

Four Questions About Social Justice

Contributed by [JewishBoston](#)

Source: JewishBoston.com

At Passover every year, we read the story of our ancestors' pursuit of liberation from oppression. It's difficult to tell that story and not feel compelled to help others who are being oppressed. There are numerous social-justice themes in the Exodus story, including hunger, homelessness, oppression and redemption. Oppression still exists in society today, and it's important as Jews to focus on how to help others and take an active role in our community, country and world.

In what ways are people in our society discriminated against or treated unequally?

What are examples of recent discrimination? What groups are targeted? How can we advocate for more equal treatment? How can we prevent future generations from being victims of discrimination?

Is it our responsibility to support displaced people who have been forced to flee their homes because of violence or persecution?

Deuteronomy says, "You must befriend the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." What does this mean to you when you think about refugees and immigrants today? What could you do to help? Have you spoken to your elected officials about your thoughts on refugees and immigrants?

Why on this night do we invite the hungry and vulnerable to share our meal?

Is this an important part of Passover to you? Psalms 145:16 says, "You give [food] open-handedly, feeding every creature to its heart's content." What does this mean in your life? Have you invited or been invited to share a meal with others you don't know well in the past? If so, how did it feel?

How can we address hunger and homelessness in our community this year?

Is there something you could do in your community to help those who are hungry and homeless? Proverbs teaches: "Speak up for the mute, for the rights of the unfortunate. Speak up, judge righteously, champion the poor and the needy." What does this mean for you?

Here's a fifth question, courtesy of American Jewish World Service:

How can we make this year different from all other years?

This year, this Passover, let us recommit to that sacred responsibility to protect the stranger, particularly those vulnerable strangers in faraway places whose suffering is so often ignored. Let us infuse the rituals of the seder with action: When tasting the matzah, the bread of poverty, let us find ways to help the poor and the hungry. When eating the maror, let us commit to help those whose lives are embittered by disease. When dipping to commemorate the blood that protected our ancestors against the angel of death, let us pursue protection for those whose lives are threatened by violence and conflict. When reclining in celebration of our freedom, let us seek opportunities to help those who are oppressed.

With excerpts from American Jewish World Service, Repair the World, Union for Reform Judaism and Religious Action Center.

Written by JCRC's ReachOut! for JewishBoston JewishBoston, March 2017.