

Conspiracy of Women

D'var Torah: Jewish World Watch
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Lunch, Learn, & Lend a Hand to Help the Women of Darfur
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For the past 48 days, the entire Jewish community has been counting...counting the days between Passover and the holy day that begins tomorrow night, the anniversary of the day we received Torah. This linking of Passover and receiving Torah reminds us that our exodus from Egypt wasn't only about our own freedom, but rather about the freedom to work to create a world linked to the values of Torah, to the principle that every human being is created in the image of God.

On Passover we learn that we were redeemed from Egypt because of the righteousness of the women of that generation. And who were the women? Shifra and Puah...the midwives who defied Pharaoh's orders and let the infant boys live; Yocheved, and Miriam, the mother and brother of Moses who risked everything to save a child; the daughter of Pharaoh, a woman who reached across race, class and religious to rescue a human life. This was a conspiracy of women, women who understood that every human being is created in the image of God.

We want to be that conspiracy of women, working together to change the world, to make it a little safer for other women who are just like us, mothers, daughters, sisters, wives....other women in whose face we see the face of God and our own faces. We want to be the women who help redeem others from slavery.

We, this conspiracy of women, know what we should be counting: We should be counting the 400,000 people, human beings like us, killed in this genocide; we should be counting the over 2,000,000 people displaced; we should be counting the women and the girls, just like us, who are the victim of brutal rape as they leave the relative security of their temporary homes to gather firewood. These are women just like us... each one a human being created in God's image.

Our tradition makes it clear that each one counts. We are taught: "Do not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor." (Lev. 19: 16); We are taught: "If you save one life it is as though you have saved an entire world." There are 19,171 refugees, mostly women and children in the Iridimi Refugee Camp, each one a whole world. Each one counts. Each solar cooker we provide can save lives. That really counts. And along with providing two solar cookers for each family tent, we are also enabling some of these women to be trained to teach along with the relief workers in the refugee camp, reminding them that they are our partners in this conspiracy of women, that they are not forgotten and not alone.

We are part of a people who understands genocide, who remember what it was like to be forgotten and alone. When we say “Never Again,” we mean “never again”, not for us and not for anyone... because every human being is created in the image of God and everyone counts.