

Dear Friends,

Wednesday evening, Jews will be gathering at tables all around the world, on almost every continent (in 2022 Alysa Hulbert an Information Officer at British Antarctic Survey celebrated the Seder at Rothera Research Station). The children will lead us in singing *Mah Nishtanah*, “Why is this night different from other nights?” It will indeed be a very different for many this year. Seder night is called **ליאל שימורים** “night of vigilance.” In Iran 10,000 Jews (there are almost 350,000 Persian Jews worldwide) will remain vigilant along with 7.5 million Jews in Israel during this time of war.

There’s a passage we recite from the Haggadah: “**והיא שעמדה**” And it is this that has supported our ancestors and ourselves, for it has not only been this one that has stood against us to destroy us. In fact, in every generation there have been those who have stood against us to destroy us. And The Holy Blessed One has delivered us from their hands.” These words are especially significant this year.

In the past six months alone, there have been a dozen attacks on Jews, synagogues and other Jewish institutions around the world. At Bondi Beach in Australia, on Erev Hanukkah, fifteen Jews were massacred. Jews in Israel will most likely be holding their Seders in bomb shelters and safe rooms, where they will intone **והיא שעמדה** with great faith and strength, “This has supported our ancestors and ourselves.” What is this? Is it the power of our traditions? Is it the promise that HaShem made to Abraham and Sarah? Maybe it is the Seder itself. For the past 3300 years we have been sitting with family and friends telling this ancient story and internalizing it with the foods we eat. The story of liberation. The story of wonders and miracles. The story of renewal and redemption. It is this story that has kept us together through difficult times such as this.

Passover offers us the opportunity to be released from old patterns of thought and behavior, and from distorted views we have of ourselves and the world. We remember the covenantal promise that we will one day fully re-emerge from the narrow confines of Mitzrayim into the broad expanse of the Promised Land. This prophecy is not just for our people, however, it is for all people, everywhere. “In each and every generation each person is required to see himself as if he had come out Mitzrayim. As it says, ‘And on that day, you will retell to your children...’ the Holy One, not only redeemed our ancestors, but also redeemed us with them.”

Next year in the rebuilt Jerusalem **לשנה הבאה בירושלים הבנויה**

Wishing you and your family) **אזיessen Pesach** (אזיessen Pesach) a sweet Passover!

— Reb Lev