



## Never Again? This Passover Share Thoughts on the War in Ukraine

The Mishnah tells us that in every generation a person must view themselves as though they personally left Egypt. This directive is especially important this year – when we’re seeing the largest number of refugees in Europe since World War II – refugees whose travels are narrated in such detail on social media and by journalists.

Moving Traditions invites you to explore the power of narratives this year by asking the following questions at your Seder, making sure that young people are part of the conversation:

- The phrase “never again” has recently appeared again and again across the internet, in connection with the war in Ukraine. What is happening in Ukraine is not the Holocaust as nothing can compare. But at a time when there will soon be no more Holocaust survivors and it will become the next generation’s responsibility to carry the narratives forward, what do you think *never again* means in practice?
- What stories about survival, escape, discrimination, or oppression do you feel it is your responsibility to tell? What stories do you see as your responsibility to pass down to the next generation? Why are these stories important?
- How, if at all, might social media affect the way we tell these stories? What stories, and also whose stories, do you choose to share (or reshare) on social media? How do you make these choices?



## Exodus 2022/5782: A Reading for the Seder

### By Rabbi Tamara Cohen

Why is this Passover different from all other Passovers?

Because this Passover, Shifra and Puah, the midwives who defied Pharaoh and saved the Israelite baby boys, are mothers and grandmothers, aunts and neighbors, saving children all over Ukraine; because this year everyone who gives a home to a refugee escaping war or totalitarianism is expanding our understanding of the way liberation happens.

Behold in all my years of studying the Exodus I have never understood why God rewarded Shifra and Puah's acts of bravery with houses, as it says, "and God established for them *batim*, houses" (Exodus 1:21).

Why is a house the reward for this resistance that began the Exodus from Egypt? This Passover, I understand.

What else could a brave woman working to save her children and the children of others — so many others whose names she doesn't yet know, and babies who don't even have names, want?

Not the temporary haven of an overcrowded underground subway.

Not the cold and soon to be destroyed theatre devoid of actors but not of tragedy or everyday heroes.

What else could Shifra and Puah, or a thousand Nadyas and Iryanas huddled in Polish and Ukrainian shelters distributing food and blankets want?

Just this — for God, and for each of us — to see the work of their hands and hearts, and to establish, re-establish — for them, with them, safety, security, peace.

And houses for them and their families. Homes

*After this reading, invite seder participants to pledge to give tzedakah or otherwise engage in supporting refugees fleeing from Ukraine or those on the ground in Ukraine.*