

# *Shiur L'Yom Revi'i*<sup>1</sup>

[Wednesday's Study]

READINGS:      ***Torah Vayalech:***              Deuteronomy 31:14-19  
                         ***Haftarah:***                                      Isaiah 55:12-13  
                         ***B'rit Chadasha:***                              Romans 7:9-11

***I Will Surely Hide My Face In That Day.***

[Deuteronomy 31:18]

Today's Meditation is Ezekiel 33:13;

This Week's Amidah Prayer Focus is Petition #6, *B'racha [The Blessing of the Year]*

***Vayomer Adonai el-Moshe*** – and the Holy One said to Moshe ... ***hen karvu yameicha lamut*** – Behold! The day of your death has arrived ... ***k'ra et-Yehoshua v'hityatzavu b'ohel mo'ed va'atzaveinu*** – Call Yehoshua to the Tent of Meeting; then I will give him his charge .... Deuteronomy 31:14a.

The Creator of the Universe spoke to Moshe more than He has ever spoken to any other person in Biblical history. The relationship between the Holy One and Moshe was so special that the Former declared of it: ***I speak with him Face to face, even plainly, and not in dark sayings; and he sees the form of Adonai.*** Numbers 12:8. When the Holy One spoke to Moshe, He did not speak in vague whispers from behind a veil or curtain; He appeared to the son of Amram and Yocheved in physical manifestations, with accompanying phenomenon verifying His very real Presence. He spoke to him face-to-Face, as a man speaks to his friend. The protocol was established at the burning bush – the Holy One speaks; Moshe *sh'mas*; and a stream of wisdom and revelation pours forth upon the earth. *Selah!*

This historic season of intimate daily interaction between a mortal and His Creator continues today. The Holy One doesn't beat around the bush; He opens the conversation with the stunning announcement: ***Hen karvu yameicha l'mut*** – i.e. *Behold, the day of your death has arrived!* Deuteronomy 31:14a.

## ***The Clock Ticks; The Bell Tolls; The Flower Fades***

The number of each man's days is predetermined. All breaths and heartbeats are scripted. Each sunset and sunrise we experience is part of a Grand Scheme of Artistry and Choreography. And so are yours and mine. *All flesh is like grass, and its loveliness is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, and the flower fades . . . .* Isaiah 40:6b-7a. The question is not whether you will die; the question is "Do you fear Death – i.e. for you, does Death still have its sting?"

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## ***Hen Karvu – Behold, it Approaches!***

***Hen karvu*** is not just a message sitting in the in-box of the prophet of the Exodus: it is an admonition addressed to every son or daughter of Noach. It applies equally to celebrities and to slaves; to leaders, to followers, and to rebels; to beggars and to tycoons; to heroes and heroines and to patsies and pariahs; to wise men and to fools; to capitalists and to socialists; to liberals and to conservatives; to our friends and to our enemies; and to us, our spouses, and our children. Our days on earth are numbered. The physical bodies in which our spirits reside each have an expiration date – and that date is always drawing near. Have you prepared against that day? Have you rehearsed your passage through the vanishing point? Have you seen what lies beyond? And when you exit this phase of life, will your bloodline – and your world – be better for your having been here – or worse? Have you been careful to leave a legacy of light, salt, wisdom, and *shalom* for those who pass through this world behind you? Will your life be a testimony to the greatness of your King – or will it constitute just one more backhand tribute to the destructive power of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of *tov v'ra*?

## ***Choosing Life – Even in the Face of Death***

Torah is not about death – it is, instead all about *life*. It is about *the purpose of life*. It is about the *possibilities* and the *potentialities* and the *panoramas* of life. It is about the *pathways* to life. That is why Moshe just summed up the entirety of Torah by powerfully challenging us to ***‘choose life’*** – *that both we and our seed may live and flourish*. But alas, to everything – including death – there is a season. And to every facet of life – including death - there is an appointed time. That is why, amidst all the special Covenant times of the Holy One in which we celebrate life, there is one day a year reserved for us to change our celebratory focus, stop in our tracks, and stare death right in the face. On that day we discover if and/or to what extent we still, despite knowing our King’s sovereignty over all things, *fear death*. We discover if we have – or have not - finally reached the point in our Beautifully Choreographed Divine Romance Novel where we are content to either live or die – as long as in so doing we continue to walk with and do the will of the Holy One<sup>2</sup>. What day each year do we consider such heavy questions? It is, of course, *Yom Kippur*. *Yom Kippur* – which is, of course, just over the horizon - is the most awesome day of the entire year. On *Yom Kippur* each human being is called forward for a dress rehearsal of his or her own death. We empty ourselves of ourselves. We eschew all normal activities. We take neither food nor drink. We make no pleasant conversation. We abhor creature comforts. We deny every physical appetite, urge, and drive. We deafen

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<sup>2</sup> See Galatians 1:21-24: ***For to me, to live is Mashiach, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Mashiach, which is far better. Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you.***

ourselves to earthly consolation. We anesthetize ourselves against earthly pleasure. We wrap ourselves in burial cloth.

As *Yom Kippur* approaches each year, so does our appointed time to come to grips with the Temporal Nature of life in the flesh. The Holy One's *Hen karvu* reminder to Moshe is our cue, every year, to remember that every single breath, every heartbeat, and every brain wave we experience is on loan to us from, and is for the sole purpose of serving, our Creator. We take the *Hen karvu* to heart, recognizing that we are not really the collection of faces, voices, ethnicities, brains, moods, opinions, and physiques that men perceive us to be, but are instead eternal spirits - on temporary assignment in physical bodies stamped by their Designer from the onset with a predetermined expiration date. We realize that we are here on earth, in physical form, for a purpose - and not at all a fleshly, self-serving, pleasure or comfort oriented one. What is our purpose? Our purpose is to join forces with the Holy One as He unveils His Grand Plan for the redemption of Mankind as a species and for the restoration of Creation to its intended state of beauty, fruitfulness, and shalom. We accept that our King has assigned to each of us a *specific range of days* to accomplish our purpose. Choices we make while here can affect the timing to a degree: we know that we can increase the number of days somewhat if we walk the earth in the flesh by following His Torah and serving our fellow man; and we know that we can decrease the number of our days somewhat by eschewing His directives, and following instead the corrupt dictates, desires, appetites, and impulses of our flesh, pseudo-intellect, and self-will. We know our King loves us, and that He has great plans for each of us to effectuate some level of *tikkun* in our bloodlines and spheres of influence while we occupy these mortal bodies; but we also know that He chose the moment to bring us into the world in bodily form, and that He and He alone gets to choose when we are removed from it . . . as well as in what manner and with what degree of trauma that removal will take place. We know that He holds all our days in His Hands – and, hopefully, we are at *shalom* with that. If we are, we do not fear death. If we are, death has lost its sting.

### *Hen Karvu . . . Now What?*

Upon hearing the Holy One's *Hen karvu* warning, Moshe had some important decisions to make. He had to decide how most effectively to 'finish the race'. It is the same with us. We, too, must decide how we will respond to *Hen karvu*. Let us draw strength and inspiration from the story of Moshe's final days. Our first assignment in the wake of *Hen karvu* - as was his - is to consider:

1. If I died today, what part of the purpose for which the Holy One gave me the breath of life and the powers of thought, speech, and social and geographical influence would remain unfulfilled? and

2. In whatever time the Holy One determines I have left, how can I bless and serve my King, my family, and my assigned spheres of influence most meaningfully, honorably, and effectively?

Why does the Holy One have us rehearse the day of our death annually? To help us face and overcome death's 'sting'; to train us to live in constant awareness of the shortness of time and opportunity; and to inspire us to dedicate ourselves urgently to the task of living well lived, fruitful, world-enhancing lives. As dead men do not eat, we are not to eat. As dead men do not drink, we are not to drink. As dead men do not dress in finery, but are dressed in a burial shroud, we are not to dress in finery, but in our burial shroud. And, most importantly, as dead men fall silent, awaiting whatever fate is decreed for them, we are to fall silent and await whatever fate is decreed for us.

### ***The Precious Legacies Moshe Left For the World***

Moshe is going to leave both mankind and physical Creation far better off for being born. His entire life story – from his ignoble birth and violent youth to his mysterious death - radiates hope. The vast treasures of revelation he received His in the Beauty Realm of the Creator of the Universe – and then patiently imparted to *B'nei Yisrael* – inspire the soul to soar with *emunah*. No matter what age one may live in, Moshe's passion for life and love for his/our King prove to be wildly contagious. His steadfast perseverance in the face of every challenge; his honesty about his own epic failures, personal tragedies, and fleshly shortcomings; his gradual, school-of-hard-knocks maturation in humility; his faithful service to the Kingdom of Heaven; these things all constitute wonderful legacies left by Amram and Yocheved's son. But there are three elements of legacy that over-ride even these. The first is his *circumcision-of-the-lips-and sanctification-of-the-gift-of-speech* legacy – i.e. the Torah. The second is his *circumcision of the flesh and sanctification-of-human-bloodline* legacy – i.e. the awakening of *Kohanim, Levi'im, B'nei Yisrael*, and *the mixed multitude of the goyim*. And the third is his *circumcision-of-the-heart-and-sanctification-of-physical-time-and-space* legacy – i.e. the design and court-protocols of the *Mishkan [Tabernacle]*. Moshe's last day on earth will be spent putting the finishing touches on each of these three very special areas of legacy.

### ***Moshe's Last Visit to the Mish'kan – The Sanctification-of-Physical-Space Aspect of His Legacy***

Moshe's last day of mortal life begins with a farewell visit to the earthly replica of Heaven's Throne Room that he introduced to the world. Four decades ago Moshe found himself caught up in the clouds atop Mount Sinai. For forty days and nights he was given a breathtaking tour of the Heavenly reality after which the *Mish'kan*, or Tabernacle, was patterned. The Holy One sought a physical port-of-entry through which His Kingdom could come, His will could be done, on earth as in Heaven. He sought to have a finite replica of His infinite Beauty Realm on this planet, where His

Manifest Presence and glory could abide in the midst of, and inspire awe, reverence, and goodness in, ordinary men. His instructions to Moshe at that time were: **“According to all that I show you, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, exactly like that is how you are to build [it].”** Exodus 25:9. With a little help from between two and three million redeemed souls, he built it indeed! As Exodus 39:42-43 makes it clear: **According to all that the Holy One had instructed Moshe, so the children of Israel did all the work. Then Moshe looked over all the work, and indeed they had done it; as the Holy One had instructed, just so they had done it.**

The *Mish'kan* – with all its prophetic shapes and images, its essential ‘wax-on, wax-off’ training protocols for approach, *kippurim*, and communion, and its eternal, unmistakable ‘surely goodness and mercy will follow me, and I will dwell in the House of the Holy One forever’ message – constitutes Moshe’s ‘sanctification-of-physical-space’ legacy. For the last 4 decades of Moshe’s life – and well beyond – fallen, flawed, and broken human beings had the inestimable privilege of walking in and out of the sanctified space of this Embassy of the Kingdom of Heaven, and receiving healing, every single day. But there was one place – the innermost chamber where the Holy One’s Manifest Presence dwelt – that Moshe alone had a standing invitation to daily pass through the great linen veil bedecked with to converse face-to-face with the King. The time has come, however, for Moshe to turn over this right of passage to another man. Who is that man? He is the prototype of the Messiah who will come. The Holy One tells Moshe:

***Q'ra et-Y'hoshua v'hityatzvu b'ohel mo'ed***  
*Summon<sup>3</sup> Y'hoshua and let him stand<sup>4</sup> in the Communion Tent,*

***v'atzaveinu***  
*then I will give him his charge/commission.'*  
**[Deuteronomy 31:14]**

### ***Y'hoshua's First Experience of the Holy One's Manifest Presence***

As soon as Moshe and Y'hoshua arrive at the *Mish'kan* the Holy One joined them in

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<sup>3</sup> The word our English Bibles translate as ‘call’ or ‘summon’ is the Hebrew verb **qare**, *kaf, resh, alef*, Strong’s Hebrew word #7121, pronounced *kaw-raw'*. Its first Biblical usage is in Genesis 1:5, where Elohim ‘called’ [Hebrew **qara**] the **Light day** [*yom*], and called [Hebrew **qara**] the darkness **night** [*leilah*]. To summon, or subpoena – i.e., to **call forth by the sheer force of one’s words** – is the meaning.

<sup>4</sup> The word our English Bibles translate as stand in this verse is the Hebrew verb **yatzab**, *yod, tzade, beit*, Strong’s Hebrew word #3320, pronounced *yaw-tzawb'*. The first Biblical usage of this verb is found in Exodus 2:4, where we are told that Miryam, as a little girl, stood [Hebrew, **yatzab**] a distance away from the ark in which her baby brother Moshe was placed in the Nile, to watch over him. This verb is the root of the word **Nitzavim**, ‘standing ones’, which described everyone participating in the covenant renewal ceremony of Deuteronomy 28-30. As discussed in that context, the Hebrew verb focuses not on the act or posture of standing [i.e. being on one’s feet], but upon the purpose of standing – to *be of service*, to *pray*, to *participate in a covenant act*, etc.

grand style. The Holy One chose this venue and this appointed time to share with Y'hoshua, as He has previously shared with Moshe, the revelation of what is going to happen in the years that follow the conquest of the Land of Promise. What the Holy One has to say could not have been welcome news to a man like Yehoshua.

***V'kam ha-am hazeh v'zanah***

*... this people will rise up and play the prostitute*

***acharei Elohei nechar-ha-aretz***

*after the strange gods of the land,*

***asher hu v'shamah b'kir'bo***

*where they go to be among them.*

***v'azavani v'hefer et-briti asher karati ito***

*They will forsake me, and they will break my covenant that I have made with them.*

**[Deuteronomy 31:16(b)]**

Wow! Before Y'hoshua's official tenure as HaNavi even begins, he is told the people that will go with him across the Jordan are going to *apostatize*. He is plainly told that they will *rebel*, will *forsake the Holy One*, will *worship other gods*, and will *abandon the sh'ma/sh'mar/asah* lifestyle for which they were created. And the Holy One makes it clear that THERE IS NOT ONE THING Y'HOSHUA OR ANYONE ELSE CAN DO ABOUT IT!!!!

The Holy One did not want Y'hoshua – or any of us – to be RESULT ORIENTED, or RESULT DRIVEN. We are to be *sh'ma* people – people who respond as a Bride – not people who need to see, or judge their value based upon – physical results. Contrary to popular opinion the Holy One did not create us to 'win our cities' or our world. The Holy One - the Omnipotent One - is quite capable of doing that Himself. Hence He arranged quite without our help for a Lamb to be slain *before the foundation of the world*. Revelation 13:8. We cannot claim much credit for that, now can we?

As the Betrothed Bride and co-regent-in-training of the Creator of the Universe, the Covenant People are ordained to have a very important role in the Great Harvest of the Bridegroom-King's fields and vineyards – but that role is not to make the harvest happen. Our assigned tasks in the process are: [1] to let Him use us as He pleases to sow Seed [i.e. the Seed of His Word] into our various spheres of influence [see Deuteronomy 6:6-9] and [2] to cooperate with Him in maintaining an atmosphere within those spheres of influence which is conducive to the operation of the *Ruach HaQodesh* [see the entire Book of Leviticus, which containing the Protocol for the Ultimate Divine Bridal Makeover].

The Holy One created us to *respond to Him*, and to *let Him direct our actions* in a way that would accomplish on earth, in the realm of time in which we live, the eternal results He ordained before we were born. There may or may not be results we can see

or appreciate with our human eyes in our lifetimes. That is the way it is supposed to be. The Holy One does not, you see, want us to do *mitzvot* – or ministry – for the satisfaction of *seeing results*. The need to ‘see results’ is a trap into which we who are in covenant to the Holy One are never supposed to fall.

Like Y’hoshua on the day of Moshe’s ‘going out’, we all need a dose of reality from time to time. We all need to know the Holy One does not need our *bright ideas*, our *ministries*, our *buildings*, our *programs*, our *meetings*, our *gifts* or our *anointings*. We should never think of ourselves so highly that in our minds the Holy One starts to become our servant and dependent – instead of *the other way around*. We all need to keep in mind that *whatever we do* on earth we are to do as a *sh’ma* response to the guiding lead of the Holy One, not out of a fleshly desire to either have an impact on the world or to make a name for ourselves.

If you will recall, desiring to *have an impact on the world and make a name for ourselves* is the essence of *Babel*. See Genesis 11:3-4. And this Babylonian system is the exact opposite of – and antithetical to - the Holy One’s kingdom. It is out of this mindset and worldview that the Holy One called Avram – and all Avram’s ‘children’ forever!

### ***Y’hoshua Is Given a Preview of ‘World History’***

The Holy One then shares Y’hoshua His long-range plan to purge and redeem His people of waywardness. The methodology through which the Holy One intends to do this involves empowering humankind to transcend and overcome a series of *increasingly intense trials, tribulations, disasters and calamities*. The Holy One’s explanation of this methodology commences with what is to us a very strange statement. The Holy One indicates that when human beings abandon Him and the Torah lifestyle – as He knows they inevitably will - His response will not be to send prophets chasing after them to beg them to come back to Him. Instead He says: ***V’histarti fanai mehem*** – i.e. “I will surely hide My Face from them . . . .” Deuteronomy 31:18.

### ***Histar P’nei* – the Hiding of the Face**

The concept of the *histar p’nei* – the *hiding of the Face* - of the Holy One is very important – crucially important – to the plan of the Holy One to redeem mankind. When the Holy One says He will hide his Face [Hebrew *satar asatir p’nei*] He does not mean that He will utterly reject His People. He does not ever abandon His covenant; with Him there is no shadow of turning. He does not, will not, would never, leave or forsake His People. What the Holy One *does do* from time-to-time however is to strategically *conceal Himself* from our *sight* and *senses*. See e.g. Romans 11:7-8, where Shaul quotes from Deuteronomy 29:4 and Isaiah 29:10. This means He actually chooses, for the ultimate good of the people involved and their progeny, to *allow sin to blind the eyes of His people* so as to make Himself and His blessings invisible to them.

Why does the Holy One do this? What is this seemingly disingenuous strategy all about? Torah tells us. It is in order that there will arise in His people a hunger and thirst – a famine, as it were – for the Presence and the Word of the Holy One. He hides His Face – and the light of His Countenance – from men so that, sensing their great loss, His People will say:

***Ha-hu ha-lo al ki-eyn Elohai bekirbi***

*Is it not because our God is not near to us*

***metza'uni ha-ra'ot ha-eleh***

*that these disasters come upon us?*

**[Deuteronomy 31:17]**

Even when disasters and calamities strike, you see, the Holy One will never leave or forsake His People. He will never turn his back on either His Covenant with Noach and his progeny or His Covenant with Avraham and his. The separation we experience is therefore not due to His leaving us – but is solely attributable us declaring independence and walking away from Him! The prophetic question of Deuteronomy 31:17 is designed to call forth an introspection – an analysis of *when* and *how* and *why* the Holy One's People have strayed from our Divine Bridegroom and wandered from His ways. And the real question - the one that matters most - is how soon the Holy One's Redeemed People will “miss” the *al-Panei* [face-to-Face] intimate relationship with the Holy One, within which His voice was ever present and near to *sh'ma* and His *mitzvot* were ever present and near to be *sh'mar*-ed and *asah*-ed.

In each individual's life the answer to this ‘real’ question depends upon what level of calamity, hardship, disaster, or loss it will take before he or she is willing to abandon “the work of their hands” - the product of their own religious efforts - and return to intimate relationship with - and total dependence upon - the Holy One.

How about **you**, Beloved? If you have stepped off the Torah pathway onto a ***derech rasha*** [crooked way], the best possible time to turn and run into the arms of the Bridegroom-King is *right now*. If you have allowed your mind to be polluted by ***mach'sheivotav aven*** [thoughts of evil] - toward another being created in the Holy One's image, toward yourself, or toward the Holy One – the best time to seek cleansing, and a renewing of the mind, is this very moment.

The Hebrew phrase at the end of the last quote - ***ki-yarbeh l'sloach*** - literally means “*He will be great to forgive*”. Forgiveness, you see, is a large part of what makes the Holy One a great God.

### ***Hide and Seek***

In this poignant season of ***t'shuvah*** [turning back to the Holy One and His covenantal path] we are told by the sages to read Psalm 27 daily. Near the end of that Psalm we find the

following words:

**When you said, "Seek My face," My heart said to you,**

*"I will seek your face, O Eternal One." Don't hide your Face from me.  
Don't put your servant away in anger.*

*You have been my help. Don't abandon me, neither forsake me, God of my salvation.*

**[Psalm 27:8-9]**

Why do ‘enemies and foes’ come upon us ‘to eat our flesh’ [v.2]? Why does a ‘host encamp around us’ [v.3]? Why does ‘war rise against us’ [v.3]? Why is there a ‘time of trouble’ [v.5]? Why do ‘false witnesses rise against us’ [v.12], and breathe out cruelty [v. 12]? Why does our King hide His Face? There is a very good reason, Dear Ones - it is so we will stop what we are doing, realize the depth of our great loss, and seek His Face! He creates in our soul a vacuum – so we have a compelling reason to return to Him. And when we return to Him, He not only heals us, and delivers us – He allows us to gaze upon His Beauty [v. 4]. When we gaze upon His Beauty we are enraptured, and He becomes our Beloved forever. All else pales in insignificance and fades into His magnificence. And miracle of miracles, the moment we put aside our ‘idols’, stop our flurry of activities, bow before His Throne, and gaze up into His Face in wild-eyed wonder, He says to us:

*You have captured My Heart, My sister, My Bride!  
You have stolen My heart with one glance of your eyes!*

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*You are beautiful, My darling, as Tirzah, lovely as Jerusalem,  
Majestic as troops with banners. Turn your eyes from Me; they overwhelm Me!*

**[Song of Songs 4:9, 6:4-5]**

Have **you** gazed upon His Beauty lately? Are you longing to do so right now?

### ***D-Day Has Arrived***

How would you feel if the Holy One were to step outside His cloak of invisibility into your world and say these very words to you? What emotions would rise up in you? What regrets would come to mind? What questions would you ask? And *how*, and *where*, and *with whom*, and *doing what* would you choose to spend your last days?

These are all appropriate questions to ponder at this time of the year. Yom Kippur, which is right around the corner, is the *annual rehearsal of the day of our death*. The Days of Awe – i.e. the ten days beginning with the Day of Trumpet Blasts and leading up to *Yom Kippur* - constitute our prescribed season of *intense mortality-consciousness*. All that is physical will one day come to an end, and all that will be left will be our eternal spirit. Yom Kippur forces us to come to grips with the ultimate reality. The fast of *Yom Kippur* calls upon us to ask: “*Will we live through this season and go on with a new lease on life - or is it our appointed time to die?*” None of us know the answer to that question. The point of asking the

question is not to find out the answer – it is to look death in the face, see our life for what it truly is, and let all the rationalizations, excuses, and defenses melt into clarity and perspective.

During this season it is a tradition to consider the quality of life we have lived up to this point – especially in the last year. It is natural, as we watch the seasons change, to ponder to what extent we have been good – and poor – stewards of the ‘twelve precious gifts’ of our Maker. What are the twelve precious gifts? They are:

1. the inspiring beauty of physical Creation, as well as how it functions as a thriving collection of interactive ecosystems;
2. life-breath [not to mention heartbeat, neural impulses, coordination, and strength];
3. creativity/creative drive and skillsets unique to each person;
4. material provision/daily bread [and far, far beyond];
5. time – i.e. all the acts of the Divine Calendar [day and night, the Shabbat, the moon’s phases, summer and winter, seed time and harvest, and the mo’edim,
6. the amazing capacity for cognitive thought;
7. the ability to speak into the lives of, converse with, and bless others;
8. relative health;
9. the *promises* and *empowerments* of the Covenant; and
10. physical space to live, move, work and operate in –every place the sole of our foot shall tread, and every place into which our auditory or technological footprint extends the opportunity to have social, societal, and environmental influence;
11. the capability of memory storage and recall;
12. the opportunities he gives each of us to have personal, social, societal, and environmental influence.

These are precious gifts indeed. How we use them defines whether the life we live is – or is not – a well-lived life. Every day, however, we are confronted with a barrage of temporal pressures and fleshly challenges that threaten to take up our time and energy, stir up the *dark energy side* of our appetites, urges, passions and emotions, and demand our attention. If we are not careful, these things – instead of the enjoyment and utilization of the Holy One’s twelve precious gifts - will eat up our allotted time on earth like corruption eats away flesh. If we let them, the cares of this world will cause us to leave the most important parts of the glorious redemptive mission for which we were placed on earth at our such-a-time-as-this undone. They will cause us the amazing potential for good with which the Holy One designed us woefully underutilized if not tragically untapped. On *Yom Kippur*, we confront our death in order that we can choose to truly live – to leave behind

us, for our spouses, children, communities, and nations the legacy of a truly well-lived human life.

So how are you doing presently with the ‘*well-lived human life*’ assignment for which the Holy One designed you, Dear One? It is time to *rehearse the day of your death*, Dear One. When you deny yourself on *Yom Kippur* – when you cease eating and drinking and indulging your flesh - into His Hands you commend your spirit. You actually experience death in microcosm. Your flesh screams because it does not want to relinquish its control over your spirit. But relinquish control it must. And your spirit will have questions for you to answer that your flesh is most definitely not going to want to hear. What are those questions? I’ll tell you some of them. The rest you need to find out for yourselves.

Your spirit wants you to start off the Days of Awe thinking on these 16 things:

1. If you knew you were going to die today, what would you wish you had done differently in regard to each of your important relationships?
2. Have you given forgiveness where it needs to be given?
3. Have you confessed what needs to be confessed?
4. Have you asked for forgiveness where it needs to be sought?
5. Have you made reparation and restoration for wrongs you have done that you can atone for?
6. Have you sewn mercy and kindness where they need to be sewn?
7. Have you sought reconciliation with those with whom you need to?
8. Have you said “I love you” and “Thank you” and “I am proud of you” everywhere it needs to be said?
9. Have you apologized for saying in anger, in passion, or in pride that which should never have been said?
10. Have you mentored everyone you were supposed to – or indeed anyone - in the Ways of the King?
11. Have you banished all hate and prejudice from your heart?
12. Have you hugged all those you have been created and placed on earth to hug?
13. Have you prayed for – and invested time and money in – the shalom of Jerusalem?
14. Have you performed all the acts of kindness your life was planned by the Holy One to include changed the atmosphere in the sphere of influence He assigned to you?
15. Have you left every place you have been gone better than you found it?
16. Has the life you have lived in the time you have been provided inspired the next generation – especially your own children - to pursue the Bridegroom-King and learn and adhere to His Ways as the primary goal of their lives?

Other things you may want to consider are: Has your presence in the world thus far been a *breath of fresh air* and a *blessing* to the world - or has it been more like a curse – a mistake for which some future member of your bloodline will feel the need to be raised up to make *tikkun*?

Have you introduced into, or perpetuated in, your bloodline, any addictive behavior[s]? Voyeurism? Self-obsessed narcissism? Fornication? Whining and complaining? Gluttony? Gossip? Broadcasting a victim or entitlement mentality? Leaping to conclusions and making uninformed judgments? Laziness? Lukewarmness toward the Holy One? Lawlessness? Idolatry? Occult practices?

Has your life thus far ever been characterized by hardness of Heart toward the poor, the widow, the fatherless, the foreigner, and the disadvantaged? By arrogance? By uncontrolled anger? By over-reaction? By offense? By creation and/or perpetuation of drama? By overemphasis on money material things? By slothfulness? By argumentativeness? By manipulative behavior? By jealousy? By hyper-sexuality? By promiscuity? By lying? By taking advantage of other people for your own advantage? By self-righteousness? By betrayal? Abandonment?

Have you been *celebrating life, and living it to the fullest*?

Have you been *wasting opportunities at real positive impact*?

Have you been *hurting and disappointing people you love*?

Have you been *ignoring those who need you most, and expending your time, attention, energy and resources on people and causes that are someone else's business/focus*?

Have you been *prioritizing things and ideas which are meaningless*? Have you, simultaneously, been *failing – or even refusing - to see, appreciate, and invest yourself in that which is precious*?

Hmmm. Are those tears I see forming in your eyes, Dear One? Well, I have good news for you – *you still have time to do something about it!* These are the Day of Awe. *Teshuvah, tefilah, and tzedakah* are still available to ameliorate the Decree. Even on *Yom Kippur*, all we are called to do is REHEARSE the day of death; for most of us at least, we will not actually die! At least we have this moment – so let's make the most of it! It is for us, the living to let this close brush with death and judgment that He has arranged for us *be our teacher!* Now is the time to re-center

our lives on the Covenant. Now is the time to recalculate. Now is the time to return to our Creator and His Plan. Please take advantage of the amazing opportunity this season on the Bridegroom-King's calendar affords to us! *Awake, O sleeper! Arise from the dead, and Messiah will give you light! See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.* Ephesians 5:14-16.

### ***But What About Moshe? He Really IS About to Die!***

It is different for Moshe. What is coming is not just a rehearsal for him. He really is about to die. This is *not a drill!* How will he respond? How will he spend his last days? What will he prioritize?

How do you think it made Moshe feel when His Maker appeared to him and said, matter-of-factly: ***Hen karvu yameycha lamut*** [*Behold, the day of your death is drawing near!*] How did it affect the man who murdered the taskmaster back in Egypt to be told by the One that keeps every human being's days written in a book that his death was imminent and irreversible? How did it impact the man whose sons were not showing any inclination to follow in his footsteps whatever to be told that his opportunities to provide a positive influence was rapidly winding down? Torah does not specifically tell us how this revelation affected Moshe. But he did not voice any objection. He did not complain. He did not mourn. Perhaps by this time he had begun to feel an ambivalence toward this earthly life somewhat akin to what Shaul of Tarsus would later describe. Shaul said: ***To me, to live is Messiah, and to die is gain. If I live on in the flesh, this will mean that there is fruit from my labor; yet what I would choose I cannot say. For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Messiah, which is far better.*** Philippians 1:21-23.

Death is just a dropping off point for our physical bodies. Like a propulsion rocket, when it has done its work, it is jettisoned, and returns to the *terra firma* of earth from which it came. The spirit – that which defines our true identity – however, takes wing, and continues the journey on the course the propulsion rocket has established for it.

### ***Questions Regarding Today's Study***

1. In Gesenius' Lexicon, look up the Hebrew words ***af*** [*alef, feh sofit*, Strong's Hebrew word #639, which has historically translated as 'anger' in Deuteronomy 31:17]. Write the Hebrew word and the first definition given by Gesenius for the word.
2. In Gesenius' Lexicon, look up the Hebrew words ***azab*** [*ayin, zayin, beit*, Strong's Hebrew word #5800, which has historically translated as 'forsake' in

Deuteronomy 31:17]. Write the Hebrew word and your summary of the first definition given by Gesenius.

3. In today's aliyah of the haftarah, after declaring that the words of life He has spoken will not return to Him void, but will accomplish every purpose for which He released them on and over the earth, the Holy One explains His purpose in sending those Words. His purpose was that His covenant people would:

*... go out with joy, and be led out with peace;  
The mountains and the hills will break forth into singing before you,  
And all the trees of the field will clap their hands.  
Instead of the thorn will come up the cypress tree,  
And instead of the brier will come up the myrtle; and it will be to the Holy One for a name,  
For an everlasting sign that will not be cut off.*

[Isaiah 55:12-13]

[A] What are to be the two primary characteristics of people in covenant with the Holy One?

[B] How will Creation respond to the presence of people of the covenant as, when, and to the extent they exhibit these two characteristics?

[C] Who will be glorified when sons and daughters of the covenant live a lifestyle exhibiting these two characteristics?

3. In today's assigned reading from Shaul's letter to the redeemed community at Rome, Shaul says:

*I was alive once without the law,  
but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died,  
And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death,  
For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me.*

[Romans 7:9-11]

[A] What is the difference between what Shaul refers to as the 'law' [Greek *nomos*] and what he refers to as the 'commandment' [Greek *entole*]? **NOTE:** *nomos* is used in such verses as Matthew 5:17, 5:18, 12:5, and 23:23; *Entole* is used in such verses as Matthew 5:19, Matthew 15:6 and Mark 12:30.

[B] Shaul was born a Jew, of the tribe of Binyamin. When was he alive without either the *law* or the *commandment*?

[C] Is the 'death' Shaul was talking about physical death (if so, how was he writing this epistle?) Was he talking about 'eternal death'? Or was he talking about what he referred to as the 'death of the flesh' that makes one alive to the Holy Spirit [see Romans 6:3]

[D] Is Shaul suggesting that the commandment *caused* sin? Is he suggesting that the law is dangerous? Or is he suggesting that human beings are, in their fallen state, *susceptible to sin*, and that *sin is dangerous*?

*May you and your household stay faithful to the Holy One and His Covenant forever,  
and you therefore go out with joy, and be led forth with shalom!*

***The Rabbi's son***

***Meditation for Today's Study***

Ezekiel 33:13

***When I say to the righteous that he shall surely live,  
but he trusts in his own righteousness and commits iniquity,  
none of his righteous works shall be remembered;  
but because of the iniquity that he has committed, he shall die.***