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JEWISH News

Eleven chief rabbis in unity call ahead of shabbat before Pesach

Rabbi Mirvis joins faith leaders from Israel, South Africa, Argentina and Europe calling for people to be kind to one another and observe guidelines on 'Shabbat HaGadol'

By **JEWISH NEWS REPORTER**
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11 chief rabbis' signatures, urging kindness on the shabbat before Pesach





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An *open letter* from eleven Chief Rabbis around the world has drawn parallels between this year's lockdown Passover with events 3,332 years ago, when Jewish families sat alone in their homes in Egypt.

Chief Rabbi Ephraim joined other leading rabbis from places like Israel, Russia, Argentina, France and South Africa to urge Jewish families to make the Shabbat before Passover – called Shabbat HaGadol – one of kindness.

“Shabbat HaGadol was first celebrated at the birth of the Jewish people, moments before the dawn of our deliverance from Egyptian slavery,” they said.

“Every Jewish family, alone in their homes in Egypt, sat fervently anticipating the united dream of deliverance and nationhood. Now 3,332 years later, this Shabbat HaGadol, we too sit isolated in our own homes, once again united in our fervent prayer for relief from the global pandemic that has shaken our world to its core.”

The rabbis called on Jews around the world to adhere to the health and safety protocols as set out by their own countries and to “call or message each other with words of support” before Shabbat.





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“In our heroic global quest to protect each other, we find ourselves physically cut off from one another,” they said.

“Many of us are completely alone. Call or message someone you know who is alone or struggling, wish them Shabbat Shalom and offer them words of support and encouragement.

“There is so much we cannot do at this time, but let’s not underestimate the power we have to uplift, encourage and support one another. Pray for each other just before candle-lighting. As the devastation of COVID-19 sweeps across the world, so many people need our prayers.”

Urging a “disconnect from the relentless news cycle for a precious 25 hours,” they said: “This is a time for us to rally together in unity. This is a time for us to be together, to welcome Shabbat in together, as one people with one heart.”

Full list of signatories:

- Rabbi David Lau, Chief Rabbi of Israel
- Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein, Chief Rabbi of South Africa





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- Rabbi Yizchak Yosef, Chief Rabbi of Israel
- Rabbi Haïm Korsia, Chief Rabbi of France
- Rabbi Berel Lazar, Chief Rabbi of Russia
- Rabbi Gabriel Davidovich, Chief Rabbi of Argentina
- Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, Chief Rabbi of Moscow and President of the Conference of European Rabbis
- Rabbi Yosef Chehebar, Chief Rabbi of Argentina
- Rabbi Dr Riccardo Di Segni, Chief Rabbi of Rome
- Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, Chief Rabbi of the United Kingdom
- Rabbi Albert Guigui, Chief Rabbi of the Chief Rabbi of Brussels

<https://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/eleven-chief-rabbis-in-unity-call-ahead-of-shabbat-before-pesach/>

