



new london
synagogue



On The Morning After the General Election

“May the one who gives salvation to kings and dominion to Princes ...” So begins the same prayer for the welfare of the government that Jews have prayed dating back to an Aragonese Machzor of the C13.

Jeremiah made a similar point in the aftermath of the destruction of the first Temple, 594BCE, “seek the welfare of the city to which I have exiled you and pray to the Lord in its behalf; for in its prosperity you shall prosper.”

A close friend from university married a woman who became an MP. His Facebook posting on the anniversary of the murder of fellow MP Jo Cox chilled me. Similarly, interviews given by Mike Freer, former MP for Finchley and Golders Green, explaining why he was standing down were awful. He had been the subject of arson attacks and been ‘visited’ by the murderer of another MP, Sir David Amess. In Freer’s place, the new constituency MP of our sister Synagogue, New North London is one of its members, Sarah Sackman.

It is so vital that we pray for and defend in every way civic democracy. I love the phrase ‘His Majesty’s Loyal Opposition.’ It bespeaks an impeccably Jewish attitude to what it means to differ and debate and strive, even in difference; especially in difference.

To those both entering and departing from public life, I offer gratitude. And for all of us depending on this new government, I encourage us to pray and stand up for the dignity of debate that is at the heart of our Jewish identity and our democratic citizenship.

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Jeremy