



When, one day, your daughters ask you, “What is all this?”

You shall tell them...

(Exodus 14:13, adapted)



The midwives [Shifrah and Puah], fearing God, did not do as the king of Egypt had spoken upon them; they let the boys live. (Exodus 1:17)

The Gemara comments:

“Spoken upon them”? [The Torah] should have said: “Spoken *to them*.” Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Hanina, says: This teaches that [Pharaoh] insisted they perform illicit acts [with him], and **they resisted.** (BT Sotah 11b) ¹

Our children will one day ask us: where were you when our country was thrust into a lion’s den of demagoguery and division? And we will say: I stood with love. I stood with hope. I stood with sisters and brothers of all religions and all races and all genders and sexualities to insist that we will emerge from the darkness and bask in the brilliance of an America that honors the infinite worth of all God’s children...Together, we become the **midwives** of a new America.

—Rabbi Sharon Brous, speaking at the Women’s March on the National Mall, January 21, 2017



¹The Torah here uses the word *aleihen*, which in other contexts has a sexual connotation (e.g., Gen. 29:23), instead of the more common *lahen*, giving rise to Rabbi Yosei’s midrash.