

# Women Who Spark Change: Then And Now Facilitator Guide

In anticipation of International Women's Day and the fast of Esther, how might we draw inspiration from Queen Esther and Henrietta Szold's actions to spark change in our communities today and do our part to bring the hostages home?

## FRAMING THE ISSUE

March is the month when we celebrate women as change-makers, both on International Women's Day and on Ta'anit Esther and Purim. Esther and Henrietta Szold are two examples of female figures in our communal history who sparked important change for the Jewish people. How might we draw inspiration from Esther and Henrietta Szold's actions to spark change in our communities today and do our part to bring the hostages home?

## LET'S EXPLORE

Facilitator opens with the framing above and divides participants into two groups: Group Queen Esther and Group Henrietta Szold.

- Each group has half an hour to take turns reading the sources aloud and discuss the questions on the source sheet.
- After half an hour, the groups switch characters and learn about the other woman's activism.
- Facilitator brings both groups together to engage participants in a larger discussion of what they learned and what inspiration they got from the two women.
- As a full group, the facilitator leads them in taking on their own action on behalf of the hostages, from the options listed below.

Scroll of Esther, Italy, 1617  
The National Library of Israel

## Info For Facilitator



**Target Audience:**

Middle School, Teens



**Length Of Program:**

75-90 minutes



**Materials & Prep:**

- Printed copies of the source sheet
- Art supplies or devices for poster making
- Facilitator should watch [this film](#) about Henrietta Szold and decide whether it would be useful and appropriate for their learners.



# TAKE ACTION!

Inspired by the activism of women like biblical Esther and more recently, Henrietta Szold, invite participants to do their own advocacy. Depending on the setting, choose any or all of the options below to engage in activism with your learners:

- **Political Advocacy:** Call or email your local politicians demanding they do everything in their power to bring the hostages home.
- **Communal Fast or Prayer:** What could our community of learners do in anticipation of the Fast of Esther (this year on 11 Adar Bet, March 21, 2024) to add an element of awareness for the plight of the hostages?
- **Education and Awareness:** Create a handmade or digital poster that can be used to create awareness of the hostage crisis. You could incorporate this quote by Henrietta Szold as part of your poster:  

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we have been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.” - Henrietta Szold
- Don't stop at your own advocacy. **Encourage others to take action as well!** Craft an email, text, or social media post to encourage others to contact their elected officials and take action.

## CLOSING INTENTION

Read the following quote:

- Henrietta Szold once said, “Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we have been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.”
- Share the sentiment that just as Esther and Henrietta Szold worked with their communities to spark change, you too can spark change and help bring the hostages home.
- Ask participants to take turns filling in the blank:  

“I am going to spark change by .....

▶  
 Call for a Fast Day  
 The National Library of Israel

