

## For Such a Time Like This

'May you live in interesting times' is an infamous Yiddish proverb that is starting to feel increasingly apt to the era we find ourselves in. The lowa caucuses have come and gone but the news cycle hasn't slowed down one bit. Many rabbis – myself included – are big fans of the idea of reading ourselves into Biblical narratives, meaning that we don't (just) look at the stories as (potential) historical fact but also read them as roadmaps for our own lives and journeys. The social commentary of the Biblical narratives we encounter in this quarter of the Jewish year couldn't be more fitting as a metaphorical analysis of our 'interesting times'.

Hanukkah, Purim and Passover create master stories of oppression and survival, of xenophobia and solidarity, of power and resistance. The power of Torah is for these templates to speak to us and

the moment 'ordinary heroes' like Judah Maccabee, Queen Esther and Moses staked their claim in history, the Torah has been unequivocal that our individual acts matter. In the words of cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead: 'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.'

Our interconnectedness and mutual concern matter. Mordechai exhorts Queen to challenge the injustices of her world, for she might very well have been placed in this position, 'I'et kazot', 'for such a time like this'.

All of us are able to stake out that moral claim, 'for such a time like this' and then contribute to justice, kindness, goodness and mutuality while also acknowledging legitimate and life-giving differences between us. Our community has rallied and