

Paperweight Perspective

What next?



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Rarely, if ever before, have events on the world stage impacted so quickly and so directly on the individual

man in the street. We have become accustomed to shaking our head, letting the usual platitudes roll of our tongues, perhaps making a token charitable gesture, before turning the page to check the TV listings or the latest Apprentice casualty. We raise our eyebrows as another political scandal threatens to wreak havoc at Westminster only for it to be subsumed and become yesterday's fish wrapping by yet further Royal revelations.

But we can turn a blind eye, we can to all intents and purposes ignore, because with few exceptions none of this really mattered, none of this was life changing. What happened in distant lands, remained there. If that's what you thought, well you are so 2021. Our world and therefore our lives are changing so rapidly, I

must encourage you to read this quickly to avoid being out of date.

When Prime minister Harold Macmillan famously said when asked what troubled him most, "events dear boy, events", he could not possibly have imagined the events that are unfolding before our eyes, let alone their immediate and long-term impact. Whether you are concerned about ten utility price rises in the past 12 months, and a predicted 3 fold increase in costs in the next 6 months, whether you will soon be getting a lot more exercise because the very thought of filling up the tank makes you shudder, or whether you

can no longer buy a ticket to watch Chelsea Football Club, make no mistake, world events have changed our lives.

Many across our community are only just putting back together the pieces of furlough, redundancy, unemployment, closed businesses, the impact on family life, mental health strains, credit card and rent or mortgage debt, and in too many cases the overwhelming fear that they simply can no longer cope.

Whilst the economic situation may be our first and uppermost thought, it is by no means the only dark shadow. Without exception, all of the above bring with

them in one form or another the associated complexities, trials and tribulations of bureaucracy, paperwork and infuriating online IT compliance and access.

This week across the Jewish world we will gather and read in Megillat Esther, "There is a people that is dispersed and divided". When we are divided others have the ability to cause us harm. That is the basis of Haman's plot to destroy us. When we are divided, we represent only individuals, not a community. That is the symbolism of why we were instructed that each and every Jew was to give one half shekel. Each of us is but a fraction of the entity. However, once we combine with others we make a significant contribution, and realise our strength comes through unity and recognising our need for each other.

As an organisation we are planning and bracing ourselves as we face head on into the perfect storm. As the headlines scream at us, 'How will we put food on the table?', there is no quick or simple solution for the myriad of issues we face, but hand in hand with Paperweight we will guide, advise, advocate and mediate and be there for each other.

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Debt-negotiating, court-attending, benefits-advising, law-guiding, tribunal-accompanying, hand-holding, rights-advocating, landlord-challenging and people-empowering.

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