

Weekly Teaching

March 24, 2017

Rabbi Israel Salanter z'l was the founder of the Musar movement.

This 19th century Jewish initiative placed an emphasis on the primacy of ethics over ritual.

He taught: "For yourself, give precedence to the soul, but for others, never forego the demands of the body. Your neighbor's physical needs are your spiritual affairs."

Soon, at the beginning of our Passover Seders, we will declare: "Let all who are hungry, come and eat."

I often read how this declaration can be understood as not just the desire to literally "feed the hungry," but also fulfill one's "spiritual hunger."

I admire the sentiment, but am wary of moving to the spiritual "feeding" before we make certain that the physical needs of the hungry are being effectively addressed.

Our neighbors have real physical needs, and our partner in trying to actively address these needs is the local food pantry, [Neighbor to Neighbor](#).

Founded in 1975, Neighbor to Neighbor has been one of the most primary means by which to supplement the work of our local Social Service agencies.

Presently, Neighbor to Neighbor offers three substantial food programs and also a clothing program.

There is great power in our observing the upcoming Passover rituals, but we must begin with the ethical framework by which our holiday celebration is grounded.

Please [click here](#) so that you have the opportunity to "sell your chametz" and also provide tzedakah support for our annual Passover "Feeding the Hungry" Mitzvah opportunity.

Also, if you don't have a Seder to attend the first night, consider joining our own [communal Seder](#) at the Temple which is open to people of all faiths.

Passover is our celebration of Hope and Renewal; a desire to re-calibrate our world so that we have a greater sense of wholeness and meaning within our lives, and the lives of our family, friends and neighbors.

L'Shana Haba'ah B'Yerushalayim & Shabbat Shalom,

Rabbi Mitch

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