



Kingston Liberal Synagogue



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How is this Pesach different from other Pesachim?

How is this night different from the other nights?

In “normal” times, there are already a wealth of comments to make about the first question of the *Mah Nishtana*. This year, it could be rephrased as, “how is this Pesach different from other Pesachim? We are privileged to have the technology that allows us to stay in contact in a time of physical distance. It will certainly be a strange experience, but we will still have a feel of family and community despite remoteness. Isn’t it fascinating to discover new ways of bonding, to explore other aspects of keeping up relationships, and also to reevaluate the distance between public and private space when we invite people in our homes via technology all the time? There is a megillah to be written, a narrative of these challenging times, and I urge those of you who have written skills to take your pens and to start writing it.



KINGSTON LIBERAL SYNAGOGUE

CHAG PESACH SEMEACH!

We wish you all a safe and happy
Passover

“When one gets older, one’s prayers get shorter”

A pandemic is a trying time for people of faith. Can we ask God to cure someone and to heal a sick person? What if a person doesn’t get better? And what about praying for someone who is dying, and eventually dies? Is it because God is cruel and not interested? I heard somewhere the story of a Rabbi who was asked, why has God sent us this plague? Has God abandoned us? He replied, I don’t know, but I am sure that God is there when you care for each other. A disease, the cycle of life and death are natural phenomenon that are absolutely out of our control. However, we can draw strength from prayer. The late Rabbi Lionel Blue z”l said in one of his last books, when one gets older, one’s prayers get shorter. Mine are now, stick around, I need you. You cannot ask God to alter the course of nature, but you can ask God to give you strength and courage to face it, to give strength and courage to those who are working in hospitals and care homes. Prayer is a pause, a moment when one realizes what really matters in our life, what makes our lives meaningful.

Are we making the right choices?

As I write this message, our Prime Minister is struggling for his life in ICU. Whilst the vast majority of people clearly wish him well, there is a small minority on social media making negative comments. Whatever one’s views politically, he is a scared human being fighting for his life, as thousands are at the same time, and he must be terrified on his hospital bed, contemplating his own mortality. I wish him, and all the people currently fighting the coronavirus, strength and a speedy recovery. Illnesses, death do not discriminate. This is a lesson for all of us, and begs the question, what are we doing with our life? Are we making the right choices?

How this Pesach is different from all other Pesachim? On this Pesach, we will talk about real freedom, the one that originates from inside us.

Chag Pesasch Sameach

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