.
 Written language used to converse
 With the land,
 Pictographs mimicking
 The cursive script of birds,
 And the sinuous calligraphy of lightning.[\[5\]](#)
Abara c'kitba
 I create as I write.
 Even Hebrew
 has pictures associated with it,
 Connecting it to the larger
 More-than-human world.
 The word for the first letter, *alef*,
 Means ox,
 And is in the shape of an ox,
 The word for the second letter *bet*,
 Means house
 And is in the shape of a house
 And *gimmel* means camel.
 Greek scribes took on these letters,
Alpha beta gamma
 and the names for the letters lost their meaning,
 alpha didn't mean ox, it meant nothing.
 No longer connected to the natural sphere.
 Scholars say that is when man
 Stopped conversing with nature.
 Around the time of the new alphabet
 Arose philosophies:
 Socrates said
 "I'm a lover of learning
 but trees and open country won't teach me anything
 whereas men in the town do."[\[6\]](#)
 Written language
 Allows us to eternalize concepts,
 Giving rise to Plato's
 Assertion
 That things, table, cloud
 could be pondered as eternal, ideas,
 unchanging forms.
 The meandering river now had less to teach
 Than the eternal written concept of river.
 Ideas became more important than things,
 Ideas are eternal, like souls.
 Things decay and die, like the body.
 Thus grew the Greek belief
 That souls are more important than the body,
 The soul is imprisoned in the body
 That the body is basically an anatomized corpse.
 And with this complete separation
 From the natural world,

By necessity,
 Christianity created an unnatural Heaven,
 A place above and beyond this world,
 Completely denying
 The belief of oral cultures in
 the gradual reintegration
 of one's ancestors and elders
 into the living landscape
 from which all too are born.
 Cultures in which
 Loved ones were cremated
 to return to the swirling air,
 Or fed to the condors and mountain lions
 Or our own,
 Rejoined with the ground.
 In Christianity, heaven is supernatural,
 originating in the loss of our
 ancestral reciprocity with the animate earth,^[7]
 It is a rejection of nature.
 But for the Ancient Hebrews,
 Eternity was not in a separated heaven,
 but in the promise of a future reconciliation on the
 earth.
 A return to the Garden.
 Our swords beat into plowshares.
 The oldest form of afterlife-belief in Judaism
 Resurrection, is really the belief
 In the precious unity of body and soul
 There is no Judeo-Christian world.
 Judaism was founded by a shepherd
 Christianity was founded by a carpenter.
 We are an agricultural religion.
 An oral culture, storytellers,
 Judaism is the shaman of the world,
 Sometimes feared by the society,
 Standing on the edge between oral and written,
 Nature and civilization,
 And we forget the nature part,
 We forgot how agricultural we are.^[8]
 But you only need consider
 Our holidays,
 Rosh Hashanah always falls on the new moon,
 Look to the sky tonight
 And you'll see the tiny sliver
 And the first night of Sukkot
 There is always a full moon,
 As we sit in our booths
 With the stars
 Shimmering through the eaves,
 Nature participating in our festival
 As we read on that day
 Ecclesiastes,
 To every thing there is a season
 And a time to every purpose under heaven,
 And we shake the lulav and the etrog

Like shamans in an ecstatic dance
 Tu B'Shevat
 Is our festival of trees,^[9]
 On Passover
 We celebrate Spring
 And read from the Song of Songs
 Arise my love my fair one
 And come away
 for lo the winter is past,
 flowers appear...
 let us go down to the vineyards
 to see if the vines have budded
 there I will give you my love
 More and more young people
 Seem to be looking to the religions of the far east,
 Peaceful, meditative, natural nurturing religions, they
 say,
 Zen, Buddhism,
 And it makes me crazy,
 Because that is Judaism,
 But it's as if we've totally forgotten,
 It is a religion of the land,
 The sages studied in the kerem bavel,
 The vineyards of Babylon
 Where the rabbis would walk with their students
 And expound under the trees,
 Outside of the brick and mortar of the cities,
 Deborah under her date palm,^[10]
 Shabbat ends only when
 You go outside and count three stars in the sky,
 That means in LA
 It never ends,
 We have blessings for rain,
 And blessings for dew
 That we say every day,
 Blessings for thunder,
 Lightning,
 rainbows,
 Birkat hachama
 Is an astronomical blessing over the sun
 We say only once every 28 years,
 Torah is filled with
 Instructions protecting the land,
 Do not trim a fruit tree until its third year of produce
 So that it may grow strong,
 Every seventh year, let the land rest
 From your plows and tilling,
 That it may regenerate.
 There are days that
 Celebrate the almond blossom's first blooming,
 The majority of our laws concerning tzedakka
 Are based on agriculture,
 Torah says
 Every year set aside a tenth of your crop,
 Do not harvest the corners of your field,

Do not go over your trees a second time,
 But leave what remains for the poor,
 The orphaned, and the widow.
 Do not destroy trees in a time of war.
 People say, look at this native American Prayer
 shawl,
 Warp of sun, weft of moon,
 We have that,
 That's a tallit,
 Psalm 104 says
 You are clothed in glory and majesty,
 wrapped in a robe of light.
 You spread the heavens like a tent cloth.
 You make the clouds of your chariot
 move on the wings of the wind.
 When you wear a tallit
 You bear the wings of a stork,
 Wrapped in a robe of sunrise,
 Heavens spread around you.[\[11\]](#)
 The menorah is patterned
 after the olive tree
 Torah is a tree of life.[\[12\]](#)
 We are the shaman of the world,
 We are the window,
 Because we stand,
 Our alphabet stands as the point
 Between
 Animistic and machine
 Abracadabra is ancient Hebrew,
 I create as I speak
 Oral, magic
 I cast a spell as I spell
 And we've forgotten this,
 Hebrew word for Spirit and Wind is the same Ruach
 The Hebrew word for soul is neshama
 Like the Navajo expression for soul "the wind within
 one",
 Some say that the reason the Hebrew alphabet
 Has no written vowels
 Is because vowels are sounded breath,
 Which is sounded soul
 And you cannot make a visible likeness of the Divine
 The Sages write that the vowels are to consonants
 As the spirit is to the body
 And that to speak
 is to breathe life into a lumps of clay
 Abara C'Dibra
 To breath words, worlds, to life.
 The Hasidim employ
 Breathing techniques
 In prayer.[\[13\]](#)
 Yehudah HaLevi would begin his prayer sessions
 by calling upon the winds to come
 from all four directions
 and fill his breath

and instructs his companions
 to circulate the air inhaled
 from all four directions
 interchangeably with their bodies.
 One Hasidic reads:
 If prayer is pure and untainted
 Surely that holy breath
 That rises from your lips
 Will join with the breath of heaven
 That is always flowing
 Into you from above
 Thus that part of God
 Which is within you
 Is reunited with its source.
 Kol Hanshema tehallel ya
 Let every breath praise you,
 What are we,
 After all,
 But intensified sky?[\[14\]](#)
 Ecologist David Abram wrote:
 "Given the importance
 placed upon the wind and the breath
 within the Hebrew tradition,
 we may be tempted to wonder
 whether...
 the monotheism of Abraham
 and his descendants
 was borne by a new way of
 experiencing the invisible air,
 a new sense of the unity
 of this unseen presence
 that flows not just within us
 but between all things,
 granting us life and speech
 even as it moves
 the swaying grasses
 and the gathering clouds.
 Is it possible that a volatile power
 once propitiated as a local storm god
 came to be generalized by one tribe
 of nomadic herders
 into the capricious power
 of the encompassing atmosphere itself?
 We know that the singular mystery
 revered by the children of Abraham
 was an ineffable power
 that could not be localized
 in any visible phenomenon,
 could not be imaged in any idol."[\[15\]](#)
 The name of God
 Which all Jews refuse to say,
 Choosing to replace it with the word Adonai,
 Probably reads something more like
 YHWH
 Some kabbalists say the forgotten pronunciation

may have been YH
 on the whispered inbreath and WH
 on the whispered outbreath,
 the whole name of God thus
 formed by a single cycle of the breath.
 The awesome mystery
 of God's name not separate
 from the mystery of breathing.
 The Shofar on our holiest day
 Is a grand celebration of breath,
 Soul, God, air,
 There are two things we must do
 1. Reclaim our religion for what it is,
 Recognize our place as the shamans of the world,
 Last year I ordained all of you rabbis,
 This year you shall be shamans,
 And,
 2. We have to fix the broken window
 We are an agricultural religion,
 Deeply rooted in the earth
 And the seasons,
 We have to remember that
 Return to that,
 Look through our adult education brochure:
 Dr. Eitan Fishbane Mystical Insights from Hasidic
 Masters
 Make Your Own Tallit with Naomi Katz
 Count Your Blessings with Flori Hendron
 My People's Prayer with Elaine Diamond
 Zohar with Pinchas Giller
 Meditation with Rabbi Fox
 We have our Teva programs,
 Mammoth, Moguls and Meditations, Isaiah's 3rd
 Annual Ski weekend,
 Family Camp, A Weekend in Malibu
 Shavuot Revelation Hike
 Escape to the Sea Kayaking for Passover
 We have to remember what this religion is,
 And then we have to take it to heart
 And fix the window.
 How do we do that?
 Temple Isaiah has a Green Team,
 And as members of California Interfaith Power and
 Light
 We've helped with the passage
 of landmark climate change legislation
 in California last year
 talk to members of the Green Team
 for great advice on books to read,
 and action to take,
 Think about the Air,
 Practice Air-Care,
 Because if Abram is right,
 That the monotheism Abraham discovered
 was a new way of experiencing air,

Then the air is our God,
 The air is God,
 Does God exist?
 Breathe,
 Yes,
 to pollute it
 Is to suffocate God,
 And suffocate ourselves,
 Think about how we pollute the air,
 In your companies,
 In your homes,
 Fuel efficiency of automobiles
 Is the biggest step we can take
 To reduce the threat to global warming,
 And the ozone
 Which allows more and more
 cancer causing radiation into our atmosphere,
 Consider this when you buy a new car
 That the conscientious car you drive
 Can stop cancer,
 And if you must drive a vehicle
 That goes any less than ten miles per gallon
 Of earth's blood,
 At least use that vehicle
 To transport food to shelters,
 Offer to pick up all the stuff
 Whenever we have a clothing or toy drive
 At the Temple.
 Earn the fuel you use.
 Conserve energy,
 Because when you conserve energy
 You prevent wars,
 Depression,
 Suicides,
 The world's population is out of control,
 6 billion,
 next generation 8 billion,
 Our growth much more bacterial
 than primate,
 Exceeding the biomass
 by as much as hundred times
 of any animal species that ever existed here
 Zero population growth would help,
 But I could never say don't have children,
 We are a life affirming religion,
 Full of hope,
 But at least make concentrated effort to
 Introduce your children to nature,
 Pay membership at aquariums that research and
 educate,
 Don't run inside when it rains,
 Give them a love of nature
 And you give them connection,
 For one who walks in nature,
 No matter how desolate,

is never alone,
 is clutched by gravity,
 Bathed in air,
 In dialogue with the breathing earth,
 Give your children passion for the environment,
 Because only in nature
 Do we understand living powerfully in the present,
 In the bristling moment,
 Spiced with danger and wonder
 At Tashlich tomorrow
 When we gather at the ocean's hem,
 Listen to the sound
 That has not ceased since the creation of the world,
 Swim in it,
 Beg forgiveness,
 Don't just throw the crumbs of your sins
 For it to sweep away
 With so many other pollutants
 We've dumped into her,
 Make you peace with her,
 Make your promise to her,
 The Mother Ocean,
 Cradle of life.
 Promise her that you will
 Change the way you live.
 Live lightly and your life will be light.
 Turn off lights,
 Become vegetarian
 Protest the mechanized
 slaughter of millions of God's creatures
 with life's breath in their lungs
 become vegetarian
 and save water,
 it takes 2,500 gallons of water
 to produce a pound of beef,
 and 25 to produce a pound of wheat.
 The amount of grain that we feed to our cattle
 In America
 Could itself sustain 80% of the world.
 Eat green, not only because you care about animals,
 Eat green to save the lives of 60 million people
 Who starve to death every year.
 If not vegetarian,
 Become eco-kosher,
 In other words,
 Buy foods that have been produced
 In an ecologically conscious way.
 Download what fish populations
 Are endangered
 And put the list in your wallet
 And resist eating them
 Or serving them at your weddings.
 Practice Baal Tashchit,
 The commandment not to waste.
 John F Kennedy said:

"We chose to go to the moon, it is now time
 to reach for the sun."
 More energy from the sun hits the earth in one day
 Than all conventional oil
 That has ever been used of ever will be used.
 The Galapagos Islands are turning solar,
 Iceland is becoming the first Hydrogen society,
 Energy from water,
 There are renewable sources of energy.
 Invest in them and be a hero,
 To tigers butterflies rivers oaks me and the rest
 Of the breathing world.
 When you add onto your houses,
 Consider solar power
 And you will be heroic.
 If you redo your kitchen
 Make sure the refrigerator is not in direct sunlight.
 Consider Green energy, such as solar or wind,
 Clean energy.
 Make sure your air conditioner is in the shade.
 Clean the coils of your refrigerator.
 A new refrigerator
 Reduces carbon dioxide
 By 3,000 pounds a year.
 Try to manage with only one refrigerator.
 Recycle the old.
 Several programs in California
 Buy back refrigerators,
 Picking them up from your house
 And paying you.
 Recycle everything.
 The motto of ecologists is
 Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.
 And to these three,
 As Jews, we add on a fourth,
 Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Remember.
 Remember that we are the stewards of this earth.
 25% of all mammals,
 20% of reptiles,
 25% of amphibians,
 and 34% of fish
 are all threatened with extinction.
 Join the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish
 Life,
 Coejl.
 Look at their website,
 Coejl.org
 For ways to add your voice,
 For suggestions,
 Actions you can take,
 Learn and support.
 Use ceiling fans.
 Carpool.
 Vote for people who have a stand on the
 environment.

Remember that the land doesn't belong to us
 We belong to the land.
 We have four more years until
 The next Sabbatical year
 On the Jewish calendar.
 In those four years,
 Let's prepare to let the land rest.
 Americans consume about 25 acres
 Of land per person over a life,
 Whereas non-Americans average 2.5
 The planet is exhausted.
 If we were to develop the world to be like us,
 We would need four planet earths.
 Yes, we are great,
 Our scientific and technological advances,
 the spread of democracy
 and human rights throughout the world.
 But we also bring with us
 Decimation to the natural environment
 with cheerful abandon.
 We accelerate the erasure
 of entire ecosystems
 and the extinction of thousands
 of million-year-old species.
 We are an economy driven society.
 Economists focus on production and consumption
 But in an economy driven paradise,
 The environment will have crumbled,
 And we are nothing but
 anatomized corpses in this paradise
 Reduce reuse recycle and remember,
 We are not angelic beings that descended here,
 We evolved here,
 That is the essence of environmentalism
 Remember Leviticus 25:23
 The land is Mine
 And you are My tenants.
 Reduce reuse recycle and remember
 The air,

Remember the water,
 Remember the earth
 Every time you take a breath
 You are saying God's name.
 Remember
 Every Rosh Hashana
 There is a new moon in the sky,
 Shema
 Listen to the world speak,
 The language of
 The stone that fits snugly in your hand.
 Read the pattern on a tortoise's shell.
 Remember the air,
 Remember the air and
 Remember your soul,
 The wind within you,
 The intensified sky,
 You are the shamans of the world,
 Plant yourself,
 Hear the music of the seasons,
 Wave your hand
 With a spear of lulav
 And golden etrog,
 The eyes of your eyes shall see,
 The ears of your ears shall know,
 Abara C'Dibra,
 Heal this place,
 And as God lives and breathes,
 you shall be healed.
 Abara C'dibra,
 I create as I speak,
 Abara C'dibra,
 Heal this place
 And as the Earth lives and breathes,
 We shall be healed.
 Abara C'dibra,
 Heal this world
 And as the Earth loves and breaths,
 We shall be healed.

[1] running from Feather River into a 700 mile maze of the rivulets and sloughs filtered of millions of fish pumped into a 400 mile concrete lined Aqueduct across the San Andreas Fault into Pyramid Lake sifting through treatment plant into a matrix of pipeline and copper tubing braiding up around sewage lines

[2] Once formed the naked duck is then painted in a factory in China by the steady hand of a sad underpaid woman (toxic paints of course hold their color the best, ask any artist if they would trade the unnatural tremble in their muscles for an impermanent imperfect shade of puce.)

[3] All life began in the sea, Torah begins, *Ruach Elohim merachefet al p'nai ha'mayim, A wind from God hovered over the waters*, There is no mention of God Creating the waters, They are just there, And so Judaism doesn't Believe in creation out of nothing, Rather creation out of wind and water. The eternal elements. It has been written: "If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in water, its substance reaches everywhere, it touches the past and prepares the future, it moves under the poles and wanders thinly in the heights of air, it can assume forms of exquisite perfection in a snowflake, or strip the living to a single shining bone cast upon the sea."

[4] Isn't that what magic is after all, a mastery of perception? there is an ecological dimension to the shaman's craft. we like to be awed by his rapport with supernatural entities, but that is only because we've convinced ourselves that nature is not mysterious, that it is somewhat predictable, mechanical. and so his powers must come from somewhere above and beyond. But nature is not predictable, mechanical. The patterns on the stream's surface as it ripples over the rocks, or the bark of an elm tree, or the cluster of weeds are all composed of repetitive figures that never exactly repeat themselves snowflakes, fingerprints. In contrast, the mass-produced artifacts of civilization from milk-cartons to washing machines to computers draw our senses into a dance that endlessly reiterates itself without variation without stimulation.

[5] Some written languages had 40,000 symbols and because it was so vast and complex, ancient writing was in the hands of a small elite. Until a small group called the Hebrews created a system based on sounds instead of pictures, reducing the alphabet to only 22, so that even a child could learn it. Giving rise directly or indirectly to virtually every alphabet known. It was such a remarkable innovation that some say the miracle of Moses coming down the mountain with the ten commandments was less about the commandments themselves and more about the fact that they were inscribed, this new alphabet, that anyone could learn.

[6] Plato said of the new alphabet, "If men learn this, it will implant forgetfulness in their souls, they will cease to exercise memory because they rely on that which is written, calling things to remembrance no longer from within themselves, but by means of external marks." Navajo leader said: "The white man writes everything down in a book so that it will not be forgotten; but our ancestors married animals, learned all their ways, and passed on this knowledge from one generation to another."

[7] The Spell of the Sensuous, David Abram, Vintage Books, New York

[8] In Judaism we have two entire Talmuds, the Bavli and the Yerushalmi. The Bavli was compiled in Babylonia and is non-agricultural, for a more urban setting, whereas the Yerushalmi is from the Land of Israel and has whole volumes on the land. Today, most people study primarily the Bavli, as example of how much we've forgotten our agricultural roots.

[9] We read blessings over Skin soft dogwood petals White cherry clusters Pink nectarine blossoms Magenta wygelia forsythia sprays Scrub oak birch woods Pitch pines sandy barrens Tang of juniper berries Heavy scented lilacs Summer marigolds Ginger tarragon cinnamon fennel Sweet basil marjoram cumin cloves Tulips Daffodils Violet vinca Amethyst hyacinth Maple bark Cedars of Lebanon in Tu B'Shevat Seder by Adam Fisher.

[10] Look at the ark in our Temple, and you'll see the seven species of Israel, olive, date, pomegranate, grape, wheat, barley and fig.

[11] In Ezekiel we read I will make the fruit of your trees and the crops of your fields abundant, and the people shall say that land once desolate has become like the garden of Eden, and cities once ruined desolate and ravaged are now populated and fortified, the trees of the field shall yield their fruit and the land shall yield its produce. My people shall continue secure on its own soil. They shall know that I am God when I break the bars of their yoke and rescue them from those who enslaved them.

And in our songs, Oh God, we pray that these things never end, the sand and the sea, the rush of the waters, the crash of the heavens the prayer of the heart

Jerusalem of gold, The olive trees that stand in silence upon the hills of time to hear the voices of the city as bells of evening chime, How many songs, how many stories the stony hills recall, around her heart my city carries a lonely ancient wall.

[12] And our stories:

The trees chose Israel...why do you want this small dry land? We have heard that your people the people of Israel will be given the land and it is our request that we may be permitted to help the people of Israel make the desert bloom.

Or Yesharim, An Israelite in her relationship to the synagogue may be likened to a branch growing on a tree. As long as the branch is still attached to the tree, there is hope it may renew its vigor no matter how withered it has become, but once the living branch falls away, all hope is lost.

Song of songs, "And the pomegranates were in flower..." these are the children who are busy learning the Torah they sit in rows like pomegranate seeds.

Once upon a time there was a date palm in Jericho which bore no fruit one day

a date grower passed by and said "this date palm longs for a certain date palm near Jericho. She longs with all her heart." The grower went to that tree and brought pollen

to pollinate the flower so that she might produce lovely clusters of dates. ~ Numbers Rabba
Rabbi Joshua ben levi said why is Israel likened to an olive tree? To tell you that just as the olive tree does not lose its leaves either in summer or in winter, so Israel shall never be lost either in this world or in the world to come. Even things you see as superfluous (*meyutarin*) in this world -- like flies, fleas, and mosquitos -- they are part of the greater scheme of the creation of the world, as it says (Genesis 1:31), "And God saw all that God has created, and behold it was very good." And Rabbi Acha bar Rabbi Chanina said, even things you see as superfluous in this world -- like snakes and scorpions -- they are part of the greater scheme of the creation of the world. (Midrash Exodus Rabbah 10:1)

The story is told of two men who once fought over the same piece of land. Though each claimed ownership, they agreed to put the matter before a judge. The wise man listened but could not render a decision. Finally he said, "Since I cannot decide to whom this land belongs, let us ask the land." The wise man put his ear to the ground, then he straightened up and revealed the decision of the earth. "Gentlemen," he stated, "the land says that it belongs to neither of you—but you belong to the land." (Rabbi Ezekiel Landau of Prague)

They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks nation shall not take up sword against nation, they shall study war no more. But all shall sit under their grapevine or fig tree with no one to disturb them. Micah

Torah is compared to a fig tree, since all the figs do not ripen at the same time, the more one searches the tree, the more figs one finds in it. So it is with words of torah, the more we study them, the more delight we take in them.

Avot de Rabbi Natan, if you are planting a tree and someone comes and says the messiah is coming, then continue to plant.

When a girl is born, plant a cypress tree, if a boy, a cedar, their chupah made from branches of both trees.

Ecclesiastes rabbah, I created all my beautiful and glorious works for your sake,

take heed not to corrupt and destroy my world. For if you corrupt it, there is no one to make it right after you.

[13] It was God's breath that brought Adam to life, Midrash says that by learning and practicing the secrets in the breath, Solomon could lift nature's physical veil from created things and see the spirit within.

[14] Ah, not to be cut off,

not through the slightest partition

shut out from the law of the stars.

The inner, what is it?

If not intensified sky

hurled through with birds

and deep with the winds of homecoming.

[15] The Spell of the Sensuous, David Abram, Vintage Books, New York

Abram also writes: "In the oral animistic world of pre-Christian and peasant Europe all things, animals, forests, rivers, and caves, had the power of expressive speech, and the primary medium of this collective discourse was the air. In the absence of writing, human utterance whether embodied in songs, stories, or spontaneous sounds was inseparable from the exhaled breath. The invisible atmosphere was thus the assumed intermediary in all communication, a zone of subtle influences crossing, mingling and metamorphosing. This invisible yet palpable realm of whiffs and scents of vegetative emanations and animal exhalations was also the unseen repository of ancestral voices, the home of stories yet to be spoken, of ghosts and spirited intelligences, a kind of collective field of meaning from whence individual awareness continually emerged and into which it continually receded, with every inbreath and outbreath. We might say that the air, as the invisible wellspring of the present, yielded as awareness of transformation and transcendence very different from the total transcendence expounded by the Church. The experiential interplay between the seen and the unseen, this duality entirely proper to the sensuous life-world, was far more real for oral peoples than an abstract dualism between sensuous reality as a whole and some other, utterly non-sensuous heaven. Now the air is an empty unnoticed phenomenon."