

The first time I heard a trafficking survivor speak many years ago, she told the story of her parents trafficking her for sex from the time she was a young girl until she was an adult. I sat in horror, listening to her calm recollection of how both her mother and father trafficked her, sometimes leaving her for days at a time in a makeshift brothel when she was barely old enough to read and write.

Her story was my T'ruah – a decibel-defying call to action to open doors, pull back curtains, and shout from the rooftops the pain and suffering of trafficked individuals in our midst.

The call guides my work at the National Council of Jewish Women, alongside incredible and passionate advocates around the country, to raise awareness about trafficking in the United States, where children are bought and sold in every state, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. And the call informs my work to create lasting social change through legislative advocacy – working with lawmakers to address the systemic issues that allow trafficking to exist, including lack of education and opportunities, and passing legislation to reform the child welfare system, which effectively serves as a supply chain to traffickers.

The sound of the shofar, a sign of liberation, reminds me not only of one woman's unspeakable journey, but of my greater responsibility to ensure my call becomes a collective call to action for all of us in the Jewish community.

- Jody Rabhan,  
Director of Washington Operations,  
National Council of Jewish Women

וּרְחַץ  
Ur'chatz

“The beauty of Ur'chatz was revealed to me during a women's seder. Each participant washed the hands of another with care and kavanah (intentionality)—and without words. The sisterhood created in the sacred silence elevates communal consciousness. How will we utilize this state of purity? *V'ahavtah l're'echa kamochah* - to love the other as ourself.

How will this ancient wisdom propel us forward to empower the silent? How will we elevate the hands of all those still in Mitzrayim?”

- Jessica K. Shimberg, Spiritual Leader,  
The Little Minyan Kehilla, Columbus, OH;  
ALEPH Rabbinical Program Class of 2018

קִדְּשׁ  
Kadesh

We begin our seder with the Kiddush, the sanctification of this moment in time.

The text of the Kiddush reminds us that the choice to uphold the sacred is in our hands. We do not directly bless wine, or praise its sweetness. Rather, we thank God for the fruit of the vine. That fruit can also be used to make vinegar, which is sharp and bitter. Our actions determine whether this sacred moment in time inspires bitterness or sweetness, complacency or action.

**Bless and drink the first cup of wine/grape juice.**

*Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu*

*Melech haOlam boreh pri hagafen.*

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ

מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגָּפֶן.

**Blessed are You ETERNAL our God, Master of time and space,  
creator of the fruit of the vine.**