



High Holy Day Resource Guide
5781

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Dear Hevreh,

Dear Hevreh,

Welcome to 5781, a new year and High Holy Day season that will be unlike any before. And given the differentness of these holidays, this guide and gift bag presents some novel ways to connect over the holiday season.

As a community over the past Spring and Summer, we have learned how to behave under pandemic conditions by changing routines, challenging expectations, and canceling social plans and events both small and large. Typically, we are energized by all of you as we bump into one another in the aisles of the sanctuary on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. But, given the atypical nature of this holiday season, we are forced to conduct ourselves differently. We are working hard to bottle up much of what we love about the holidays and offer it in a different form. As we said earlier this year, this holiday season we are all called to turn our living rooms into sanctuaries of their own and our computer screens into windows open to the Divine.

This bag partly offers answers to how we do that. The High Holy Days are about *cheshbon ha-nefesh*, the appraisal of the soul, and about *t'shuvah*, repentance and return to the things that matter in our lives. Inside this guide, you'll find writing and artwork created by members of our Hevreh community, presented for your meditation and reflection through the holidays. There is a special Rosh Hashanah Seder, to help elevate your experience around a festive meal. Included in this gift bag are some of the items needed to sweeten the new year.

We hope that this guide will be a supplement to what we experience together—both online and in real life—through these holiday experiences, to make the two-fold mandate of the holidays real for each of us.

Part of what makes the holidays a reality is all of the hard work that our Hevreh staff puts into the services, communal events, and classes for each of you. We want to say thank you to all of our staff and congregant volunteers who will make the 5781 High Holy Days a season for the record books. Hevreh happens because of these wonderful people.

Shifting our focus away from the holidays to a broader perspective about Hevreh, we want to also note the strangeness of this time. For some of us, we have spent many years together, and this Summer and now Fall has brought distance that the holidays have often addressed. We hope that through the different modalities of this year's holidays, we will have the opportunity to connect in a meaningful way with many of you. Furthermore, as we start this new year, our congregation is growing. Many among us at Hevreh are new to the Berkshires, whether that be seasonally or full-time. We warmly welcome you and are excited to bring you more and more into our Hevreh. We cannot wait to get to know you better once we can be together more fully. Hevreh is here to be the spiritual destination for Jewish life, learning, and community in the Berkshires for anyone who walks through our doors.

Yes, it is unusual to say hello and welcome to 5781 this way. In so many regards, our High Holy Days worship can only be a broken Hallelujah. Still, we pray that the year to come will be one filled with blessings and comfort, joy and solace, reasons to celebrate, and opportunities to simply be together as the beautiful Jewish community that we are. May this year be a sweet and happy new year for you and your family.

Sincerely,
Rabbi Neil P.G. Hirsch, Rabbi Jodie Gordon

A NOTE FROM WEENGAGE, HEVREH'S MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

weEngage, Hevreh's membership committee, welcomes all our new members. Some are families with religious school aged children, others are couples, and some singles. Some we will see on the weekends, and some are now calling the Berkshires home. Please be sure to welcome all warmly to our Hevreh community.

L'Shana tova,
Debbie Harris, Julie Gale, Shelley Rolf

A NOTE FROM THE RITUAL CHAIRS:

In the midst of what remains a challenging time for all of us, we are blessed that Hevreh is providing what we believe will be a thoughtful and engaging High Holy Day experience. Our Rabbis and staff deserve major thanks for their dedication as they committed themselves to making these Days of Awe meaningful, spiritual, and inclusive. The current unforeseen and unique circumstances have offered the Hevreh community the opportunity to search our creative souls in order to produce a new and exciting way to celebrate the holidays. Incorporating traditional prayer and ceremonial motifs with innovative new musical composition and ritual activities, we hope that these High Holy Days of 5781 will ultimately be remembered as a difficult yet productive time of spiritual growth in community for our Hevreh.

We wish everybody a *Shanah Tovah!* May you celebrate safely and in good health, and may you be inscribed and sealed in the Book of Life for a good year.

Heidi Katz and Carol Beyer

DEAR HEVREH,

First and foremost, I wish a happy and healthy new year to all of you and your loved ones. Welcome to Hevreh's High Holy Days in a year that has changed our understanding of community.

As you have heard by now, we will not gather for services in our beautiful sanctuary, although there will be some options to visit in small groups. We will instead gather together through the intermediary of our computers, tablets, and phones, gathered safely together with loved ones in place or in mind. We will be together in a different way, but we will be together.

However, many aspects of our holy day practice remain. We will pray and reflect and take time to listen and study. We will recite ancient and modern texts that guide us with comforting familiarity or awakening newness. We will hear wonderful, inspirational melodies, including some newly fashioned and refashioned for these days. We will not, alas, have our wonderful choir helping us, and so will be on our own for much of the singing.

This new undertaking, the production of a streamed set of services and discussion groups, combined with small group in-person events, has taken many hours of work by a dedicated staff and volunteers. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of them for the efforts they have made to bring this about. Our office staff, Kate Van Olst, Jodie Friedman, and Rebecca Wagner, have had this added to their normal workload and still got things done. (And don't forget, they together with Ellen Marcus had a new Early Childhood Center to get started at the same time!) Our Ritual Committee, headed by Heidi Katz and Carol Beyer, helped to plan the format of the events. Of course, our rabbis took a leading role in all of this as well, and with our Cantorial Intern have learned a bit about appearing on camera.

There are many others to thank for their work throughout the year, leading and sitting on committees, taking on special projects, reaching out to care for our members and our community. Our teachers have had to adapt to remote teaching, our students to remote learning. Take a moment to thank each of them when you have a chance.

Best wishes again for a happy and healthy new year,

Rik Kabel, President



Photo: Auriel Bless

EREV ROSH HASHANAH 5781: OPENING MEDITATION

Eloheinu avoteinu v'imoteinu,
Hineni.
Here I am.

Like Abraham, I present myself to you in all of my goodness and imperfections,
Ready to say "Here I am"
Ready to welcome the new year and its blessings,
Eager to find renewal in the turning of the calendar page.

Like Sarah, I present myself to you in all of my hope and all of my doubts
Ready to say "Here I am"
Ready to find connection, ready to offer and receive forgiveness
Eager to find peace in what may come

O God,
On this eve of a new year, I pray:
Bless me and my loved ones with health above all else
Keep us safe from affliction, shelter us from the storm
Renew me and my community for goodness, blessings, and peace.

May the year 5781 be a sweet new year for us and for all of humanity.

FESTIVAL CANDLE LIGHTING

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו,
וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל (שַׁבָּת וְשֶׁל) יוֹם טוֹב.

Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel (Shabbat v'shel) Yom Tov.

Blessed are You, our God, Ruler of the world, who sanctifies us with mitzvot and calls upon us to kindle the lights of (Shabbat and) the Festival day.

SHEHECHIYANU

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחַיָּנוּ וְקִיָּמָנוּ
וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לַזְּמַן הַזֶּה.

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, shehecheyanu v'kiy'manu v'higiyanu laz'man hazeh.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this season.

FESTIVAL KIDDUSH

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר בחר בנו
מכל-עם, ורוממנו מכל-לשון, וקדשנו במצותיו.
ותתן לנו, יי אלהינו, באהבה את-יום הזכרון הזה, יום
תרועה, מקרא קדש, זכר ליציאת מצרים. כי בנו בחרת
ואתנו קדשת מכל-העמים, ודברך אמת וקיים לעד.
ברוך אתה יי מלך על כל-הארץ, מקדש ישראל ויום
הזכרון.

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, borei p'ri hagafen.

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, asher bachar banu mikol-am, v'rom'manu mikol-lashon, kid'shanu b'mitzvotav. Va-titen-lanu Adonai Eloheinu, b'ahavah et-yom ha-zikaron ha-zeh, yom T'ruah, mikrah kodesh, zacher li-tzi-at Mitzrayim. Ki vanu vacharta, v'otanu kidashta, mikol haamim, ud'vrachah emet v'kayam la-ad. Baruch atah, Adonai, Melech al kol ha-aretz, mikadesh Yisrael v'yom hazikaron.

Praise to You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Praise to You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has chosen us from all the peoples, hallowing us with mitzvot. In Your love, Adonai our God, You have given us this Day of Remembrance, to hear the sound of the Shofar, to unite in worship, and to recall the Exodus from Egypt. For You have chosen us from all the peoples, consecrating us to Your service, and Your word is truth eternal. Praised is the Sovereign God, Sovereign of all the world, who hallows the House of Israel and the Day of Remembrance.

Kiddush**קידוש**

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
Melech Ha'olam, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
borei p'ri hagefen. בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

Blessed are You God, Sovereign of the Universe,
 who creates the fruit of the vine.

<i>Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu</i>	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
<i>Melech Ha'olam, asher bachar</i>	מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר-
<i>banu mikol am, v'rom'manu mikol</i>	בָּנוּ מִכָּל עַם, וְרוֹמַמְנוּ מִכָּל
<i>lashon, v'kid'shanu b'mitzvotav.</i>	לְשׁוֹן, וְקִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו.
<i>Vatiten lanu, Adonai Eloheinu,</i>	וַתִּתֵּן לָנוּ, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ,
<i>b'ahavah et [Yom HaShabbat</i>	בְּאַהֲבָה אֶת [יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת
<i>hazeh v'et] Yom HaZikaron hazeh,</i>	הַזֶּה וְאֶת] יוֹם הַזִּכְרוֹן הַזֶּה,
<i>yom [zichron] t'ru'ah [b'ahavah],</i>	יוֹם [זִכְרוֹן] תְּרוּעָה [בְּאַהֲבָה],
<i>mikra kodesh, zeicher litziyat</i>	מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ, זִכָּר לִיְצִיאת
<i>Mitz'rayim. Ki vanu vachar'ta,</i>	מִצְרַיִם. כִּי בָנוּ בְּחַרְתָּ,
<i>v'otanu kidash'ta mikol ha'amim,</i>	וְאוֹתָנוּ קִדְּשַׁתָּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים,
<i>ud'var'cha emet v'kayam la'ad.</i>	וְדִבַּרְתָּ אֱמֶת וְקַיָּם לָעַד.
<i>Baruch Atah Adonai, Melech al kol</i>	בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ מֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל
<i>ha'arets, m'kadeish [HaShabbat v']</i>	הָאָרֶץ, מְקַדֵּשׁ [הַשַּׁבָּת וְ]
<i>Yisrael v'Yom HaZikaron.</i>	יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיוֹם הַזִּכְרוֹן.

With gratitude for Stephen Wise Temple for creating this Seder

Blessed are You God, Sovereign of the Universe, who chose us and enlightened us among all peoples, making us holy through Your commandments.

God, You have graciously given us in love [this Day of Shabbat and] this Day of Remembrance, a Day of [recalling] the shofar's sound [in love], calling it holy in remembrance of our People's going out from Egypt.

For You chose us and made us holy amongst the nations. Your word is true and everlasting. Blessed are You God, Sovereign of the Universe, who sanctifies [Shabbat and] Israel and the Day of Remembrance.

Shehechyanu

שהחינו

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu

ברוך אתה, יי, אלהינו

Melech Ha'olam, shehechyanu

מלך העולם, שהחינו

v'kiy'manu v'higiy'anu lazman hazeh. v'kiy'manu v'higiy'anu lazman hazeh.

וקיימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה.

Blessed are You God, Sovereign of the Universe, who gives us life, sustains us, and enables us to reach this season.

*Dates — A Wish for Peace*

תמר

Y'hi ratzon mil'fanecha

יהי רצון מלפניך

Adonai Eloheinu,

יי אלהינו,

She-yi-tamu oyveinu v'soneinu

שיתמו אויבנו ושונאינו

v'chol m'vak-shei ra'ateinu.

וכל מבקשי רעתנו:

May it be Your will, Adonai our God,
that this new year be a peaceful year
for us and for all the world.

Pomegranate – A Wish for Mitzvot

רמון



*Y'hi ratzon mil'fanecha
Adonai Eloheinu,
She-ni-he-yeh m'le'im
mitzvot ka-rimon.*

יהי רצון מלפניך
יי אלהינו,
שנהיה מלאים
מצות פרמון:

May it be Your will, Adonai our God,
that we be as full of good deeds
as the pomegranate is full of seeds.



Beans – A Wish for Prosperity/Tzedakah

רוביא

*Y'hi ratzon mil'fanecha
Adonai Eloheinu,
sheyirbu zechuyoteinu.*

יהי רצון מלפניך
יי אלהינו,
שירבו זכותינו:

May it be Your will, Adonai our God,
that we be blessed with all we need in the new year.

Pumpkin /Gourd – A Wish for Happiness

קרא



*Y'hi ratzon mil'fanecha
Adonai Eloheinu,
she-tikra ro'a g'zar dineinu
v'yikaru l'fanecha zechuyoteinu.*

יהי רצון מלפניך
יי אלהינו,
שתקרע רע גזר דינו
ויקראו לפניך זכותינו:

May it be Your will, Adonai our God,
that we be blessed with happiness.



Beets – A Wish for Freedom

סלק

Y'hi ratzon mil'fanecha

Adonai Eloheinu,

She-yistalku oyveinu

v'soneinu v'chol

m'vakshei ra'ateinu.

יהי רצון מלפניך

יי אלהינו,

שיסתלקו אויבנו

ושונאינו וכל

מבקשי רעתנו:

May it be Your will, Adonai our God,
that we be blessed with freedom.

Fish Head – A Wish for Leadership

ראש



Y'hi ratzon mil'fanecha

Adonai Eloheinu,

shenih'yeh l'rosh

v'lo l'zanav.

יהי רצון מלפניך

יי אלהינו,

שנהיה לראש

ולא לזנב:

May it be Your will, Adonai our God,
that we will be heads and not tails,
leaders instead of followers.

Leeks/Scallions – A Wish for Friendship כרתי

Y'hi ratzon mil'fanecha יהי רצון מלפניך
Adonai Eloheinu, יי אלהינו,
Sheyikartu oyveinu שיכרתו אויבינו
v'soneinu v'chol ושונאינו וכל
m'vakshei ra'ateinu. מבקשי רעתנו:

May it be Your will, Adonai our God,
that we be blessed with friendship.

Apples in Honey – A Wish for Sweetness תפוח

Y'hi ratzon mil'fanecha יהי רצון מלפניך
Adonai Eloheinu, יי אלהינו,
Shetichadesh aleinu שתחדש עלינו
shanh tovah u'metukah. שנה טובה ומתוקה:

May it be Your will, Adonai our God,
that we be blessed with freedom.

* We then dip the apple in the honey, recite the prayer below,
and enjoy the sweet flavor we associate with the New Year!

A blessing for fruit בורא פרי העץ

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu ברוך אתה, יי, אלהינו
Melech Ha'olam, מלך העולם,
borei p'ri ha-etz. בורא פרי העץ.

Blessed are You God, Sovereign of the Universe,
who creates the fruit of the tree.

Hamotzi — For Bread

לחם



Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ
melech ha-olam, Hamotzi מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמוֹצִיא
lechem min ha'aretz. לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ:

Praised be our Eternal God, Ruler of the universe,
 who brings forth the bread from the earth.



The Priestly Benediction

ברכת כהנים

Eloheinu v'Eilohei avoteinu אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
v'imoteinu, barcheinu וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ, בְּרַכְנוּ
bab'rachah ham'shuleshet בְּבִרְכַּת הַמְּשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת
hak'tuvah baTorah, הַכְּתוּבָה בַּתּוֹרָה,
ha'amurah mipi הָאֲמוּרָה מִפִּי
Aharon u'vanav kohanim אַהֲרֹן וּבָנָיו כֹּהֲנִים
am k'doshecha ka'amur: עִם קְדוֹשֶׁיךָ כְּאֲמוֹר:

MASCULINE FORM

Y'varech'cha Adonai v'yishm'recha. יְבָרְכֶךָ יְיָ וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ.
Kein y'hi ratzon. כֵּן יְהִי רָצוֹן.
Ya'eir Adonai panav eilecha יֵאָר יְיָ פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיַּחַנֶּךָ.
vichuneka. כֵּן יְהִי רָצוֹן.
Kein y'hi ratzon. יִשָּׂא יְיָ פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ
Yisa Adonai panav eilecha וְיִשֵּׂם לְךָ שָׁלוֹם.
v'yaseim l'cha shalom. כֵּן יְהִי רָצוֹן.
Kein y'hi ratzon.

a PERSONAL TASHLICH

1 Look for a natural body of water that you can access easily. Tashlich requires that you cast your sins into a body of water like a river, spring, lake, pond, or well. Most people prefer natural, flowing bodies of water because it gives the effect of your sins being swept away by the current.

- If you don't live near a natural body of water or can't manage to get to one, you can use running water from a hose or faucet.
- It's acceptable to perform Tashlich even if you can see the water only from a distance.

2 Opt for a body of water that has fish living in it if you can. Fish are extremely symbolic for the practice of Tashlich for a number of reasons. Most importantly, fish can sometimes be unintentionally caught in nets, which symbolizes the tendency of humans to unknowingly get caught in bad situations.

- Jewish tradition teaches that when you cast your sins into the water, the fish will protect them because they are hidden under the water.
- If you can't find a body of water with fish, or you aren't sure if fish are present, it is still fine to perform Tashlich.

3 Try performing Tashlich on Rosh Hashanah. Tashlich is supposed to be performed on the first or second day of Rosh Hashanah. If, however, you're unable to perform the ceremony on Rosh Hashanah, Tashlich can be done any day during the Days of Awe until Yom Kippur.

4 Examine what you've struggled with in the past year before doing Tashlich. Rosh Hashanah is a period of self-introspection, and Tashlich requires that you review your behavior over the last year before you can cast away your sins. Remember that everyone struggles with mistakes, sins, and accidents, so don't be afraid to be honest with yourself during this period of review.

5 Take a meditation walk. After you've thought about your actions over the past year, take some time to consider how you can improve in the upcoming year. Many Jews recommend taking a walk and meditating to think of ways you can change your behavior and return to God in the next year. Keep in mind, however, that the goal of Tashlich is to move forward in the year, rather than to dwell on the past.

6 Read the passages of Tashlich. The source passage for Tashlich comes from the last verses of the prophet Micah (7:18-20). These verses tell why we practice Tashlich and will guide your own practice.

Who is a God like You, Forgiving iniquity and remitting transgression; Who has not maintained wrath forever against the remnant of God's own people, Because God loves graciousness, God will take us back in love; God will cover up our iniquities, You will hurl all our sins Into the depths of the sea. You will keep faith with Jacob, loyalty to Abraham, as You promised on oath.

7 Collect your "sins" in your pockets.

- Some people discourage the tossing of items because it stems from superstitious practices. It can be helpful, however, to visualize the sins being washed away, especially for young people.
- If you're going to a natural body of water, never use paper or other items to represent your sins. These can cause pollution and damage the natural wildlife in the area. It's okay to use paper if you're using a small basin in your home.

8 Walk to the body of water or basin. As you do, take the time to think about your past year and what you'd like to do better in the upcoming year.



Image: Nina Lipkowitz Day 144

9 Sing, if it feels appropriate. Here are some possibilities:

- Eili, Eili: Eili, Eili shelo yigameri l'olam. Hachol v'hayam, rishrush shel hamayim, b'rak hashamayim, t'filat ha-adam.
- Hashiveinu: Hashiveinu, hashiveinu adonai eilecha v'nashuvah, v'nashuvah. Chadeish, chadeish yameinu k'redem.
- Avinu Malkeinu: Avinu malkeinu, choneinu va-aneinu ki ein banu ma-asim. Asei imanu tzedakah vachessed v'hoshi-einu.

10 Offer a prayer about your hope for the year. Talk to God out loud or in your head about your past year and how you plan to do better. Try to be as honest as possible about what has happened during the year and how you want to improve. If you need help with words, try answering some of these questions:

- Am I using my time wisely?
- Was I there for people who needed me?
- Do my relationships reflect k'dushah, holiness?
- The kind deed: did I perform it or postpone it? The unnecessary word: Did I say it or hold it back?
- Did I acquire only possessions? Or did I acquire insights and knowledge as well?
- Did I live fully? If not, how can I?

11 Cast your sins into the body of water. After your prayer, reach into your pockets and grab the seeds or metaphorical sins, and throw them into the water. When you let go of them, breathe out and watch them wash away. Only do this when you feel ready. It might take you longer than some other people to prepare for this moment, but don't feel rushed.



Image: Heidi Katz, *Go Forth?*

texts and Liturgy for self-guided CHeshbon HaNefesh

The Aseret Y'mei Teshvuah (The Ten Days of Repentance) mark the time between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur with intention. During these days, we are encouraged to reflect on our lives, and our behaviors. Where have we missed the mark? When did we fail to act as our best selves? To whom might we owe an apology? To whom might we offer forgiveness?

On the following pages, we offer you texts and liturgy to guide you through a process of Cheshbon HaNefesh, an accounting of the soul. Cheshbon HaNefesh is the essential prelude to meaningful change. If we approach the process humbly and sincerely, it can provide us with a map for more worthy living.

DAY 1: THE HEAD OF THE YEAR

The moon is dark tonight, a new moon for a new year. It is hollow and hungers to be full. It is the black zero of beginning.

Now you must void yourself of injuries, insults, incursions. Go with empty hands to those you have hurt and make amends.

It is not too late. It is early and about to grow. Now is the time to do what you know you must and have feared to begin. Your face is dark too as you turn inward to face yourself, the hidden twin of all you must grow to be.

Forgive the dead year. Forgive yourself. What will be wants to push through your fingers. The light you seek hides in your belly. The light you crave longs to stream from your eyes. You are the moon that will wax in new goodness.

(Marge Piercy. *The Art of Blessing the Day*. Knopf, 2002)

DAY 2: SEEING WITH THE HEART

Windows invite us to see the world outside ourselves-- but not all seeing is the same. There is seeing with the eyes and there is seeing with the mind. Aha! I see, we say when we have an insight. We look back in hindsight, plan ahead with foresight, keep things in order with oversight. When we miss a step, we call that oversight too.

And there is a kind of seeing that we might call undersight. Seeing under, beneath the surfaces; seeing into, through and through; taking in the whole of what is. We might also call this

heartsight-- seeing with the heart-- because seeing deeply renders us more understanding and compassionate. Is it not easier to forgive when one sees beyond the actions, sees through to the humanity, in all its flaws and limitations, of someone who has caused us pain?

(Marcia Falk. *The Days Between: Blessings, Poems, and Directions of the Hearts for the Jewish High Holiday Season*. Brandeis University Press, 2014)

DAY 3: UNDERSTANDING TESHUVAH

[Who has reached] complete teshuvah? One who confronts the same situation in which he/she sinned, and has the potential to commit the sin again, and nevertheless, abstains and does not commit it because of his/her teshuvah alone and not because of fear or a lack of strength.

(Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, The Laws of Repentance 2:1*)

DAY 4: CONSIDER HUMANITY (A SELF-REFLECTION)

[A]s you consider your need for deeper human connection, I hope you will engage in the practice of “cheshbon hanefesh” – deep soul searching, and arrive at a place of hope to not desist from the work to build a better world. Your life has been touched by a term you learned while traveling in Africa – Ubuntu. Ubuntu is a Nguni Bantu term meaning “humanity.” It is often translated as “I am because we are,” but it also means “we believe in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity.”

Ubuntu made you weep, upon hearing your African-American grandfather’s saying “Don’t ever let anyone steal your joy” from the mouth of an African woman you have never met. She spoke these words in another language and came from a culture quite different than your own, yet had inherited this same principle from her parents and grandparents.

Ubuntu calls for a teshuvah that inspires us to build equity through acknowledgement of transgenerational accountability – remembering who we are to ourselves and who we are to each other. Ubuntu is an assertion of value for those who have come before us and upon whose shoulders we stand.

This [year], I hope you will continue to choose the dawn and work with as many open-hearted humans as you can to value our multi-racial, multi-ethnic, cross-classed, multi-gendered, differently observant, differently abled and intergenerational community of Jews. May your liberation continue to be tied to the liberation of all humanity and to your capacity to listen, learn, grow and take action with others. I am with you. (Yavilah McCoy. Published on jewelsofelul.com, 2019)

DAY 5: I POSSESS NOTHING BUT TORAH (B. YEVA MOT 109B)

What do we truly possess? The intense probing of these ten days turns our attention inward. We turn away from the outside world that normally claims our attention and focus on what really matters. We think about what we have gained and whom we have lost during the past year. These thoughts may still hurt us. We may be scared. Life can be so uncompromising! We ask ourselves what we achieved through all these pursuits. We despair: perhaps many of our strivings were in vain! But we have an alternative to despair. We can enter the gate of sacred study, a necessary step in our quest for sacred living. We must not hurry through the text. We need to drink in its sweetness, savor its taste. Sometimes we find sweetness in surprising places. So said the psalmist “.. with honey from the rock will I nurture you.” (Psalm 81:17).

Once someone went to a rabbi, searching for answers to certain difficult questions. Said the seeker, “I have already been through the entire Torah. I have not found the answers to my questions in it.” The rabbi responded “You may indeed have been through the entire Torah, but has the entire Torah been through you?”

(Kerry M. Olitzky and Rachel T. Sabath. *Preparing Your Heart for the High Holy Days*. Jewish Publication Society, 1996)

DAY 6: ACKNOWLEDGING SADNESS

Sadness: the guest that comes unbidden and leaves in its own time. Its guises take many shapes and colors: grief's midnight indigo, sorrow's predawn gray. The searing red of sudden separation. And sometimes it is a colorless thing that visits for no apparent reason, quietly inhabiting one's cells, unremarkable as breathing.

At such times, relief may be sought in the world's large and small beauties: light shifting in the sky as the sun burns an opening in the clouds; jays calling to one another across a maze of high branches; the smell of rain on cut grass, narcissus in first bloom. Wind on your limbs as you walk the open field, kindness on a stranger's face, as you pass her on the street.

As the self can be a refuge when you are world-weary, so the world can revive you when you are weary of yourself.

Step outside, let the world comfort you.

(Marcia Falk. *The Days Between: Blessings, Poems, and Directions of the Hearts for the Jewish High Holiday Season*. Brandeis University Press, 2014)

DAY 7: FOR HUMILITY

G-d, give me a quiet heart,

A peaceful heart,

A humble heart.

Teach me to be gentle with myself,

So that I may be gentle with others.

Teach me to be patient with myself,

So that I may be patient with others.

Teach me kindness and gratitude,

Joy and humor,

Strength and forgiveness,

Trust and faith,

Openness, willingness and surrender.

To Praise, not to be praised.

To Bless, not to be blessed.

To Glorify, not to be glorified.

To Extol, not to be extolled.

To Sanctify, not to be sanctified.

So that all will go well with your People Israel.

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DAY 8: JOY IN TESHUVAH

Full penitence registers two seemingly contradictory effects on the soul: on the one hand, anxiety and grief over the sins and the evil in oneself, and on the other hand confidence and satisfaction over the good, since it is impossible for the person not to discover some element of good in himself. Even if at times his assessment is confused and he cannot find anything good in himself, the very realization that sin and evil have produced in him anxiety and distress is itself of great merit. He should be happy, confident and full of vitality because of this measure of good. Thus even while seriously troubled by the emotion of penitence, he should be full of vitality, girded with the zeal for achievement and the joy of life and the readiness to experience its blessing.

(Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, *The Lights of Repentance* 16:8)

DAY 9: WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya was 18-years old when he was called into leadership in a time of communal crisis. He stayed up most of the night in anguish, fearing he lacked the age and experience necessary for the position. But when he woke up the next morning, R' Elazar looked like a 70-year-old, having miraculously aged many years overnight, with the newfound wisdom to match his new gray hair.

These past six months have been painful and challenging, as we and our loved ones have wrestled with illness, financial instability, isolation and uncertainty. But we have also learned so much during this time. These months have forced us to confront our mortality. They have surfaced deep systemic inequalities in our country. And they have pushed us to consider our priorities, our time, our relationships and more. In all the tumult and heartache, we have grown years in a matter of days.

What have you learned this past year— about yourself? About your community? About the world?

(story and prompt from IKAR)

DAY 10: LIFE HOMEWORK FOR THE DAY BEFORE YOM KIPPUR

In our house, at the meal before Yom Kippur starts, everyone receives the questions below on a sheet of paper. After writing the answers, each person at the table receives an envelope containing all of the answers to the same questions from previous years. We read them to ourselves and then deposit our new sheet and our old ones in an envelope and date it. The envelopes keep getting bigger. Sometimes we realize that we have been able to meet challenges that we had identified in the past. At other times, we find ourselves repeating the same transgressions or working on the same relationship year after year. Feel free to use these questions at your table or review them in your mind. The idea is to take small steps, to move teshuva from impossibility to possibility, to be as honest as possible:

Think of one person you have hurt this year. How can you fix it?

What is one small and realistic thing you can do to make yourself a better person this year?

What can you do this year to be a better student, or professional, or parent or friend?

What is one thing you really want to pray for this year?

What is one thing you can do to strengthen your relationship with God this year?

(Erica Brown. Return: Daily Inspiration for the Days of Awe. Maggid Books, 2012)



Image: Barbara Rosenbaum, *Untitled*



Image: Larry Frankel, *Mystical Tree*

VIDUI & YIZKOR READINGS

VIDUI

A Confessional Prayer, Mishkan HaNefesh 296.

Our God and God of all generations,
May our prayers reach Your presence.
And when we turn to You, do not be indifferent.
Adonai, we are arrogant and stubborn,
Claiming to be blameless and free of sin.
In truth, we have stumbled and strayed.
We have done wrong.

A Personal Confession, Rabbi Rachel Barenblat

AL CHET SHECHATATI L'FANECHA...

I need to speak these words aloud and to know
that the universe hears them.
I get caught in old patterns and paradigms; I am
stubborn and hard-headed.
In the last year I have missed the mark more
than I want to admit.
Forgive me, Source of all being, for the sin I have
sinned before you
By allowing my body to be an afterthought too
often and too easily;
By not walking, running, leaping, climbing or
dancing although I am able;

By eating in my car and at my desk, mindlessly
and without blessing;

By not embracing those who needed it, and not
allowing myself to be embraced;

By not praising every body's beauty, with our
quirks and imperfections.

By letting my emotions run roughshod over the
needs of others;

By poking at sources of hurt like a child worrying
a sore tooth;

By revealing my heart before those who neither
wanted nor needed to see it;

By hiding love, out of fear of rejection, instead of
giving love freely;

By dwelling on what's internal when the world is
desperate for healing.

By indulging in intellectual argument without
humility or consideration;

By reading words of vitriol, cultivating hot
indignation;

By eschewing intellectual discomfort that might
prod me into growing;

By living in anticipation, and letting anxiety rule
me;

By accepting defeatist thinking and the
comfortable ache of despair.

By not being awake and grateful, despite
uncountable blessings;

By not being sufficiently gentle, with my actions
or with my language;

By being not pliant and flexible, but obstinate,
stark, and unbending;

By not being generous with my time, with my words or with my being;
By not being kind to everyone who crosses my wandering path.
For all of these, eternal Source of forgiveness
Help me know myself to be pardoned
Help me feel in my bones that I'm forgiven
Remind me I'm always already at one with You.

YIZKOR (MISHKAN HANEFESH 570)

The following reading can be offered in memory of a loved one.

"Love is strong as death." Song of Songs 8:6
May God remember the soul of... who has gone to his/her/their eternal home. For the sake of tikkun olam, I freely give tzedakah in his memory. For the sake of his/her/their precious soul, let my memories, my prayers, and my acts of goodness bind him to the bond of life. May I bring honor to his/her/their memory by word and deed. May he/she/they be at one with the One who is life eternal; and may the beauty of his/her/their life shine forevermore.

For an Infant or Child (Mishkan HaNefesh 571)

God of hope, God of strength--
As my heart aches in silence
I turn to You on this holy day for healing and comfort.
I pray to You, God of life, for renewal of spirit.
I long for the shelter of Your love.

May the soul of my beloved...
Be embraced by You forever with love and tenderness.
May the promise of this innocent young life
Teach me to cherish sweetness and beauty,
And not give in to the bitterness I have tasted.
May the gift of memory bless each of my days.

Weep with me, God, Creator of life,
For the precious life whose songs were left
unsung.

Weep with me, God, for the loss of my child--
A loss that is like no other.
Shelter me,
That I may be a source of care and shelter for those who need me.
Strengthen me,
That I may be a source of strength.
Be with me
In sorrow and joy, in moments of emptiness, and in the fullness of life.

Words of Healing (Mishkan HaNefesh 578)

Blessed is the life of every soul,
Pure and bright the breath of God within us.
We pray--
Help us know the Infinite Wisdom that gives life and takes it away.
Forgive us for anger, bitterness, and selfishness.
Teach us the language of healing.

Baruch atah, Adonai, m'ror hachayim.
Blessed are You, Holy One, who gives and renews life.

Excerpts from Mishkan HaNefesh: Machzor for the Days of Awe © 2015; and are under the copyright protection of the Central Conference of American Rabbis and reprinted for use by permission of the CCAR. All rights reserved.



“We boldly live Jewish values, to uplift, enrich and transform the lives of all we touch.”

What better way to put Hevreh’s mission statement into action than the creation of our early childhood center? The year began with construction and paint colors; handbooks and hiring; regulations and certifications. And for me on a personal level, Hevreh and haimish. All these undertakings were a prologue to the rich chapter on which we are about to embark - providing quality care and learning for the youngest members of our community.

The ECC at Hevreh provides year-round learning and care for infants, toddler, and preschoolers. Our original vision was to open in the spring, but those plans were upended with the pandemic. Several months later, we reconfigured our program to meet the childcare needs of the community in an altered landscape.

Early childhood experiences provide the foundation for a child’s lifetime. Our play-based, emergent curriculum fosters exploration and cultivates children’s natural curiosity. Our exceptional teaching team share a love of children and all bring with them a diversity of strengths. Knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and creative our educators seek to spark the “I wonder” and “Aha” moments that are so valuable in a child’s development.

As we seek to grow the next generation of mensches, we want to imbue our program with the same characteristics that help create strong family ties - love, trust, time spent together, communication, appreciation for one another, healthy limits, and more love. Our curriculum is guided by universal Jewish values including Talmud Torah - instilling curiosity and a love for learning; Gemilut Chasadim - teaching love and kindness; and Derech Eretz - teaching cooperation and community participation. We will lay the foundation for children to become independent, caring, thoughtful, and responsible individuals. Open to all, we seek to strengthen our congregation and the larger community.

Reflecting on the past year, I feel deep appreciation for the support and guidance of the Hevreh community and everyone’s efforts to move us from vision to reality. I have great hopes for the upcoming year, whatever it may hold. May the playful, joyous voices of children usher in the new year and may they reinforce Hevreh’s place as a community home for people of all ages - l’dor v’dor - from generation to generation.

Shana Tovah,
Ellen Marcus, ECC Director

A MESSAGE FROM HEVREH'S SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ACTION COMMITTEE

The Social Justice in Action (SJA) Committee is an expansion of Hevreh's Social Action Committee. It includes both local social action initiatives as well as broader social justice efforts. The inequities highlighted by the COVID 19 epidemic as well as the death of George Floyd have energized and activated so many across the country and the world. As we write this for #HevrehAtHome, we are masked and social distancing. Nevertheless, we join with many across the nation who are engaged in actions to redress the wide inequities.

SJA members continue to be involved in The People's Pantry and, prior to the COVID pandemic, Breaking Bread. To expand the scope of our committee, a series of house meetings were held in early 2020 to get input from Hevreh members on new initiatives of interest.

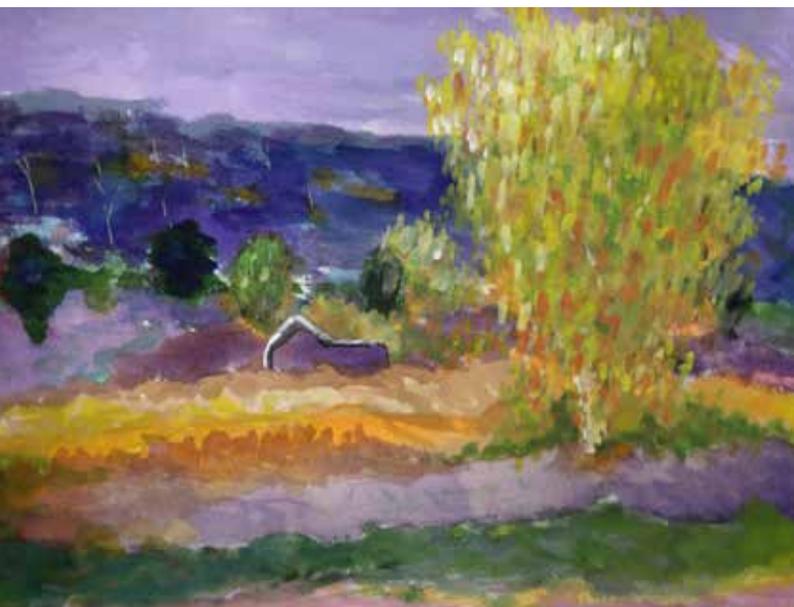


Image: Julie Gale, *Autumn Calm*

One of the new initiatives is focused on immigration. Committee members were involved in Breaking the Ice, an event co-sponsored by a number of local organizations working with the immigrant community. Held at Hevreh on a cold February evening, more than two hundred immigrants and their families gathered to enjoy a convivial dinner, discussion of unmet needs and ending with song and dance.

Promoting racial justice was a second initiative identified as a key area of concern at the January house meeting on human rights. The Black Lives Matter movement has brought this concern to the fore. The July Zoom discussion between Rabbi Hirsch and Gwendolyn VanSant (Director of Multicultural Bridge) of the article "Skin in the Game" by Eric Ward was a first step in this process.

Recently, our main focus has been on getting out the vote in the URJ's Religious Action Center (RAC) launched a training initiative, providing tools that we can use to make this happen. The initiative is non-partisan: focused strictly on getting people to register and commit to voting in November. A lot of Hevreh members have expressed interest in volunteering. As part of the 100% Voting Congregation sponsored by the RAC, we are calling all Hevreh members to make sure they have all the information needed to vote in their home state. We are also phone banking, texting and postcarding to get out the vote nationwide.

We welcome your participation and ideas for extending the work of the Social Justice in Action committee.

L'Shana Tova,

Michele Krieg Bauer and Carol Noble
Co-chairs, Social Justice in Action Committee

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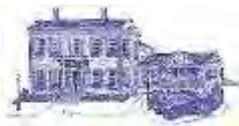
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We Will Be Silent No More...

The sky opened up — weeping, weeping torrents of rain
It roars with thunderous blasts; it blazes with flashes of light
It screams out loud: our world needs cleansing — the world is in pain!
our world needs us — to weep, to roar and yes to fight!

Look to nature to be our guide — it tears down what is bad
It replenishes the earth; it parts the clouds to let in the sun
Mother Earth does not wallow in pity; spend nights feeling sad
Earth sprouts nourishment giving us strength to run

Today is a different day — the sun is shining; the butterflies are out
Lush plants are bursting with fruit in yellow, red and green
So dry your tears; open your hearts, let your soul fly up and about
Like nature, let's make change — let's make sure we ALL seen

Like the birds are heard, we must be heard — silent we can longer be
Enjoy our differences — shout out how we love the many and the few
Each is unique — shun not those who think or do not look like you or me
Have no fear to raise your voice and befriend those not like you

—Jadwiga Brown



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