

KEREN OR

Keren Or is a publication of Or Shalom Synagogue

Rosh Hashanah: Cleaning Up the Inner Street

Rabbi Laura Duban Kaplan

Rosh Hashanah. The Beginning of the Year.

The Hebrew word *rosh* is related to the first word in the Torah, *Bereisheet*. *Bereisheet* means “in a beginning” and it signals the beginning of the creation story. The word *rosh* in *Rosh Hashanah* hints that each of us is beginning our creation story for the year. Each of us has the opportunity to recreate ourselves.

The Hebrew word *shanah* is related to the modern Hebrew word *shinui*, change. At Rosh Hashanah, each of us has the opportunity to change.

Of course we cannot completely recreate ourselves, and we cannot change everything about ourselves. Sigmund Freud expressed this about our inner lives using the metaphor that each of us is like a city, built upon the hidden ruins of another city, built upon the hidden ruins of another city, and so on. As we mature, we evolve, and recreate ourselves. But our old selves, with our old skills, our old knowledge, our old memories, our old emotions, our old hurts, are still there. We may choose to go on an inner archeological dig, but the customs of Rosh Hashanah, the time of new beginnings, don't require us to.

There's plenty of work for us to do right at street level in our inner cities. We can clean up, and we can beautify.

Our sages suggest a simple clean-up technique for our inner city. As soon as we become aware that we feel unhappy with something we have done, we pinpoint the feeling, and get clear on what we did wrong. If what we did hurt anyone in mind and body, we let them know that we are aware of what we did, and we ask them to forgive us. Possibly together with them, we figure out what we are able to do to fix the situation, and do it, even if it's something small. And if we are lucky enough to be approached by someone who seeks our forgiveness, we should eventually grant it.

And then our sages suggest a simple beautification technique for the inner city. We do our best not to make the same mistake

again. Or in other words, we learn more about how live at street level. Sometimes in order to let go of the feelings that drive our mistakes, we have to forgive people who don't function well on their own inner surface streets, people who don't even know how to ask for forgiveness.

There's a free newspaper you can get on the street in Vancouver, called West End Weekly. Every week it includes a witty, literary column called “Free Will Astrology” by Rob Brezny. The column teaches that yes, the influence of the stars may be responsible for one of those old inner cities, but what happens on the street is entirely a matter of your free will. The author is, apparently, an Aries and, apparently, spiritually Jewish. Here is his advice to Aries at Rosh Hashanah last year:

Aries (born March 21-April 19): To the thug who stole my Chevy Malibu from its parking place while I was recording an album in San Francisco back in 1991: I forgive you. To the lovely and talented Artemisia, who couldn't bring herself to fall in love with me as we parted at the Burning Man festival back in 2001: I forgive you. To the agent who helped my writing career so much but also cheated me out of thousands of dollars: I forgive you. To any Aries readers who hate it when I refer to my personal life in their horoscopes, and would much rather I confine myself to talking about them: I forgive you, and recommend that you engage in a more thorough and profound version of the cleansing I just illustrated.

And he suggests a short, well maybe a long, homework assignment: “What's the most selfish, narcissistic thing about you? Do you think that maybe you should transform it?”

Happy *Rosh Hashanah* – the beginning of re-creation and change. *Shanah tovah* – may the change be for the better. And may our paths cross where our beautified streets intersect.

UPCOMING ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES

The Mystical Shabbat: Shabbaton with a Scholar

*Saturday & Sunday October 16-17
Led by visiting scholar Rabbi Dr. Elliot
Ginsberg*

Please join us for a deep learning-filled weekend with a teacher known for the twinkle in his eye! Learn with Reb Elliot about the Shabbat of the mystics, through his participation in the Shabbat morning program and a special niggun-filled Seudah Shlishit program on Shabbat afternoon. Study advanced Hassidic text on Friday morning, or beginning Hassidic text on Sunday morning. Enjoy a public lecture on "Peace and Spiritual Friendship" on Sunday evening. Details TBA!

Rabbi Elliot Ginsberg, Ph.D. is Associate Professor of Jewish Studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and a member of the Va'ad of the ALEPH Rabbinic Program.

Parshat Hashavua

*Selected Shabbat mornings, 9:00 am
Oct 2, Oct 16, Oct 30, Nov 13, Nov 20
Led by Gloria Levi*

Join us for an informal and thought-provoking small group discussion of the weekly Torah reading. No pre-registration necessary; just come, learn, and enjoy.

Kaddish: What is it? Why do we say it?

*Thursdays October 21 & 28, 7:30-9:00 pm
Led by Rabbi Hillel Goelman*

The Kaddish is an ancient prayer in both Hebrew and Aramaic whose origins and evolution through history are shrouded in mystery. In the first week of this two-part course we will explore what is known about the history of the Kaddish prayer, where it appears in the prayer service and the functions it serves in our davening. In the second week we will focus exclusively on the mourner's Kaddish. Contemporary translations and interpretations of the Kaddish will also be explored.

To get the most out of the course, participants are strongly encouraged to attend both parts. Knowledge of Hebrew is not a requirement. Please pre-register via email to orshalom@telus.net by October 8, 2010 with "Kaddish class" in the subject line.

Evening of Jewish Chant

*Sunday November 21, 7:30-9:00 pm
Led by Lorne Mallin*

Bring more spiritual illumination into your Chanukah this year. Enjoy an evening of sacred chanting focused on light. No musical or Hebrew ability required. Please bring a donation for the Abayudaya Jewish Community of Uganda.

Learn to Leyn

*Nov 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 7:30-9:00 pm
Led by Harriet Frost*

Learn how to be a Torah reader! Learn the trope (musical notes and notation) as you work towards preparing a short Torah reading for Shabbat December 11. The class will be taught by Harriet Frost, an experienced Torah reader and bnei mitzvah tutor. Prerequisite: ability to read Hebrew phonetically. Please pre-register via email to orshalom@telus.net by October 20, 2010 with "Leyning class" in the subject line.

Talmud: Jump Right In!

*Wednesdays February 2, 9, 16, 23
Led by Rabbi Laura Duhan Kaplan*

Through text study and discussion, enter a sugya (section of Talmud) that offers a microcosm of the Talmudic world: stories interwoven with halachic discussions about the ethics of speech, the nature of rabbinic authority, passion in prayer – all expressed through the lives of famous male and female heroes. Please pre-register via email to orshalom@telus.net by January 16, 2011, with "Talmud class" in the subject line.

Our study materials will be drawn from *A Beginner's Guide to the Steinsaltz Talmud*

by Rabbi Judith Z. Abrams (\$30). If you wish to purchase a copy of the book, please indicate that in your email.

What is Pesukei D'Zimra? Or: Why Should I Come 10:00 am on Shabbat?

*Saturday March 5, 10:00 am
Led by Rabbi Laura Duhan Kaplan*

Enjoy a special Shabbat service with a focus on Pesukei D'Zimra (Verses of Song) – the festival of song, poetry, teaching, and prayer we enjoy on Shabbat morning from 10:00-10:30 am. Early in the service, learn about the meaning and structure of Pesukei D'Zimra before experiencing it. Later, enjoy a dvar Torah about the hidden poetic meanings of the prayer Baruch She'amar. Come at 10:00 am sharp! No pre-registration needed!

Exploring Judaism

*Fifteen Tuesdays, Sept – June, 7:30-9:30 pm
Led by Rabbi Laura Duhan Kaplan*

Become acquainted with Jewish religious customs and ideas in an open, discussion-oriented environment. This series of fifteen monthly classes for those interested in exploring Judaism is open to couples, singles, new seekers, and novice participants at various stages in their spiritual journeys. Participation is by prior arrangement only, and participants normally join at the first class meeting. Class is free for members of Or Shalom, \$200 for individual non-members; \$250 for a nonmember couple. For more information, contact Rabbi Laura Duhan Kaplan at reblaura@telus.net or 604-872-1614.

YAC - YOUNG ADULT COMMUNITY WANTS YOU!

Or Shalom Knowledge and Skill Share (KASS)

Do you know how to make a wallet out of duct tape, the history of Morris Dancing or the current situation of the Roma people in Macedonia? Perhaps you have that rare talent of knowing how to install shelving, build a wooden planter box, or can teach basic animation.

Whatever your talent, skill, hobby or passion, this fall YAC invites **all of Or Shalom** to share your knowledge and showcase your skills through the YAC Knowledge and Skill Share.

We'll meet once or twice a month in someone's home for a 2 hour workshop / discussion provided by that month's featured presenter. We hope that many of our diverse and talented members will want to present and attend these fun, casual and informative sessions.

If you are interested in presented, willing to host a KASS evening in your home, or want to be added to the YAC e-mail list, please email us at orshalomyac@gmail.com

See you then, and Chag Sameach!

YAC Shabbaton

Coming this fall: YAC's first annual Shabbaton for fun and funky 20 and 30-somethings! A weekend of fun, learning and friends right here in the Lower Mainland. Experience Judaism in a fun, creative and communal way and spend the weekend with new friends and old. We'll be learning with a guest rabbi, creating meaningful ritual, and finding ways to put more "dish" into Yiddish. And you won't want to miss our closing event, the YAC JEWnior Prom!

For additional information, to get involved in planning, or to be added to the YAC e-mail list, contact YAC at orshalomyac@gmail.com

FROM OUR NEW PROGRAM DIRECTOR

My fellow Or Shalomniks,

I am so happy to have joined Or Shalom's staff last August as Program Director! Or Shalom has been in my life since my childhood, so it really is amazing for me to see this relationship take on such a positive and exciting new course. I first came to Or Shalom when I was about 10 or 11 years old, and I could barely make it through 5 minutes of the Shabbat Morning service before having to jump up to run outside and play. I could never have imagined reaching a point in my life where I'd be able to sit through a whole service – and enjoy it! Now there is nothing I look forward to more than our weekly Shabbat davenning. How things can change!

Or Shalom has always been committed to delivering the best spiritual and educational experiences for congregants of all ages, and I am really looking forward to playing a role in that continuing tradition. My main commitment to Or Shalom will be to deliver fun and glitch-free programming in a genuine and supportive environment. By doing so, I hope to help provide an atmosphere where learning is fun, effective, and contagious. I am really looking forward to working with everyone in the community, and I want to thank everyone for opening your doors to me in my new role.

All year long we while the time, in fleeting listless ways
But in between the bleak routine are our special, holy days

Pleasant smells caress your nose, Gut Yontif! finds your ear
Warming thoughts from heart to heart, scattered across the year

Sukkot breezes, Torah teachers, nights of brilliant glowing,
A festival for all the trees, and one that leaves nothing showing

The Feast of our Story, the songs of our glory, tales flying off of the plate
For all of this and so much more, I can hardly wait!

L'Shana Tovah
Asaf Pomerantz

Welcome to Asaf! Asaf brings to Or Shalom strong Jewish literacy, experience as a Jewish parent, strong computer skills, and many years of diverse work experience.

FAMILY, YOUTH, AND CHILDRENS' EVENTS WITH OR SHALOM

FAMILY HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

Sukkot Party! Please join us at Or Shalom for Sukkot crafts, songs, and learning. Shake it up with the Lulav and Etrog, and spend some quality time in Or Shalom's very own Sukkah. Fun for children of all ages! Sunday September 26th, 10:00 am – noon at Or Shalom.

Simchat Torah Celebration! Celebrate the gift of Torah at a very energetic holiday event, with plenty of group participation. Enjoy a family service, dancing with the Torah scrolls, great music by Or Shalom's house band, and genuinely wise Torah silliness from Reb Laura. Thursday September 30th, 6:00 pm, at Or Shalom.

Hanukah Party. 6:00 pm, Saturday December 4th at Or Shalom. Details TBA!

FAMILY SHABBAT CELEBRATIONS

Or Shalom, 10:00 am – 12:00 noon, followed by dairy-vegetarian potluck lunch
Ages 3 through bnei mitzvah enjoy their own morning program, and join the congregation for a family Torah service.

Shabbat mornings October 23, November 20, January 22, February 26

For more information about children's and family programs at Or Shalom, contact Program Director Asaf Pomerantz, orshalomprograms@telus.net, 604-872-1614.

CALLING ALL JEWISH TEENS!

Join TAG on Monday nights. TAG is your once-a-week source for Jewish community, celebration and learning with other Jewish teens. TAG is engaging, student centered, service oriented, and just plain fun.

Check us out at our **Orientation Night, for teens and parents**, Sept 13th, 2010 @ 6pm, at King David High School (41st & Willow)

To register or for more information: Visit TAG's website www.tagbc.ca, or contact TAG Program Director Noam Dolgin at 778-886-8241 or tagbc@telus.net.

TAG is sponsored by Or Shalom Synagogue, Temple Shalom, Congregation Beth Israel, Beth Tikvah Congregation, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver.

Palliative Care Mattress Fund Thank You!

Word from the ward was that the Therapeutic Roho Mattress, bought with your generous donations totaling \$6000 to the "Barry Goodman Mattress Fund", was in high demand, with patients expressing increased comfort on it. With still \$3000 left in the Fund, the physiotherapist, the Palliative Care Unit and I agreed the best use of the remaining money was to buy a second mattress, which we did!! The last \$700 was designated to a Nurses' Education Fund to help those wanting to take additional specialized courses. Thanks again to everyone for making this legacy possible.

Todah Rabah,

Kymn

Some People

Some people come into our lives and quickly go.

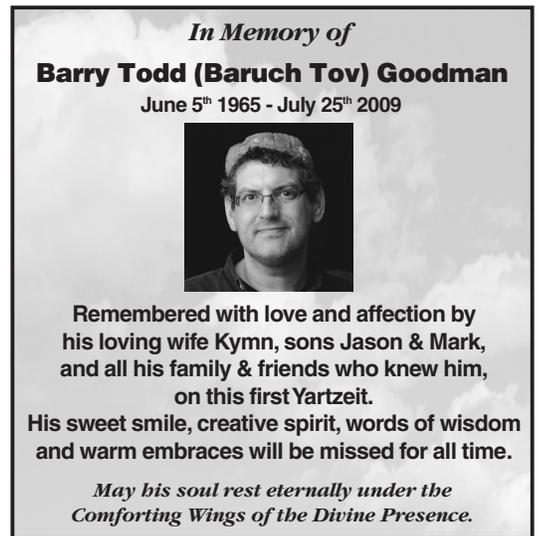
Some people move our souls to dance.

They awaken us to new understanding with the passing whisper of their wisdom.

Some people make the sky more beautiful to gaze upon.

They stay in our lives for awhile, leave footprints on our hearts and we are never, ever the same.

-- Author Unknown



Or Shalom Synagogue is a Jewish spiritual community affiliated with the ALEPH Alliance for Jewish Renewal.
We are creative, egalitarian, traditional and participatory.

Please join us any Shabbat morning, beginning at 10 a.m.
at our synagogue at 10th and Fraser.

For more information about Or Shalom, see our web page

www.orshalom.ca
or call the Or Shalom Office
604.872.1614

NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEES

Communications Committee

This year the Communications Committee has completed two major projects. We

- have a new and more efficient email contact manager.
- publish a weekly email newsletter called Doar Shalom.

If you are not receiving Doar Shalom and would like to be added to its distribution list please send a short note to webmaster@orshalom.ca.

The Communications Committee is also responsible for Or Shalom's website. We are anticipating a busy year as we take on its revitalization. We intend to bring to the website an attractive new look while making it even more user friendly.

Bayit Committee

The Bayit Committee in its role as the committee responsible for maintaining the "Bayit," our spiritual house, provides ongoing support to our office manager in all matters related to repairs and maintenance. The Committee has recently completed revision of rental rules, approved installation of a bike lock-up rack and has plans and approval from the Board of Directors to repaint and repair the lower sections of the synagogue.

The Bayit Committee meets on an as-required basis, usually electronically, and welcomes suggestions to help in its mission. The Committee is co-chaired by Frank Segal and Ron Einblau. Committee members are Heidi Mannis, Motti Lis, Charles Kaplan, Martin Gotfrit and Lily Salja.

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee's mandate is to attract, welcome, introduce and involve new members in our community. We work with the Rabbi and office manager, to call and welcome new members. We host an annual New Members Kiddush. This year's kiddush, held on the 17th of April, was spirited and well attended. The Membership Committee also conducts exit interviews, soliciting the feedback of any members who have left our shule.

Members of the Committee are Robin Friedlander, Lenore Rosen, Sara Bernstein, Martha Barker, Gill Berson, Ruth Stewart and Ellen Hamer.

MEDITATIONS ON THE NEW YEAR

A Prayer After Wrongdoing

I wish I could take it back, God. I wish I could turn back the clock and do it all differently. This time I would listen to my conscience. This time I would think before I acted. This time I would pray for Your guidance.

But I can't erase the past. All I can do is regret the choice I made. I was selfish. Now I will have to suffer the consequences of my actions.

Give me the courage, God, to admit I was wrong and apologize. I will have to find a way to repair the damage I have done. I will have to learn to act with integrity, compassion, and honor.

Forgive me, God, for not living up to the best in myself. Give me strength to endure my guilt and humiliation.

You have blessed me with so many gifts, God; help me to realize them. Please don't leave me, God; don't give up on me, be with me. Let me know you are near. Amen.

-- *Rabbi Naomi Levy*

The Bridge to Forgiveness

Forgiveness is like a bridge. It carries you over an expanse to the side of life that is softer, kinder, easier to bear. It is a shift of perspective, a new way of seeing our world, a different way of experiencing our inner life. If life is really a journey, then forgiveness is a main avenue, a path to life renewed. And along the way, there are stepping-stones you must traverse: loss, anger, acceptance, forgiveness, learning, and restoration. With each step, a new perspective is gained.

-- *Karyn D. Kedar*

Forgiveness Meditation

Ribbono Shel Olam! Master of the Universe! I hereby forgive anyone who has angered or who has upset me, or has done me any harm; who has harmed my physical body, my possessions, my honor; anything pertaining to me; whether accidentally or intentionally, by speech or by deed, in this incarnation or any other; any human being. And may no one be punished on my account. May it be Your will, *Adonai* my God, and God of my ancestors, that I continually walk upon the path of holiness and that I do not lapse into unconsciousness or indifference. May I receive the power to transmute past unconscious thoughts, words, and deeds into radiant awareness and loving right action.

-- *Traditional Jewish bedtime prayer, translated by Rabbi David Zaslow*