

Sunday August 15, 2021

Goose vs Bottle

The Koan:

A woman raised a goose in a bottle. When the goose had grown she wanted to get it out, without harming the goose or breaking the bottle. How do you get the goose out of the bottle?

Questions:

1. What or whom do you feel protective of right now? Is there a bottle out there to help with that?
2. What sort of protective shell do you have around yourself? Does it fit?
3. Is there anything you're doing right now that might end up having unintended consequences? Or are you really good at thinking ahead?

Poem

Untitled by Susan Rothbaum

We have all known times like this...in between times.
A time between a life that is familiar and a new life still unknown.
An unformed time.
Perhaps it was a time when we lost someone to circumstances beyond our control.
A wilderness time.
We have all known times like this.
Maybe it was a time when we saw something that changed everything, and we knew our life would never be the same.
Maybe a time when we left behind a life that had become too small for us.
We knew we had to leave so that something new would have room to grow.
A waiting time.
Maybe we have planted seeds. We water them. We weed them. But we can't make them grow.
A watching time.
Maybe we don't even know what seeds to plant.
We become impatient.
We try to return to the past, or rush to find something new.
We say, "I should be over this by now."
We say, "This isn't happening fast enough."
We say, "There's nothing to hold on to."
Sometimes it feels like we're alone in empty space.
We have all known times like this.
It's an unformed time...a wilderness time...a waiting time...a watching time.
A counting time.
Time is doing its invisible work.
Although we can't see it, something new is taking shape.
Days pass. Weeks and months.
We wait. We watch. We water. We weed. We count.
And one day we notice that our feet are planted in a new life.
This is the time of the omer*.

**The Omer ("sheaf") was a harvest offering brought to the Temple on the second day of Passover*