

Avinu Malkeinu, hear our voice.

Our Father, our King, hear us out. It's 2018, and it's time.

Hear the voice of Rabbi Adina Allen: Things are breaking all around us in our world right now. And there is so much that we are being called upon to break. The ways in which we've conceived of wealth and race and borders and citizenship and family structure and gender and power and governance and commerce and care; of responsibility to one another and responsibility for ourselves. This year has been a year in which the fault lines have been revealed in broad daylight. We can feel in our body the weight of these ruptures. The center no longer holds. Some things are breaking under their own weight, others require active smashing...

May we have the courage and fortitude to smash all the systems of oppression that diminish us and keep us apart from one another, and the curiosity and intrepidity to seek out the ones that may make us whole. May we hold the remains of what's been broken together with that which is intact to remind us that the work of growth and healing is cyclical: breaking things apart can lead to greater wholeness, and what feels whole today may need to be broken apart tomorrow.ⁱ

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Our Parent, Our Sovereign, let's smash what needs rebuilding.

Hear the voice of Ambassador Wendy Sherman: More than anything, women have to become more accustomed to getting power. And we need to recognize the power we already possess.

Women need to stop thinking that "power" is a dirty word, or that the trappings of power matter less than the work. When President Clinton and Secretary Albright asked me to come back to government as Madeleine's counselor, I asked to be confirmed with the rank of ambassador. It was one of the smartest things I ever asked for. I knew that as a woman and without line authority, I needed some heft beyond the position, and so the Senate confirmed

me as an ambassador. It has been immensely helpful. When, in that position, I led American delegations to, for instance, trilateral talks with Japan and South Korea on North Korea and all the delegations were men, being “Ambassador Sherman” undoubtedly helped when I dealt with North Korea. The title has been helpful ever since.

Women have a tremendous amount of power that comes with the roles we play in society, far more power than we ever had before. We cannot wield this power positively without understanding our strengths and owning them. At the same time, we have to appreciate that so many of the remaining obstacles to women’s advancement— most blatantly, perhaps, the sexual harassment in the workplace that has become an important topic of conversation—are all about power. We must each have the courage to stand up for what is right. We also need to rediscover the power of working collectively and become adept at using social media to speak with one voice. The challenge for many of us remains the interpersonal moments, when we have to risk being called tough, aggressive, even difficult. Our only response must be to continue to view—and use—power positively.ⁱⁱ

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Source of our Power and Strength, now is the time to be bold.

Hear the voice of the Senior Director, Strategic Planning at UJA Federation of New York Clare

Hedwat: I’ve worked in Jewish organizations, worldwide. I’d love to write that being passed over for promotion on the bogus pretext that a man was “more political” was a defining moment. It wasn’t. I internalized a hierarchy that took years for me to disassemble.

The Jewish woman is vulnerable because she is invisible in a way the Jewish man is not. The Jewish woman is unequal in a way the Jewish man is not...

#MeToo offers Israel and the Jewish community in America and elsewhere a precious opportunity to push back against how normalized defective gender relations have become. Undoing this is not just women’s work.

The issue isn’t whether we should pardon the men we hallowed, too readily. Rather than pining for their mythic return, we must find and celebrate women and men, with the inclusive and innovative thinking we so desperately need, to inspire us. We must examine the entrenched gender assumptions on which our Jewish lives are built.ⁱⁱⁱ

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One who Inspires and Embraces All, help us change.

Hear the voice of writer Rebecca Traister: So during a naturally supercharged Grand Slam final between veteran superstar and the young woman trying to unseat her, a male umpire prodded Serena Williams to anger and then punished her for expressing it. In doing so, he took from her not just the point, not just the game, but ultimately the tournament, even if — and this seems likely — she would have lost it anyway. She was punished for showing emotion, for defiance, for being the player she has always been — driven, passionate, proud, and fully human...

Serena's rage is also an expression of displeasure at the bad things in the world, her wrath channeling far broader impulses to defy those rules designed and enforced by, yet so rarely forcefully applied to, white men. As she said at the press conference after the game, "I've seen other men call other umpires several things, and I'm here fighting for women's rights and for women's equality...I'm going to continue to fight for women."^{iv}

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Wellspring of Passion and Compassion, please fight with us.

Hear the voice of the Executive Director of GatherDC Rachel Gildiner: As much as I've felt moved, lifted, and driven during the secular Year of the Woman, I've noticed a very different experience in the Jewish professional world. In fact, I have only slowly and incrementally, if at all, felt this movement substantively have an impact on the Jewish nonprofit sphere.

Here's what I've noticed still to be true about the reality on the ground as a Jewish professional woman:

- Women's work and contributions are consistently undervalued, underestimated and often rendered invisible.
- Men are too often the public faces of work that a majority of women are implementing on the ground. Or as bell hooks, the renowned feminist writer, agitator and thinker, describes, men are often the respected theorists and women the less-respected practitioners.
- Women's voices are less likely to be invited, championed, supported or invested in in Jewish professional settings than those of men: The majority of articles and books hailed in the Jewish community are authored by men. Jewish panels are consistently majority if not exclusively male.

- There is a dearth of female thought leadership and visibility that leaves other women seeking the inspiration and role models they need to imagine themselves as a voice of the Jewish community.
- Women continue to be underrepresented at the very top of professional leadership in the majority of Jewish organizations. There is still immense social capital and currency in a traditionally male ways of interacting and doing business in the Jewish communal workplace. The Jewish boys club is real.^v

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Our Mother, Our Queen, let's imagine a new reality.

Hear the voice of writer Sarah Rich: As much as feminism has worked to rebalance the power and privilege between the sexes, the dominant approach to launching young women into positions that garner greater respect, higher status, and better pay still mostly maintains the association between those gains and masculine qualities. Girls' empowerment programs teach assertiveness, strength, and courage—and they must to equip young women for a world that still overwhelmingly favors men...

It is lopsided to approach gender equality by focusing only on girls' empowerment. If society is to find its way to a post-#MeToo future, parents, teachers, and community members need to build a culture of boyhood that fosters empathy, communication, caretaking, and cooperation. But how? Could there be a space or an organization for boys where they're encouraged to challenge what's expected of them socially, emotionally, and physically? What would the activities be? What would the corresponding catchwords be to the girls' "brave" and "strong" other than "cowardly" and "weak"?^{vi}

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Womb of Empathy and Cooperation, this is about everyone.

Hear the voice of feminist theologian Rabbi Rachel Adler: God's Otherness, God's difference from us, is what makes possible relationship and exchange. God's is the primary Otherness in a world where, as Emmanuel Levinas teaches, self constantly raises its face to the other. An other carried us in her belly, cut the cord that made us one, and embraced us as her other. An other fed us from her own body. Otherness is the mother of human language: because of the

other, we are moved to speak. Others teach us and are taught by us. Others work and build the world with us. Others heal our loneliness. Others befriend us...Because God is Other, God creates a world filled with difference. Because God is Partner, all difference is filled with holy possibility.^{vii}

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Our Friend and Partner, we are no one without an Other.

Hear the voice of the Executive Director of the Jewish Women’s Archive Judith Rosenbaum: “From the depths I called to you,” says Psalm 130. These words have echoed in my mind so often over recent months. Calling out is not the problem, it is a symptom of the problem. We are in the depths, and we call from a place of desperation, from a deep need to be heard.^{viii}

Avinu Malkeinu, hear our voice...Hear the call and cry of Psalm 130

<p>A song of ascents [a liberating translation]</p> <p>Out of the depths I call You, O Holy One. Holy Other, listen to my cry; May Your ears listen close to the voice of my plea. If You watch for wrongs, O God, My Partner, who could endure? Yours is the power to forgive so that You may be held in awe. I look to You as a friend; a beloved teacher; I look to You; I await Your word. I am more eager for You than a baby for his mother in the morning, than a baby for her mother in the morning. Israel, wait for our fearless, compassionate One; for with Her is steadfast love and great power to liberate. It is She who will rebuild with Israel with all our imperfections and truths.</p>	<p>Psalm 130:1 מִמַּעַמְקִים קְרָאתִיךָ יְהוָה: 2 אֲדַנִּי שְׁמָעָה בְּקוֹלִי תַהֲיִינָה אַזְנוֹתֶיךָ קְשׁוּבוֹת לְקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי: 3 אִם-עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמַר-יְהוָה אֲדַנִּי מִי יַעֲמֹד: 4 כִּי-עֲמַךְ הַסְּלִיחָה לְמַעַן תִּגְרָא: 5 קִנִּיתִי יְהוָה קִוְיָתָה נַפְשִׁי וּלְדַבְּרוֹ הוֹחֵלְתִי: 6 נַפְשִׁי לְאֲדֹנָי מִשְׁמָרִים לְבָקָר שְׁמָרִים לְבָקָר: 7 יַחַל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-יְהוָה כִּי-עַם- יְהוָה הַתְּסֹד וְהַרְבֵּה עַמּוֹ פְּדוּת: 8 וְהוּא יַפְדֶּה אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל עֲוֹנוֹתָיו:</p>
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Avinu Malkeinu, hear the voices crying out to you.

ⁱ Allen, Adina, *Smash the Patriarchy: Rabbi Adina Allen's Rosh Hashanah Day Drash*, <https://www.jewishstudioproject.org/writings/roshhashanahday5779>

ⁱⁱ Sherman, Wendy R., "How I Learned to Embrace Power as a Woman in Washington," *Politico Magazine*, September 6, 2018, <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/09/06/wendy-sherman-power-woman-in-washington-219631>

ⁱⁱⁱ Hedwat, Clare, "The Jewish World's #MeToo Crisis Is Much Deeper Than Ari Shavit and Steven Cohen," *Haaretz*, July 26, 2018, <https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-the-jewish-world-s-metoo-crisis-is-much-deeper-than-shavit-and-cohen-1.6316456>

^{iv} Traister, Rebecca, "Serena Williams and the Game That Can't Be Won (Yet): What rages costs a woman." *The Cut*, September 9, 2018, https://www.thecut.com/2018/09/serena-williams-us-open-referee-sexism.html?utm_source=fb&utm_campaign=thecut&utm_medium=s1

^v Gildiner, Rachel, "Let's Make 5779 The Year of the Jewish Woman #5779 #YOTJW," September 6, 2018, https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/lets-make-5779-the-year-of-the-jewish-woman-5779-yotjw/?utm_source=Sept+6%2C+2018&utm_campaign=Thurs+Sept+6&utm_medium=email

^{vi} Rich, Sarah, "Today's Masculinity Is Stifling," *The Atlantic*, June 11, 2018, <https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2018/06/imagining-a-better-boyhood/562232/>

^{vii} Adler, Rachel, *Engendering Judaism: An Inclusive Theology and Ethics*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1999, 92, citing Emanuel Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity: Conversations with Phillippe Nemo*.

^{viii} Rosenbaum, Judith, "Contending With 'Call-Out Culture'" *Shma Now*, August 27, 2018, <https://forward.com/shma-now/din/408978/contending-with-39-call-out-culture39/>