



04 Jun
2020

A REVELATORY LETTER FROM RABBI TANYA

Dear friends, I don't know about you but for me this lockdown feels like a much longer experience than it has actually been. These 6 weeks feel like an eternity now and a whole universe away from where we were 6 or 7 weeks ago. I wonder whether that is how our ancestors felt when they were wandering weeks later in the desert looking back at their Exodus from Egypt.

While on the one hand the world around us looks the same, on the other hand it feels very different. On sunny days, life still seems good. On rainy days it's not so easy. I have to remind myself why I should be grateful for not having to wander around the wilderness right now as the Israelites did, eating manna three times a day and wondering why ever they needed this kind of "wandering" freedom, when they could have had some certainty back in slavery. No wonder the Israelites rebelled quite regularly during their journey.

I used to be very judgmental about them, thinking that our ancestors got what they deserved. I saw them as weak spirited (what else would you expect from former slaves?) and blamed them for not seeing the truly historic magnitude of this upcoming change at Mount Sinai, where they had both gained their freedom and responsibility for their own lives.

The freedom to make choices and then taking responsibility for the consequences of these choices was something slaves were not able to do. However, God made the Israelites wander for 49 days in the desert in order to enable them to go through some changes in their minds. As we all know becoming free (physically, emotionally or mentally) requires a new way of thinking as a free person. To be free and to feel free are two different things and they don't always coincide.

So just like us with the Covid Plague and the lockdown, our ancestors were going somewhere but they didn't know where. They had no way of knowing that in a few short weeks they would find themselves in the midst of something momentous ...in their case, Revelation. How many of them, just like us, even had time to recognise that history was being made and they were living through events which would change the world? Seeing a bigger picture in the midst of a daily routine is a skill which needs to be nurtured and given time.

One of the most challenging parts of our 7 week lockdown journey is that no one really knows when it will be over, so the feeling of uncertainty about our future stops us sometimes from keeping our focus on things which matter and seeing a bigger picture.

As Catherine O'Meara expressed it in her poem "And the people stayed home", the people "learned new ways of being and listened more deeply and the people began to think differently and healed." This is almost the model of the Revelation we are all about to experience on Shavuot, when we will realise yet again that it will be up to us to nurture the light within ourselves, to share that light with others, to share kindnesses with others and to nurture the joy within our hearts so we can make this world a happier place.

As Rabbi Tarfon said, our work is never done but that is why it is so important to prepare ourselves for that moment of the Revelation and the joy of receiving the solid foundation of our tradition in an ever-changing world – the Torah.

I can only compare that joy to eating a piece of delicious cheesecake. That sweetness reminds us of the words of the Torah, and of doing the right thing when you are no longer a slave to your work, to your circumstances, to your own demands on yourself and the world around you. In that awoken and free state of mind, being in tune with the world around you, you will truly enjoy the moment of being part of a much greater mystery in the history of our People.

In order to make this time special for each of us, Angela Donen and Norman Randall are stepping in to share their knowledge and passion about food and the Revelation. You will enjoy the unique conversation on what our ancestors' cuisine was like and will have a chance to cook an ancient Israeli meal a day before Shavuot as well! And Norman will lead a conversation about the Revelation and what it means to you. We are also preparing a video surprise for you all – it will be a Shavuot to remember and to enjoy!

Enjoy your personal journey and remember to see the bigger picture!

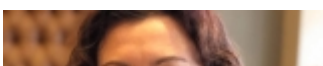
Rabbi Tanya

LATEST NEWS



Speaking Out Against Racism: A Statement from Rabbi Tanya (</nls-news/words-from-rabbi-tanya/291-speaking-out-against-racism-a-statement-from-rabbi-tanya.html>)

Words from Rabbi Tanya





[A revelatory letter from Rabbi Tanya \(/nls-news/words-from-rabbi-tanya/289-a-revelatory-letter-from-rabbi-tanya.html\)](/nls-news/words-from-rabbi-tanya/289-a-revelatory-letter-from-rabbi-tanya.html)



[Chag Pesach Sameach from Rabbi Tanya \(/nls-news/words-from-rabbi-tanya/290-chag-pesach-sameach-from-rabbi-tanya.html\)](/nls-news/words-from-rabbi-tanya/290-chag-pesach-sameach-from-rabbi-tanya.html)



[Leah Barker Batmitzvah via Zoom \(/nls-news/general-news/288-leah-barker-batmitzvah-via-zoom.html\)](/nls-news/general-news/288-leah-barker-batmitzvah-via-zoom.html)

General News

MEMBERS AREA LOGIN

Username

Password

Remember Me

Log in

[Forgot your password? \(/component/users/?view=reset&Itemid=101\)](/component/users/?view=reset&Itemid=101)

[Forgot your username? \(/component/users/?view=remind&Itemid=101\)](/component/users/?view=remind&Itemid=101)



(<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Nottingham-Liberal-Synagogue/1533502210252026?fref=ts>)

JOIN THE COMMUNITY



(</about-us/joining-nls.html>)


liberal judaism

([https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?](https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=89470fb852&u=8997ce9fee901471473e7ac05&id=15d04eeb4e)

[e=89470fb852&u=8997ce9fee901471473e7ac05&id=15d04eeb4e](https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?e=89470fb852&u=8997ce9fee901471473e7ac05&id=15d04eeb4e))



(<https://mailchi.mp/bod/board-of-deputies->



(/nls-news/whats-on-at-nls-public.html)

Copyright © 2014-2020 Nottingham Liberal Synagogue
Registered Charity No: 246773

[Sitemap \(/component/xmap/xml/1.html?view=xml&tmpl=component\)](/component/xmap/xml/1.html?view=xml&tmpl=component) | [Privacy Policy \(/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=236\)](/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=236)