

The First Cup of Wine: Hope, and Striving for Equity

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Reproductive Justice Seder Insert

The four cups of wine recall God's four promises: "I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians and deliver you from their bondage. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and great miracles. And I will take you to be my people." (Exodus 6.6-7) Just as the four promises and four cups speak to our redemption from Egypt, they symbolize the hope that, one day, all will be free – free from illness and worry, hunger and poverty, and free to determine the course of their lives.

Our land is blessed with material abundance, as well as the liberty to speak, gather, pray and so much more. Meanwhile, access to fundamentals, especially medical attention that includes reproductive care, is at great reach or beyond for many women and families still enslaved by the vicious cycle of poverty – even as some politicians labor to enshrine their personal faith restrictions, further denying the religious freedom of others by upending a woman's private pregnancy decision as she seeks out the legal and safe medical attention she believes she needs. As we celebrate Passover, we renew a commitment to safeguard the deliberations and wellbeing of each woman and her family, that her goodness and conscience is honored as she determines the course and destiny of her life.

So we raise the cup and recall: Our heartaches, the four promises, their fulfillment and our commitment to establish fairness and freedom for all. And we recommit ourselves to strengthen and extend the promise of reproductive justice, thereby honoring the integrity and sanctity of each woman's conscience and protecting her safe access to the legal medical attention that she and her doctor believes is right for her.

-Rabbi Dennis S. Ross is the director of Concerned Clergy for Choice in New York and author of All Politics Is Religious.

For more information on reproductive justice, please visit rac.org/reproductive-rights-and-womens-health.

For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit rac.org/Passover.