

Rabbi Weiner's Shabbat Message - April 3-4 2020

There is a story about a group of Jews who visited a magnificent historic synagogue. A guide showed them the elegant, ornate balcony. So someone from the group asked, "How is this balcony supported?" The guide answered, "By very large contributions." And he was right. This synagogue and every other is supported by large contributions -- not just of money, but also of time and strength and love and work. That is what keeps it going. Even in the difficult time we are all experiencing right now. If people were not willing to sacrifice, this place simply would not be.

Last Shabbat, when I had the good fortune to address you, I spoke of my concern about the economic and financial toll this would take on our fellow citizens. The coronavirus outbreak will affect us all, but it will not affect us all equally. Some will be hurt disproportionately. You've all seen the numbers. How many businesses are closed? How many workers just this week, have filed for unemployment. The Stimulus Package was approved last week and I'm glad that Republicans and Democrats were to work together to pass it. But no matter how much was allocated, it will not be enough. So those with us with means need to sacrifice to help those who are worse off. It's that simple. So I am calling upon the members of our congregation who are financially able to do so, to donate their stimulus check from the government to the important charities that are alleviating suffering in our communities. I am calling upon the members of our congregation to share this money with neighbors and friends and family who have lost jobs, or collecting unemployment, who can't pay their monthly bills. If you need it, use it. That's what it's there for. But thank God there are members of our congregation, of our communities who will get by just fine without this stimulus check. So we, who understand the importance of sacrifice as a religious obligation must be in the vanguard of those who will say, quietly but forcefully: thanks very much but I'm going to put this money back into the economy to get people working and to get them back on their feet. It's a sacrifice that we are willing to make because we love this great nation, and care about all the people that live within it. Shabbat Shalom