

# Blessing for the Matzah

*Anna Swanson*

[One speaker leads, all voices join in on the bold text]

We realize again in each generation  
that we did not truly understand what it meant,  
**the bread of affliction.**

From the long tables of borderless plenty,  
our beautiful futures look back in sorrow.

We must tell it as if we were there.  
**We were there.**

**We watched on our phones**  
as parents ground animal feed and baked it into hard loaves.  
**We saw** the blood-soaked sacks of flour  
in the streets.

**We hold this matzah up,**  
bread of affliction, bread of liberation,  
reaching back into story and then  
forward into prayer,

into the late-afternoon streets  
where a child runs with cousins  
through the market, past cardamom,  
cumin, turmeric, nutmeg, past strawberry stands  
and bakeries and boats bobbing  
in the open port, past birds and fruit trees  
**and doors built back around every key.**

Into a world where the dead rest easy,  
**their names busy among the living,**  
blossoming into schools, libraries,  
street signs, hospital wings  
**all across a free Palestine.**

May we be the ancestors  
of a better story.

**Amen.**