

MARCH 27, 2020

AN OPEN LETTER TO DR. ANTHONY FAUCI ASKING FOR PASSOVER SEDER ADVICE

by Jackie Pick

Dear Dr. Fauci,

I'm really sorry to bother you, it's just that I'm hosting a virtual Seder this year and I want to make sure everything is kosher. I mean, this night will be different from all other nights, mostly because I'm not even sure what night it is anymore. You too, probably, but for different reasons. You're busy saving the world on four hours of sleep (Dayenu, am I right?), and I'm busy watching C-SPAN, eating Lucky Charms by the fistful, and not bothering to change from my daytime athleisure wear to my nighttime athleisure wear.

This is all just to say that not only are you our country's best hope and conveyor of concise medical information, but you're also America's *zayde*, trustworthy and sage.

I've checked the CDC website and none of this is on there, so if you have a few minutes to answer these questions, I'd be grateful:

- How do I disinfect a Seder plate?
- How many extra handwashing steps should I add to the Seder? I mean, there are two already built-in. Should I add more, possibly ratcheting the evening up to seven hours, or should we just hold the whole thing over the sink?
- Because this debate will come up (it's the nature of the beast): Would wandering in the desert be advisable at this time? That is assuming there is manna from heaven and/or Amazon Prime, enough water and shelter, and we keep six feet away from other wanderers.
- We're forbidden from eating things like leavened wheat, barley, rye, oats, or spelt. Unfortunately, the only thing left at Costco yesterday was a 50-pound sack of spelt. I'll obviously hold off on eating it until after the holiday but need to know what is the LD50 on spelt?
- I'd love to be sure I'm coronavirus-free before asking my husband and kids to the table, but the only tests I can get my hands on are an expired ClearBlue Easy and a gently used Cologuard. Which do you think would reassure my family more?
- My Uncle Murray insists on tweeting that Manischewitz cures coronavirus. In case the president sees this, please tell him it's not true. Also that he shouldn't retweet it, no matter how tempted he is by Uncle Murray's use of all-caps.
- When the Treasury sends everyone some "Corona cash," would you mind bundling that with a Xanax prescription for parents? You see, we've been e-learning these last few eternal days, and if we have to hear one more question — never mind four questions — a

great cry will go out over all the land, such as never has been heard before, and never will be heard again.

- Can the president use the Defense Production Act to have gefilte fish factories converted to make... literally anything else?
- Does opening the door for Elijah violate the “no more than ten people” gathering rule?
- Instead of sending the kids on a search for the hidden afikomen, can I send them on a search around town for a megapack of Charmin Ultra, even if it means they miss some of the Seder? Not your area of expertise, but I trust your judgment on these matters.
- I’ve been carb-loading ever since we started sheltering in place. Will the charoset act like my own personal digestive mortar? Or will it put me on the express chariot to the hoop?
- Where can I find Kosher for Passover matzah? I know this is another question outside your field, but maybe you can ask that fucker Steve Mnuchin. He’s probably got an entire pallet hidden in his basement lair next to a golden calf.
- Our local dispensary is an essential business. Can I go there for the requisite “bitter herb?”
- I know you’re unable to state for sure, but based on your experience, do you think “Next Year in Jerusalem” — politics aside — is feasible? Or should it be changed to “Next Year via FaceTime”?

Thank you, Dr. Fauci, for leading us through this. When this is all over, please come for dinner. Hope you like spelt.

— Jackie