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Menachem Av 5773



The Hebrew month of Av (or Menachem-Av, the consoler of Av) is the fifth of the twelve months of the Jewish calendar.

The name Av literally means "father." It derives from the root which means "to will" or "to desire."

It is the month of the "low point" of the Jewish calendar (the 9th of Av, the day of the sin of the spies and the destruction of both the first and second Temples in Jerusalem) as well as the month of the "high point" of the Jewish calendar (the 15th of Av--"there are no happier days for Israel than the 15th of Av and Yom HaKippurim" (Mishnah Ta'anit 26:)--the day of finding one's predestined soul-mate).

This accords with the teaching of our sages that "the Mashiach is born on the 9th of Av." Relative to all other souls of Israel, the soul of Mashiach, who comes to redeem Israel from her state of (spiritual as well as physical) exile, is like a groom to his

bride. After his birth on the 9th of Av he reveals himself to his bride and betroths her on the 15th of Av.

Letter: Tet

The letter tet, which resembles a womb, equals 9, corresponding to the 9 months of pregnancy. In the month of Av the 9 months are condensed and concentrated into 9 days, from Rosh Chodesh Av (the yahrtzeit of Aaron the high priest, whose name comes from the word "pregnant") to the 9th of Av, the day, which as mentioned above is the birthday of Mashiach.

Zodiac Sign (mazel): Leo - Aryeh
The aryeh symbolizes the superrational power of Divine will (the meaning of the name Av, as mentioned above). The initial manifestation of G-d's will to destroy (the Temple) was in truth purely for the sake of reconstructing (the Temple with all of its spiritual meaning and significance for Israel and the entire world) for eternity.

In the words of our sages (Yalkut Shimoni, Yermiyahu, 259): "The lion [Nevudchanetzar, who is referred to in the Bible as a lion--Yermiyahu 4:7] came on the month of the lion [Av] and destroyed the lion [the Temple, which is referred to in the Bible, especially with regard to the altar, as a lion], in order that the lion [G-d, of Whom is said 'the lion roars,

IFR Mission Statement

The IFR is a professional organization of rabbis united by a commitment to Jewish tradition and a desire to facilitate the Jewish spiritual growth and life cycle needs of all.

IFR provides a progressive, pluralistic forum, linking member rabbis in a spirit of friendship and a sense of community.

IFR provides support for members in their professional endeavors and offers continuing education. IFR encourages professional relationships with rabbis and other rabbinic organizations.

IFR News Editors

Rabbis
Barbara Aiello
Frank Tamburello
Design/Layout:
shosh

Chodesh Av continued from page 1

who shall not fear'--Amos 3:8] come on the month of the lion and rebuild the lion." This secret is also reflected in the numerical value of aryeh. Aryeh in gematria = 216 = gevurah ("might"). Gevurah is the Divine power responsible for tzimtzum (contraction and diminution of Divine light and energy, as is said with regard to the beginning of Av:

"When Av enters we diminish in joy" [Mishnah Ta'anit 26:] and destruction. But $216 = 3 \times 72$. 72 = chesed ("lovingkindness"), the Divine power which "builds" all of reality, as is said (Psalms 89:3): "the world is built with [by the power of] chesed."

Three times chesed corresponds to the building of all three Temples, who are all contained and find their eternal consummation in the third Temple, to be built speedily in our days by Mashiach. For this reason the aryeh appears to the right, in the place of chesed, in the Divine Chariot (Ezekiel 1:10).

Tribe of Israel: Shimon

The name Shimon comes from the word "to hear." The sin of the spies on the 9th of Av entailed their speaking evil of the land of Israel and the people's accepting--"hearing"--the evil tongue. Thus the general rectification of the month of Av is the rectification of hearing.

Shimon is the only tribe that Moses did not explicitly bless at the end of the Torah. This was due to his "frustration" with the tribe of Shimon because of their involvement (more than all the other tribes) in the sin of Pe'or (prostitution with foreign women, which resulted in idolatry). The name Shimon divides into two words which spell sham avon, "there is iniquity."

In a certain sense, Moses (from the tribe of Levi) was most closely related (in spirit) to Shimon than to any other tribe. "Shimon and Levi are brothers" (Genesis 49:5) said our father Jacob in blessing his sons. The two together (Shimon leading his younger brother Levi) took revenge for the rape of their sister Dinah, and destroyed the entire city of Shechem.

In Kabbalah we are taught that the primary reincarnation of Moses is in Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, he who more than any other of the sages revealed the inner dimension of the Torah of Moses (in the Holy Zohar).

The "degeneration" of the power of Shimon leads to the destruction of the Temple. The rectification and elevation of that very power brings about the eternal reconstruction of the Temple.

The rectification of Shimon (the rectification of the sins and iniquities of Israel which brought to the destruction of the Temple in the month of Av, the month of Shimon) is by his clinging to the most essential attribute of Moses--humility. The word avon ("sin") permutes to spell anav ("humble") the unique term by which the Torah praises Moses (Numbers 12:3): "And the man Moses was very humble [anav], more than any other man on the face of the earth." The name Shimon transforms (in the month of Av) from "there is iniquity" (sham avon) to "there is the humble one" (sham anav).

The ability of Shimon to so "metamorphasize" depends upon his inner sense of hearing. Moses addresses Israel with the most all-inclusive statement of the Torah (Deuteronomy 6:4): "Hear [shemah] O' Israel...." Moses speaks to Israel through the soul-root of Shimon. Inner hearing (derher in Yiddish) comes with the deep sense of humility in the soul.

Even though Moses did not explicitly bless Shimon, our sages teach us that he alluded to him in the first word of his blessing to Judah (Deuteronomy 33:7):

"Hear [shemah] G-d the voice of Judah...."

In the division of the land of Israel to the twelve tribes, Shimon inherited his portion within the larger portion of Judah (this is the only instance that one tribe inherited its portion within another).

When the two names Shimon and Judah are added together: $466 + 30 = 496 = \text{malchut}$ ("kingdom")

Thus we learn that the malchut of Judah depends upon the "presence" and "partnership" of Shimon.

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Judah corresponds to the month of Nissan and the sense of speech. Shimon corresponds to the month of Av (the first two letters and "sub-root" in Hebrew of the word aviv, the name in Torah for the month of Nissan) and the sense of hearing. Av is the 5th month from Nissan, whose letter is hei = 5.

The two senses of speaking and hearing are obviously a pair, just as in the sin of the people's hearing (accepting) the "evil tongue" spoken by the spies, the sin of the 9th of Av.

Thus we conclude that the power of the month of Av (the month of [apparent] destruction) is to "hear" the message "spoken" by the month of Nissan (the month of redemption), and integrate the first and foremost power of Israel leadership into the consciousness of the Jewish people.

This is the secret of the "pregnancy" and "birth" of Mashiach (the quintessential leader of Israel) from the 1st of Av (the beginning of his 9 day pregnancy) to the 9th of Av (his birth). He then fully unites with the consciousness of the people, "in matrimony," on the 15th of Av.

The Kabbalists use different verses to focus on the Name of God during the Mussaf – Additional prayer – on Rosh Chodesh – The New Month. They use the following verse on Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av: "Moses and the Cohanim, the Levites, spoke to all Israel, saying, Be Attentive and Hear O Israel." (Deuteronomy 27:9)

The Ibn Ezra explains that there are two steps, "be attentive", and "hear". He applies the steps of this verse to Shema: One must be attentive to what one hears in Shema.

How does this reflect God's attributes? How do we use this to concentrate on God's Name in our Rosh Chodesh prayer?

God speaks to us in layers. We must listen, as the people of Israel did not to the warning of the prophets before the destruction of Jerusalem. We must listen to and hear the messages God sends, even during a month of tragedy; the month of Av.

Once we listen and hear, we must learn to pay attention to what we hear and apply the lessons we learn.

God's layered speech is a gift, especially during a time when we experience God as distant. This Name empowers us to discover the layers of God's messages.

II. The Hebrew of "Pay Attention" is "Haskeit", which shares the same root as Succot.

This Name indicates God as Cover of Protection even when all seems terrible.

The roof of the Succah allows us to see through the small open spaces, as in Yiskah – To see with the Divine Spirit. This derivation of God's Name allows us to "see" God's Presence in small points of light even when most of the world occludes His light, as the S'chach of the Succah.

III. Haskeit is also related to "Sucatim" in Chronicles I, Chapter: They were skilled at understanding others.

Sinat Chinam – Hatred without a Reason – caused the destruction of the Second Temple. This derivation of God's Name empowers us to hear others with greater sensitivity and awareness, so that we can repair the Sinat Chinam with Ahavat Chinam.



RAVENOUS RAVS

RABBI FRANK TAMBURELLO



Adafina - Haricot Stew with Beans Sefardic version of CHOLENT

Luis Moises Gomez, whose family fled to England and France after the Inquisition in Spain, was a prominent leader and businessman within the early Jewish community of New York.

Gomez built the Mill House, in Newburgh, NY in 1714 as a residence and center for his lumber and quarry business. The Mill House has been the home of five historic families, and is the oldest surviving Jewish dwelling in North America.

This version of a Sefardic cholent comes from the nineteenth-century handwritten Gomez family cookbook, and is surely one of the oldest recipes for the dish in the country.

6 pounds brisket of beef
2 cloves garlic, peeled and split
Salt to taste
Cayenne pepper to taste
3 Tablespoons olive oil
3 onions, peeled and sliced thickly
2 cups dried lima, fava, kidney, or other beans washed and drained
4 cups water or enough to cover
1 Tablespoon flour
4-6 Eggs (Optional)

Rub the brisket with the garlic, salt and cayenne pepper. Sear in a heavy casserole in the olive oil.

Surround with the garlic, onions, beans, and salt.

Add water. Cover and bake in a pre-heated oven (225 degrees) for 8 hours. Just before serving, mix the flour with 1/4 cup of the gravy, stirring briskly.

Then, stirring constantly, pour the paste into the gravy. Yield - 12 servings. (you can cook this dish ahead of time, refrigerate overnight, skim off the fat, slice the brisket and re-heat)

** This recipe is under the custodianship of Ruth Hendricks-Schulman (great, great, great, great, great, granddaughter of Luis Moises Gomez)*

Shakshuka



shosh's recipe using patio tomatoes; bell peppers and cilantro from her kitchen container garden.

1 small red onion, chopped
2 tbsp chopped bell pepper
4 to 5 ripe tomatoes, chopped
2 tbsp tomato paste
1 cup veg broth
1/4 cup peas
1/4 cup corn
2 eggs
1/2 tsp Cumin
salt to taste
coriander/cilantro leaves
Olive oil

In a pan, heat a tbsp of Olive oil. Add the chopped onions and bell pepper and saute for a few minutes. Add the tomato paste, chopped tomatoes and veg broth. Add the peas and corn as well. Season with salt and cumin.

Simmer and allow to cook till the corn and peas are cooked and there's some liquid left. Break the eggs into the base. Break the yolks with a spoon, cover and simmer. Let it cook for 2 -3 minutes till eggs are firm. Add chopped cilantro and serve with warm pita bread.

B'teyavon!

IFR SCRAPBOOK



Rabbi Dr. Renae Tobin –PA-wedding officiation



Rabbi shosh @ Bat Mitzvah-So-Flo style
Circa January 2011



Rabbi shosh and Rabbi Joseph Gelberman z"l
Delray Beach, FL Circa 2000

IFR Rabbi **Frank Tamburello** - NY



Rabbi Frank serves on the board of the IFR. He served as the rabbi at the Westchester Community for Humanistic Judaism in White Plains, New York for three years, and serves on the Executive Committee for the Society for Humanistic Judaism, and is the rabbinic advisor for the Society of Jewish Science in Manhattan.

Humanistic Judaism, organized in 1969 by Rabbi Sherwin Wine in Birmingham, Michigan, is a non-theistic approach to Jewish philosophy and culture. With over forty communities in the United States, Canada, and Israel, Humanistic Judaism seeks to create a contemporary alternative to traditional Jewish practice. Humanistic Jewish communities have members from diverse backgrounds: secular, agnostic, atheist, as well as reform, conservative, and orthodox. These communities welcome as members inter-faith, couples, gay, lesbian, and transgendered individuals, and anyone who identifies with the Jewish experience.

Rabbi Frank (Like Rabbi Barbara Aiello) comes from an Italian Jewish background, and edits the Ravenous Ravens (what else!) section of our newsletter.



Rifuah Shelema to:

Rabbi Marvin Pearlman

Rabbi Dr Raphael Pazo

The IFR extends heartfelt condolences to IFR Rabbi Richard Allen on the sudden loss of his beloved, wonderful, caring daughter, Alissa of Blessed Memory.

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A poor man lived with his wife and six children in a very small one-room house. They were always getting in each other's way and there was so little space they could hardly breathe! Finally the man could stand it no more.



He talked to his wife and asked her what to do. "Go see the rabbi," she told him, and after arguing a while, he went. The rabbi greeted him and said, "I see something is troubling you. Whatever it is, you can tell me."

And so the poor man told the rabbi how miserable things were at home with him, his wife, and the six children all eating and living and sleeping in one room. The poor man told the rabbi, "We're even starting to yell and fight with each other. Life couldn't be worse."

The rabbi thought very deeply about the poor man's problem. Then he said, "Do exactly as I tell you and things will get better. Do you promise?" "I promise," the poor man said. The rabbi then asked the poor man a strange question. "Do you own any animals?" "Yes," he said. "I have one cow, one goat, and some chickens."

"Good," the rabbi said. "When you get home, take all the animals into your house to live with you." The poor man was astonished to hear this advice from the rabbi, but he had promised to do exactly what the rabbi said. So he went home and took all the farm animals into the tiny one-room house. The next day the poor man ran back to see the rabbi. "What have you done to me, Rabbi?" he cried. "It's awful. I did what you told me and the animals are all over the house! Rabbi, help me!"

The rabbi listened and said calmly, "Now go home and take the chickens back outside." The poor man did as the rabbi said, but hurried back again the next day. "The chickens are gone, but Rabbi, the goat!" he moaned. "The goat is smashing up all the furniture and eating everything in sight!" The good rabbi said, "Go home and remove the goat and may God bless you."

So the poor man went home and took the goat outside. But he ran back again to see the rabbi, crying and wailing. "What a nightmare you have brought to my house, Rabbi! With the cow it's like living in a stable! Can human beings live with an animal like this?" The rabbi said sweetly, "My friend, you are right. May God bless you. Go home now and take the cow out of your house." And the poor man went quickly home and took the cow out of the house.

From IFR Rabbi David Degani in Boca Raton, FL the next day he came running back to the rabbi again. "O Rabbi," he said with a big smile on his face, "we have such a good life now. The animals are all out of the house. The house is so quiet and we've got room to spare! What a joy!"



Congregation Shirat Shalom

Presents:

"It Could Always Be Worse - A Rabbi's Tale"

A PUPPET SHOW AND PROGRAM FOR ALL AGES!

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When his house becomes too noisy, a poor man goes to the Rabbi for advice. The Rabbi says to bring animals into the house. What kind of advice is that!

Sunday, May 5th 2:30 - 4:00 p.m.

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Rabbi Barbara Aiello and Bar Mitzvah Walter Aiello prepare for Walter's Bar Mitzvah service in the newly renovated Calabria synagogue in southern Italy where Rabbi Barbara serves a growing b'nei anousim community.



Rabbi Barbara Aiello recently retired from her Chaplain position at Kobernick in Florida, and is living in an ancestral home in Calabria Italy with her husband. She continues to serve as rabbi in the newly renovated Calabria synagogue in southern Italy where Rabbi Barbara serves a growing b'nei anousim community.

Pictured Kobernick Hannukah Extravaganza December 2012



New IFR members since Kislev 5773

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Finding the Ideas of Forgiveness with the Act of Giving

The month of August for many is the end of summer lightheartedness. We put away our summer clothes and file away our summer memories and begin thinking about the important elements of the New Year which will be coming shortly.

As we enter August /September we begin preparations for the new ideas within the shift from easy going life of summer to the seriousness of the coming year. We do this by putting our minds into the mode of forgiveness. We establish this by saying the *slichot* prayer when our minds and hearts try to cling to the ideas of forgiveness and hope for a change in heart as we prepare for Rosh HaShannah.

Slichot prepares our mind and soul for the inspiration and initiative to change so we can stand with God on Rosh HaShannah. The change comes from hope and also actions of our relationships to one another. On *Slichot* we recite the beginning of the High Holiday liturgy and look to the words we recite in hope that it can prepare us for judgment. The prayers signal for us to search within our heart and give of ourselves not only to God, but to our fellow human beings searching for our inner quality of forgiveness.

On September 4th we begin the liturgy of the High Holy Days in which we search introspectively within our daily actions at our relationships to others. On both on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur there is a prayer which concludes, "Repentance, prayer, and charity or *tzedakah* may avert the evil decree."

Our tradition teaches that *tzedakah* has a significant impact. The Talmud in Yurasalmi Peah tells us that *tzedakah* is the equal of all of the commandments of the Torah combined. That is a strong statement if one looks at all the laws, including the ones relating to God and man; it is the charity of man to man that seems to outlast everything. All seems to come down to the word *tzedakah*, the Jewish concept of giving.

In trying to understand *tzedakah* one needs to search in our textual history for the meaning of giving and receiving for love and forgiveness. We find that the book of Deuteronomy states, "If there be a needy person among you, you shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand." The Hebrew begins with "*patoach tiftach*", you shall "open, open" your hand.

The verse continues with "*naton, titayn*" you shall "give, give" saying it twice and "your heart shall not be grieved". Opening your hand means giving from all elements of yourself, not just money but your time, even a kind word. The term is also said twice so we will give and not turn away from the opportunity to allow others to give to us.

Tzedakah is more than just giving, it is a state of mind that we put ourselves into in order to prepare for standing before God. When we approach God during the holidays we appear as a humble individual, a person pleading for justice and righteousness, but we are not always humble when we relate to others. We need to recognize our relationships with others as we prepare our hearts for the prayers of *Slichot*. We pray not asking for something for nothing but for a second chance, the ability to make our world and our souls better simply through our self-motivation of giving to individuals and our community. We want to change ourselves as well as the person who is affected from our gifts through the act of giving; this is how we understand the gifts that God has bestowed upon us. We allow the giving to act as a catalyst for forgiveness.

Tzedakah is rooted in a basic Jewish principle that all people are responsible for each other. We are obligated to share our physical possessions with those who are in need and we need to be proud of these actions when doing it. The righteousness of charity comes not from how much we give but the simple idea that giving is our responsibility. The notion that we are connected through our actions is what binds us as a community. We are to change our hearts when we give and thus the giver is truly the one who benefits from this action. The giver is changed by the simple act of giving.

As we approach this month it is not a time for us to look at the world and say, "You are on your own, you should pull yourself out of your problems by your own will, don't lean on me, work it out for yourself." We should be saying that we are stronger when we are together, we lean on each other, and we are responsible for each other. That is why the prayer for *tzedakah* during the High Holidays is an essential element of our faith. We stand together because with one voice we stand with God and offer our supplication.

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Finding the Ideas of Forgiveness with the Act of Giving

As we prepare to embrace God with our prayers for forgiveness we are given the opportunity to change. The acts of asking for forgiveness are to put our bodies into action and this is why giving is so important. When we embrace the love of God we see that the greatest gift that can be given is often the gift of forgiveness. Now is the time to give the *tzedakah* of forgiveness to those around us and try to start our lives with a new heart.

We are given this time to set aside old angers and make peace with old enemies and try and find our charity to finally forgive. On Slichot we ask God to forgive our mistakes but first we must forgive others.

This is the final act of *tzedakah* that we can give the world, a second chance for a relationship with us. We ask God to give us another year so we begin this by taking it upon ourselves to give others a new opportunity to come back into our lives.

We come together as a community to pray, so let us do it out of love and not spite, let's rebuild bridges that have fallen and build new relationships that seem distant from us. This is the greatest act of giving a person can do, rekindling a flame in someone that had appeared burnt out due to bad feelings.

Let us stand together and cling to God as Jews and human beings united through the act of giving. Take this time to connect with others and build and create something positive for the New Year.

מזל טוב

To IFR rabbi Bob Schriebman, and his wife Ruth on the birth of their first grandchild Zevin Elleanna Einhorn on VAV AV 5773

