The Place

Rachel Barenblat

Wherever two gather to learn
is the gateway of heaven.
Have the courage of your convictions
but remember when Mashiach comes
our lenses might change.

When Mashiach comes
all of our old arguments
will become mulch
sustaining the Tree of Life
in the center of the *beit midrash.*

Every soul has a cubby there
to hold siddur, kippah clips, tefillin.
Supernal light always shines—
there's no need for sunrise, so
they rest in velvet sleeping bags.

We'll feel their imprint anyway—
like the wedding ring in a coffee cup
behind the sink for safekeeping
while we're doing dishes
for our beloved without being asked.

We'll always be holding hands
with the Holy Blessed One.
In '*olam haba* our debates
won't sharpen our wits like swords
but sweeten us like dates.

Eden will be everywhere.
Torah's beauty will twine
through our words
like the sapphire of the firmament,
like the heavens, like the sea.

Rabbi Rachel Barenblat, the Velveteen Rabbi, is author of several poetry collections including 70 Faces: Torah Poems (Phoenicia Publishing) and Texts to the Holy (Ben Yehuda Press). A co-founder of Bayit: Building Jewish, she serves Congregation Beth Israel of the Berkshires.