



MACHSHAVOT

SHABBAT HAGADOL 5780

UK COMMUNITY SHABBATON @ HOME

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THE FOUR QUESTIONS ON SHABBAT HAGADOL

Rabbi Andrew Shaw
Chief Executive, Mizrachi UK

The youngest child now asks

Why is this year different from all other years?

In all other years' people go away for Pesach or stay at home – this year we are all at home.

In all other years' people have loads of guests to their seder table— this year we have none.

In all other years' we either go to shul to sing Hallel or we pray at home – this year we will all pray at home.

In all other years' we look forward to Chol Hamoed outings with family and friends – this year we will stay at home.

The parents answer them

We were slaves to our crazy 24/7 lifestyle but then came the Coronavirus which crippled our economy and put brave Doctors and Nurses on the front line to save lives. We prayed for the country and the world to get better while we remained locked in our homes, as together we tried to bring the outbreak under control.

However, we have also realised that we should be more grateful for what we have, that the earth is breathing better, that we are looking at our neighbours and friends with new found appreciation, that our prayers are less rushed and more meaningful, that we are spending more quality time at home with our loved ones and that we dare not come out of this crisis without making a change in the way we live our lives.

We are instructed in the Hagaddah to imagine 'as if we were slaves in Egypt'. You may say that this year it will be a little easier, we have not really left the home for weeks, your friends appear on screens and not in person, your daily schedule is to move between various rooms in the house – but no my child, you are not a slave, you are free. Free to think, free to laugh, free to cry and free to

appreciate all that you have. We cheer the entry into our house of fresh fruit and veg, juice and cereals – things we have always taken for granted. We realise the strength of community, to go shopping for those in isolation, to pray for others, to be positive and to always be there for us.

So yes my child, Pesach will be different this year but it still is *Zman Cherutenu* – the time of our freedom, because freedom is not just physical, it is also spiritual. Hashem redeemed us 3500 years ago in order to take us to Har Sinai and give us the Torah to transform us into a *Mamlechet Kohanim v Goi Kadosh* – a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. That mission does not change whether we are travelling around the world or whether we are isolated at home.

So Shabbat Shalom and Chag Sameach my child – it is still a beautiful world, just a confused and scared one at the moment – but hopefully it will realise that we are all Hashem's children and that all He has ever wanted us to do is for all of us to stop worshipping the temporal and focus on the eternal. Which all began when we were redeemed from *Mitzrayim* and became the Jewish Nation.

So actually, this Pesach is not so different after all.

Shabbat Shalom

UK COMMUNITY SHABBATON @ HOME

What happens when an idea grows?

When trying to make Shabbat engaging for one family turns into making Shabbat engaging for a whole nation?

A small group had the audacity to dream big and Mizrachi UK's Shabbaton UK at Home, in partnership with the United Synagogue UK, came together in less than 15 days!

This Shabbat Hagadol - the "Great Shabbat" before Seder Night - will be the greatest online journey that Anglo Jewry has ever experienced.

Starting at 17:30 BST with a concert by world famous musician Shwekey, live greetings from British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, inspirational words from Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, followed by an intimate Kabbalat Shabbat service for each community, we will switch off our devices at the onset of Shabbat and switch on to the magic of a technology-unencumbered, serene Shabbat.

Make Kiddush, eat, read, play games, engage with your family or even on your own with new ideas. Read inspiring thoughts from Emeritus Chief Rabbis Yisrael Meir Lau of Israel and Lord Jonathan Sacks of the UK and enjoy the ultimate Friday Night Dinner with those you love; either with you or in your thoughts!

Join your very own intimate, home-based Shabbat Morning Service with a sermon from your Rabbi, after service announcements from guest warden Ashley Blaker, and play board games that have taken on a new lustre!

As twilight beckons, enjoy a quick bite at Seudah Shlishit before rejoining your community online after Shabbat for Maariv - followed by an uplifting and reviving Havdallah with Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks and Chazan Jonny Turgel.

With the Seder less than 100 hours later, we have never been more prepared for Pesach!

Shabbat Shalom, get inspired, switch off the outside world and switch on to the power of your "Shabbaton UK at Home" with Mizrachi UK and the United Synagogue!

~Rabbi Daniel Epstein

#shabbatonathome
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[CLICK HERE FOR THE FULL SCHEDULE](#)



MIZRACHI
UNITED KINGDOM



In partnership with

THE UK COMMUNITY SHABBATON @ HOME

3rd & 4th APRIL 2020 | 10th NISSAN 5780

So you want more details? Well here are some more...

17:30

Pre Shabbat Concert with **Yaakov Shwekey**

18:00

Pre Shabbat Message from **The Right Honourable Boris Johnson MP**

18:05

Pre Shabbat Message and Prayers for the sick – psalm 121 – **Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis**

ALL LIVE ON FACEBOOK & YOUTUBE

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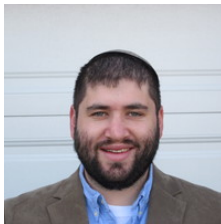


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Creation, Chaos and Korbanot During Corona

Rav Ari Silberman
Mizrachi UK Shaliach in Manchester

"Crazy" seems to be the word on everyone's lips these days. Crazy that the world has come to a standstill. Crazy that visiting the supermarket means putting on half a hazmat suit. Crazy that there is almost no air travel. However, it is precisely this sense of crazy which has helped me to understand something about *Sefer Vayikra* as a whole.

In our *Parasha*, as in much of *Vayikra*, we encounter a myriad of rules. When to offer, how to offer, who offers, parts of offerings to be placed here and burned there. So many nitty-gritty items that take away from the sublime experience of offering up our possessions to the Master of the Universe. Surely, the act itself is enough and not the process, not the minutiae? *Halacha* is also structured in this way. Why does G-d give us a system of myriad details that may take away from the spiritual goals?

Many great Jewish thinkers have answered this question. The *Halacha* represents G-d's will; without the detailed external actions, the spiritual dimension would also drop away. Perhaps, as Rav Soloveitchik claimed, the true halachic man brings down spiritual goals through scientific formulae.

However, I realized something else this week, amongst the angst surrounding the chaos of Corona. We are all so worried and engulfed by a feeling of craziness because we are not in control. After all, the world we thought we knew has been upended. The structures of society have slackened, and we don't know what will be. This feeling comes from the chaos and the anarchy of our surroundings. It is precisely this that the *korbanot* and the *Halacha* try to pacify. They wish to ground us amongst the chaos of an unredeemed world.

In this we imitate G-d. His creation of the world is essentially the turning of chaos into ordered reality. Nechama Leibowitz argues that chapters describing the building of the *Mishkan* and the creation of the world use similar words. This highlights, she claims, our role in completing creation. The *Mishkan* and the act of building it are full of details, as is the creation of the world. They both create structure.

The sacrifices are the pinnacle of this process. We also see this elsewhere. For instance, the first Mishna of Shas explains that we determine the time of *kriyat shema* dependent on when the Kohanim enter to eat their *terumah*. The *Kohanim* of the Temple serve as a reliable source for timing one of our most cherished *mitzvot*, because, amongst other things, they are at the peak of the ordered world. The stars and the sun – elements of G-d's ordered creation – are used by us as the other reliable sources for timing our *mitzvot*. They represent the structure which grounds us.

The *korbanot* and the *Halacha* represent for us order in an unordered world. They represent structure amidst a sea of anarchy. They ground us to G-d and to ourselves. May we all be *zocheh* to good health and a return to regular *minyanim* and *shabbatot* with family and friends soon.

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