

LOSS & MOURNING

The First Hand Washing

Contributed by [Kalsman Institute](#)

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The first hand-washing of the seder is unusual. The rabbis point out that even a child would wonder at least two things: why do we wash without a blessing and why do we bother to wash when we will not be eating our meal for some time. They suggest that we wash our hands here in order to raise questions. Questions, both of wonder and of despair, are crucial to our growth as human beings. As Jews we have permission to ask questions, even of God, when we see and experience suffering.