



The Shofar

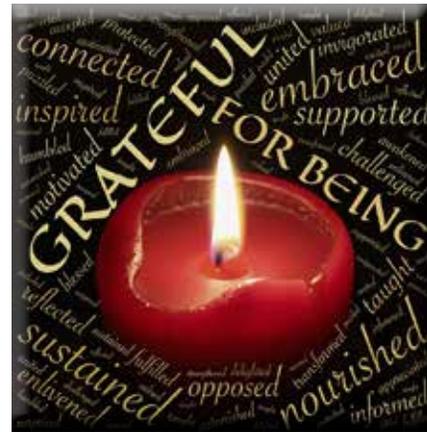
June 2020

Congregation House of Israel

9 Sivan - 8 Tammuz, 5780

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Days of Appreciation

By Sherrill Nicolosi

We are living in an unprecedented time, a time when we must appreciate every day we and our loved ones wake up well. As a result of this American epidemic and worldwide pandemic, there seems to be a surge in caring and concern for neighbors, friends, and even strangers. “We are in it together”.

As Jews, we have been taught from early childhood that doing good deeds - *mitzvot* - is expected. The ROI, “return on our investment”, is that our hearts will be lifted, we will know peace, and we will enjoy the privilege of worship.

Saying this out loud sounds quite odd, but there may be a silver lining in this cloud of social distancing, isolation, sanitizing, illness, and loneliness. There is that wonderful sense of oneness, that feeling that we are supporting one another through acts of kindness, including the increased correspondence with so many who may have been largely ignored in the past.

The Days of Awe will soon be upon us, but for now we will embrace the Days of Appreciation.

Reb Shelly's Desk



During our Erev Shabbat service on May 15, the question arose about the meaning of the counting of the Omer, which we always do following our reciting of Mi Sheberach during the period from Pesach until Shavuot. Although discussed at the time, I found this interesting article by Rabbi Steven Weiss which I felt dealt with the subject in a very provocative way.

Seeking Endurance

By Rabbi Steven Weiss

“This is the fourth week of the counting of the Omer. We count seven weeks from Passover to Shavuot. These 49 days link the two holidays together.

We ascend over the seven weeks from becoming a free people during the Exodus to becoming God’s servants through receiving the Torah.

In Kabbalah — Jewish Mysticism — each week in the counting of the Omer corresponds to a different *sefirah* (one of the ten aspects of the Divine through which God’s light is channeled as it flows through our world and our souls). By meditating on the week’s *sefirah*, we draw that dimension of God’s spirit into our soul and are nurtured by it.

This week’s *sefirah* is *Netzach*. The word is often translated as “victory” or “eternity,” but a better translation might be “endurance.” It is the power to overcome all obstacles, the persistence and focus we need in order to succeed.

Netzach is not about rising above the moment. It is not the strength of the sprinter. It is the strength of the marathon runner who pushes on relentlessly over the long term, determined to meet his/her goal. When we draw down God’s *Netzach* into our soul, God graces us with the fortitude to surmount the long-term challenges we face.

Rabbi Min Kantrowitz writes: “*Netzach* is like spiritual fuel... Helping us get through difficult times with grace, *Netzach* is available during the

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Sisterhood

We are transitioning from Covid-19 Spring into Covid-19 Summer, into the unknown. For most of us, although our state has “opened” up, we will continue striving to maintain distance and protect one another. While missing personal contact, Mark and I have enjoyed our temple Zoom meetings and look forward to continuing this new way of worship, as long as our temple leadership determines it necessary.

Thank you, Rabbi Shelly, for your hard work and leadership in leading our online services! I have certainly missed meeting as a Sisterhood and our executive board will discuss future meeting plans over the next few months. At the very least we will hold a Zoom meeting with our full membership in late August and discuss options going forward. A big thank you to our treasurer Ruth Sedler for e-mailing our treasurer’s report and confirming we are in good shape financially.

Over the summer months, I hope each of you find ways to enjoy your family and friends, read a good book, enjoy our beautiful outdoor world and most importantly, stay healthy and safe. Meanwhile, I’ll see you on Friday evenings via Zoom and will look forward to celebrating our shared Sisterhood very soon.

Patti

High Holidays 2020 - Rabbi's Start to Think Outside the Synagogue

By Ari Feldman - The Forward

About 2,000 years ago, Judaism swapped animal sacrifice for prayer. This fall, it will face another challenge that, while not quite on the order of the destruction of the Second Temple, is still historic: How to conduct the faith's holiest — and best-attended — services while maintaining enough physical distance between congregants to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

At a time when people are craving human and spiritual connection, rabbis are feeling even more pressure than normal to create a deeply meaningful High Holidays experience. Some — clergy and congregants — are looking toward 2020's Days of Awe with anxiety, but others are relishing the challenge of radically rethinking what is possible in the context of an ancient tradition.

The High Holidays — meaning chiefly Rosh Hashanah, the New Year; and Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement — happen in the fall, and they are when synagogues are at their busiest. The staff works through the summer to coordinate services for the largest crowds of the year. Rabbis spend weeks crafting special sermons, and cantors compose elaborate musical programs.

Though it is only May, the 14 rabbis from egalitarian denominations — Reform, Conservative, Reconstructing Judaism and Humanistic — who were interviewed for this story are making their plans based on the assumption that synagogue buildings will need to be closed when Rosh Hashanah starts, on September 18.

Indeed, even as the United States begins efforts to restart its economy, a broad range of Jewish leaders have agreed that synagogues should be among the last institutions to reopen, wherever they are, in order to adhere to the Jewish doctrine of *pikuach nefesh*, which mandates setting aside religious obligations in order to save a life.

There are practical considerations, too — none weighing on rabbis more deeply than the dangers of singing, which studies are showing can spread the coronavirus at alarming rates. Even singing with masks on is possibly unsafe.

Then there are shofars, the ceremonial ram's horn blown at climactic moments in the High Holiday services. No scientist has actually measured the dispersal of coronavirus in aerosol droplets shooting forth from a hollow ram's horn. But at least one study found that vuvuzelas — the plastic horns from the 2010 World Cup in South Africa — can “propel extremely large numbers of aerosols” that can lodge deep inside the lung.

Brief, and intimate

Rabbis said they are working together to tackle the challenge of re-envisioning High Holiday services. Reconstructing Judaism, for example, has begun a weekly Zoom conference attended by over 60 rabbis called “Dreaming of the High Holidays,” said the movement's president, Rabbi Deborah Waxman.

Just about everyone agrees that the services will be brief. Zoom and Facebook Live attention spans can't support hours-long High Holiday services. Synagogues in the Reform movement, America's largest, as well as those in Reconstructing Judaism, a denomination with just under 100 communities, have more flexibility in using technology and changing the service structure, since their denominations prioritize adaptability over adherence to *halacha*, Jewish law.

There are three main formats rabbis can use for services this year: in-person; broadcast, which has rabbis conducting services via Facebook Live or YouTube, with no interaction from congregants at home; and services over software like Zoom, in which congregants can participate.

While all the clergy who spoke with the Forward expect they'll be closed for the holidays, some haven't yet made the final decision yet. Others have — four months out.

“Even if we have mud on our face in September and everyone is running around and hugging and sharing drinks, we're still not gonna go back,” she said.

During the pandemic, some synagogues have been able to bring in large numbers of viewers for their Zoom and Facebook Live - based services. But High Holiday services derive a good chunk of their spiritual intensity from the sheer crush of a

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Freedom

By Rabbi Josh Weinberg

“You shall proclaim liberty throughout the land for all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: each of you shall return to his holding and each of you shall return to his family.” (Leviticus 25:10)

“Proclaim liberty.” Arguably it is the most important directive of the Torah, more basic than having one God and more fundamental than honoring one’s parents, remembering Shabbat, or even loving one’s neighbor as one’s self.

Freedom is the reset button of society. It is no coincidence that we are commanded to proclaim liberty in the same verse that delineates the Jubilee year, the time, every 50 years, when debts are forgiven and any land that has been sold reverts to the original owners. It is a practical vision of what freedom requires, yet it remains unrealized; generations since and generations yet to come continue to dream, fight, sing, and pray for freedom.

This desire for freedom permeates Western culture. From Braveheart’s blood curdling earth-shattering end-of-life cry of “Freeeeedooooom!” to General John Stark’s simple notion that we should “Live free or die,” to activist folk singers like Crosby Stills Nash and Young, who added their harmonies to the short poem:

“Find the cost to freedom
Buried in the ground
Mother earth will swallow you
Lay your body down”

For most of us, the call for liberty or release throughout the land resonates strongly right now. The majority of the world is not exactly free right now. We are confined to our own spaces, fervently wishing the world would revert back to the way it was before this virus brought the world to its knees and imprisoned us.

The confinement of the past weeks has offered the opportunity to reflect on some of the most fundamental questions of life, closely examining what it means to be free. As Professor Eva Ilouz

writes in Haaretz:

“These billions have willingly given up the most fundamental aspects of their freedom, even though, in fact, we still lack some key information about the epidemic that is responsible for the restrictions (for example, how many are actually infected, and thus what the real mortality rate is). They accepted confinement to their homes (assuming they had one), confirming the view of Thomas Hobbes (and others) that fear of death is the most powerful political passion and that we will always be willing to sacrifice our freedom for our security.”

Sacrifice we did and continue to do. The majority of us understand that temporarily relinquishing some personal freedoms is the responsible thing to do to save lives.

As our own national liberation movement was coming into being, we placed the value of freedom at the core of our nationalist aspirations, both in Israel’s Declaration of Independence – “it will be based on freedom, justice, and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel” – and as the penultimate line of our national anthem – where we dream to be a Free People in Our Land. But what exactly does freedom mean here?

Does it mean freedom from tyranny and persecution?

Does it mean we can do anything, say anything, or act in any way we want?

Does it mean we can leave our houses and roam freely?

Is it freedom from our vices and devices?

Is it possible for some of us to be free if not all of us are? Can we have a free society if some attempt to relegate religious freedom for others?

In the early years of the State of Israel, the word “free” was used as a descriptive term for Jewish observance. Where we would now refer to Jews as either ‘secular’ or ‘religious’, in our not-so-distant past the terms were free vs. religiously observant, where “free” symbolized Jews unburdened by the yoke of Torah and mitzvot.

Much ink has been spilled over these fundamental

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Jewish Trivia for June Courtesy of Norman Hanenbaum

- June 5, 1967 Six-Day War begins, Israel captures Golan Heights, West Bank and Gaza Strip
- June 14, 1948 Yom HaAtzmaut, Israeli Independence Day. Shofar is blown after synagogue service
- June 14, 1948 New York City celebrates with a parade honoring the founding of the State of Israel

Deceased

- June 1, 2016 David Chase, entrepreneur
- June 4, 1951 Serge Koussevitzky, conductor
- June 7, 1965 Judy Holiday, actress
- June 13, 1986 Benny Goodman, musician
- June 19, 1933 Josef Rosenblatt, cantor
- June 22, 2002 Ann Landers, columnist
- June 23, 1995 Jonas Salk, medicine
- June 23, 2011 Peter Falk, actor
- June 26, 2004 Naomi Shemer, Israeli composer
- June 27, 1994 Rabbi Menachem Schneerson, Lubavitcher leader
- June 28, 2015 Jack Carter, actor
- June 30, 2012 Yitzhak Shamir, Israeli Prime Minister
- June 30, 2003 Buddy Hackett, comedian

HOW TO PROPERLY GREET SOMEONE DURING THE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK



ARZA - World Union

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questions of freedom and great minds have agonized over its definitions and implementation. 20th century philosopher Isaiah Berlin distinguished between the concept of ‘negative freedom’ and ‘positive freedom.’ Negative freedom means freedom from interference, that others cannot hinder one’s own freedom; positive freedom means freedom as self-mastery, which asks not what we are free from, but what we are free to do.

For most of Jewish history we sought negative freedom. We had to escape, endure, or even accept our status as being subject to the whim and will of others. Zionism changed all that. Zionism allowed us to become a free people in our own Land.

Zionism redefined Jewish freedom to be about self-mastery and self-actualization rather than simply avoiding persecution. But with that self-mastery comes responsibilities that we cannot escape or turn our back on.

This week, as we read the call to proclaim liberty throughout the land, as those in the Land begin to emerge from isolation, our freedoms are still limited. It is up to us to use this moment as a reset, a Jubilee, a chance to re-evaluate what we should hold dearest. To ensure that we are truly free, we must actualize the freedom of all the inhabitants of the Land.

So, yes, proclaim liberty throughout the Land, and find now the cost of true freedom.

Reb Shelly’s Desk

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bumpy events of ordinary times and the dramatic and unavoidable traumas of life.”

We could surely use some *Netzach* now, as we face the long road that lies ahead of us in dealing with this pandemic. After more than six weeks locked down in our homes, with businesses shut, it is natural that we are feeling restless and anxious to get on with our lives. It also makes sense that we worry about the impact of this crisis on the economy, the stock market and our own finances. But if we rush back too fast, we jeopardize both ourselves and others. It would be wise of us to pray that God imbues us with *Netzach*, so that we stay focused not on this moment, but on the long road that lies ahead.

In Kabbalah, *Netzach* is also about the ability to overcome obstacles that stand in the way of our being instruments for bringing God’s *chesed* - kindness - into the world. As our anxiety over our challenges rises, there is a temptation to turn our focus only on ourselves. Just looking after our own needs is hard enough and sufficiently tiring that we lack the energy and will to attend to the concerns and needs of others. Under the weight of stress, we can become less patient, less giving, less accepting. In this sense too, we need *Netzach* now, enabling us to be stubbornly persistent in always showing patience and kindness to one another in word and deed.”

High Holidays 2020 -The Forward

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sanctuary filled to capacity. If people feel left adrift on their couch this year, there is concern that those people will be less likely to return the next year.

“There’s gonna be a mourning period,” said Sutton Place Synagogue’s Rabbi Ain, for people who want things to just go back to normal. But she is hopeful that people will reconcile with reality, like they did for Passover: “Judaism is an adaptive culture.”

Rabbi Paul Kipnes, who leads Congregation Or Ami, in Calabasas, Calif., said that his synagogue

will likely not have tickets, and instead he will just double the number of calls he usually makes in the weeks before Rosh Hashanah to check in on families and broach the subject of financial support, to around 300 households this year. If that doesn’t yield results, he said, they will simply organize an annual campaign.

The silver lining of the uncertainty, said Heller, is that it has pushed rabbis, perhaps more than ever before, to lean on one another for support and ideas. That collective brainpower is what’s keeping him calm for now.

“I think some of the best ideas for how to run these High Holidays haven’t been had yet,” he said.

June Yahrzeits

Kaddish Recited June 5

Annie Marcus
Grandmother of Carol Kleinman

Nancy Kleinman
Mother of Sheldon Kleinman

Kaddish Recited June 12

Tikva Baron
Mother of Yossi Baron

Dora Korngut
Mother of Fred Korngut

Tillie Crem
Great Aunt of David Reagler
Great Aunt of Rachel Schulman

Faye Kirsch
Grandmother of Steven Kirsch
Grandmother of Stuart Fleischner
Grandmother of Mark Fleischner

David Lockwood
Grandfather of Susan Siegel
Grandfather of Diane Goltz

Charles Bellin
Father of Ruth Sedler

Kaddish Recited June 19

Esteel Klompus
Mother-in-law of Mary Klompus

Patricia Tanenbaum
Wife of Jerry Tanenbaum

Kaddish Recited June 26

Vicki Seligman
Mother of Diana Surfas

Morris Nathan Bauman
Father of Cynthia Rephan

SaraLee Stark
Member and friend of CHI

Birthdays & Anniversaries

June Anniversaries

Ira and Stephanie Kleinman	June 8
Mark and Patti Fleischner	June 12
Anthony and Sherrill Nicolosi	June 14
Ross and Ruth Sedler	June 16
David and Cheryl Cohen	June 27

June Birthdays

Clarissa Kirsch	June 1
Sheldon Kleinman	June 4
Michael Richardson	June 4
Carol Kleinman	June 8
Andrea Parker	June 9
Randy Lewis	June 12
Mary Klompus	June 20
David Cohen	June 21
Yossi Baron	June 28

Refuah Shelemah

The following people are in our thoughts and prayers:

- Bill Ginsburg
- Jerry Tanenbaum
- Ken Baim
- Annette Baim
- Art Williams
- Ellen Eubanks
- Susan Siegel

Please offer prayers that they all have a full and speedy recovery.

If you are aware of anyone needing spiritual or any sort of assistance, please let Carol Kleinman know.

Our Caring Committee is here to help all of our members in any way we possibly can.

Weekly Parshiot

June

Naso

June 6, 2020

Completing the headcount of the Children of Israel taken in the Sinai Desert, a total of 8,580 Levite men between the ages of 30 and 50 are counted in a tally of those who will be doing the actual work of transporting the Tabernacle.

God communicates to Moses the law of the *sotah*, the wayward wife suspected of unfaithfulness to her husband. Also given is the law of the *nazir*, who forswears wine, lets his or her hair grow long, and is forbidden to become contaminated through contact with a dead body. Aaron and his descendants, the *kohanim*, are instructed on how to bless the people of Israel.

B'haalot'cha

June 13, 2020

A "Second Passover" is instituted in response to the petition, "Why should we be deprived?" by a group of Jews who were unable to bring the Passover offering in its appointed time because they were ritually impure. God instructs Moses on the procedures for Israel's journeys and encampments in the desert, and the people journey in formation from Mount Sinai, where they had been camped for nearly a year.

The people are dissatisfied with their "bread from heaven" (the *manna*), and demand that Moses supply them with meat. Moses appoints 70 elders, to whom he imparts of his spirit, to assist him in the burden of governing the people. Miriam speaks negatively of Moses, and is punished with leprosy; Moses prays for her healing, and the entire community waits seven days for her recovery.

Shelach

June 20, 2020

Moses sends twelve spies to the land of Canaan. Forty days later they return, carrying a huge cluster of grapes, a pomegranate and a fig, to report on a lush and bountiful land. But ten of the spies warn that the inhabitants of the land are giants and warriors "more powerful than we"; only Caleb and Joshua insist that the land can be conquered, as God has commanded.

The people weep that they'd rather return to Egypt. God decrees that Israel's entry into the

Land shall be delayed forty years, during which time that entire generation will die out in the desert.

Korach

July 27 2020

Korach incites a mutiny challenging Moses' leadership and the granting of the *kehunah* (priesthood) to Aaron. He is accompanied by Moses' inveterate foes, Dathan and Abiram.

Joining them are 250 distinguished members of the community, who offer the sacrosanct *ketoret* (incense) to prove their worthiness for the priesthood.

The earth opens up and swallows the mutineers, and a fire consumes the *ketoret* offerers. A subsequent plague is stopped by Aaron's offering of *ketoret*.

Aaron's staff miraculously blossoms and brings forth almonds, to prove that his designation as high priest is divinely ordained

