**(Visual Art)**

Today you are invited to view two paintings by Vilna-born, American Jewish artist, Samuel Bak, [“The Cup” and “Still Life 69”](https://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/bak/human-still-life.asp#:~:text=Bak%E2%80%99s%20still-lifes%20are%20none%20other%20than%20family%20portraits%2C,determination%20not%20to%20let%20the%20cracks%20shatter%20them.) from the Yad Vashem exhibitions website. For more information on Samuel Bak’s 2016 exhibition at the University of Vermont, see this [Seven Days 2016 art review](https://www.sevendaysvt.com/vermont/art-review-samuel-bak-fleming-museum-of-art/Content?oid=3249377)

**Questions to Ponder:** Bak’s still life paintings blur the distinction between the human and the inanimate, often depicting common objects, including fractured or altered pears, as human portraits. How do the fractures in these paintings relate to the vulnerabilities of humanity? What strength is honored in the depiction of these fractures? How does the process of becoming vulnerable enter into your experience of prayer during the holiday period?

**Deepen the Experience: For Singles or Families or Households of all Ages**

***Play with Ripped Paper:*** Do you have magazines, junk mail, advertisements or other things with photographs or illustrations in your house that are suitable for ripping up or cutting? If so, try randomly ripping or cutting up some images of ordinary objects. If you don’t have any in your house, you can make simple line drawings of ordinary things and rip or tear those. What do you discover as you piece them back together in different configurations, or draw around the pieces to make new images?

***Do you like to write?*** Talk or write about what you might be piecing together during the holiday period that has felt broken to you? Talk or write about the scars from earlier parts of your life that have made you stronger. Talk or write about what healing means to you during this holiday period.