

הלל עק"ו ע"ה -

Rabbi Herbert Baumgard

INTRODUCTION

BAH\_RU\_CHIM HA\_BAH-IM , BLESSED ARE YOU FOR COMING TOGETHER TO WORSHIP THIS <sup>הלל עק"ו</sup> . WE STRENGTHEN ONE ANOTHER AS JEWS AND AS HUMAN BEINGS BY SHARING THIS EXPERIENCE TOGETHER.

I HAVE EMERGED FROM RETIREMENT TONITE AT THE URGING OF RABBI BOOKMAN, AND I MUST CONFESS . IT IS GOOD TO BE WITH YOU ONCE AGAIN .

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE NO IDEA WHO I AM, I HAVE A STORY.

( little kids in the John ) ZOMBIE, KING OF THE ZOMBIES.

SINCE OUR CURRENT RABBIS ARE TALKING ABOUT SPIRITUAL SUBJECTS THIS ROSH HA\_SHANAH, I HAVE DECIDED TO TALK ABOUT ANOTHER MATTER WHICH IS VITALLY IMPORTANT TO OUR PEOPLE.

ROSH HA\_SHANAH is known , AMONG OTHER THINGS, AS "YOM HARAS OLAHM" - "THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE DAY ON WHICH THE WORLD WAS BORN. IF WE THINK ABOUT THIS CONCEPT A MOMENT, WE CAN SEE HOW THE HOLIDAY CARRIES WITH IT A MOST PROFOUND MEANING . <sup>As the Anniversary of the Day on which the world was created</sup> AS ~~YOM HARAS OLAHM~~, ROSH HASHANAH BECOMES A HOLIDAY ON WHICH TO DWELL ON NEW POSSIBILITIES AND NEW HOPE.

IN THE MIDRASH, KNOWN AS " VAYIKRA RABBAH" ( 29:10), THE SAGES ARE QUOTED AS SAYING, " AND GOD WILL SAY TO ISRAEL, INDEED TO ALL HUMANITY: MY CHILDREN, I LOOK UPON YOU TODAY, ON ROSH HASHANAH, AS IF THIS VERY DAY I HAVE CREATED YOU- A NEW BEING, A NEW PEOPLE, A NEW HUMANITY .

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Rosh haShanah, 5763

Rosh haShanah, the Holiday which observes the beginning of the year, is also know as, "יום הדין", the anniversary of the day on which the world was born. Since Rosh haShanah is therefore a holiday with the most profound meaning, the day which marks the anniversary of the world, Jews have identified it as a holiday on which

~~of the~~

creation

to dwell on

we think of new possibilities, of new hopes.


In the Mishnah known as "Vayikrao Rabbah" (29:10), the Sages quoted as saying, " (see "A")

We would like to think that this mood, this possibility of new creations applies also to the State of Israel and to its problems; yet the State of Israel seems locked in a dance of death with its intimate neighbor, the Palestinians. Round and round the two peoples go, in what seems to be a fatalistic whirl of violence and vengeance. Militarily, the Palestinian authority does not seem able to compete with the Israeli armed forces, but the Arabs have figured out another way to hurt the Israelis. They employ the terrorist bomber who stealthily appears in places and situations where he or she cannot be detected, until the bomber gives his or her own life. In committing suicide, the terrorist deploys a bomb to kill and wound many unsuspecting Israelis, as they innocently ride a bus or attend a Bar Mitzvah party or participate in a wedding.

has to be

have gone has to

karm

see 

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go to "A"

2 1/2



A FEW WEEKS AGO, A MEETING WAS HELD BETWEEN SOME OF THE MORE MODERATE PALESTINIANS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE. THE TWO SIDES AGREED TO ATTEMPT A CEASE-FIRE WITH AN END TO THE SUICIDE BOMBING AND THE GRADUAL WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAELI TANKS FROM THE WEST BANK CITIES. NEITHER ARAFAT NOR SHARON WAS PRESENT AT THIS MEETING, AND THE PALESTINIAN RADICAL GROUPS DELIBERATELY STAYED AWAY.

AFTER THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CEASE-FIRE, WHICH SEEMED TO THROW A RAY OF LIGHT INTO WHAT HAD BEEN THE DARKEST OF SITUATIONS, HAMAS AND ISLAMIC JIHAD WERE QUICK, TO SAY THEY WOULD NOT ABIDE BY THE CEASE-FIRE, <sup>N</sup>WHILE THE ISRAELI RIGHT WING PARTIES DID NOT CONCEAL THEIR DISPLEASURE. *w/ the agreement*

IN SPITE OF IMMEDIATE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL OF ITS TANKS FROM BETHLEHEM, THERE WAS LITTLE OVERALL CONFIDENCE IN THE AGREEMENT. THERE IS A RELUCTANCE TO HOPE ON EITHER SIDE, BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF THE LONG STAGE OF ACTIVE HOSTILITY BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES. THIS WAR HAS BEEN DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER WARS FOUGHT BETWEEN THE TWO PEOPLES, FOR THIS WAR HAS BEEN BROUGHT HOME TO WOMEN AND CHILDREN, AS WELL AS TO MEN.

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~~Insert~~

~~There is a reluctance or hope on either side, because~~

~~have been engaged~~  
~~in a~~  
~~violent~~

~~WAR IS DIFFERENT FROM ALL THE OTHERWISE BETWEEN THE ARABERS & THE ISRAELIS~~  
~~FOR THIS THE WAR HAS BEEN BROUGHT HOME TO WOMEN AND CHILDREN, AS WELL AS TO MEN.~~

→ The news media <sup>has</sup> repeats <sup>ed</sup> the scenes of bombed Israeli buses, which were carrying civilians to work or children to school. On the other hand, the media <sup>has</sup> shows <sup>ty</sup> repeated scenes of Israeli tanks invading a refugee camp or a crowded city. The charge of greater cruelty, <sup>has been</sup> is leveled against the Palestinians or the Israelis depending on which side you are on.

More distant observers in Europe and America <sup>have</sup> wonder if this madness <sup>would</sup> will ever cease; they <sup>have</sup> wonder <sup>ed</sup> how the two peoples can be capable of such an ever increasing display of vengeance.

Many Jews not living in Israel <sup>have felt</sup> feel that the violence is certainly not consistent with the finest teachings of Judaism. The Talmud teaches, "He who destroys one human life is as if he ~~has~~ has destroyed the world." Only recently, <sup>some</sup> many of our members ~~have~~ said to me, "Rabbi, how can we condone some of the things we know are being done?"

Prime Minister Rabin, before his assassination by a Jewish religious fanatic, addressed the Palestinians and declared, "Enough, it is



enough. Enough of your boys being killed; <sup>2</sup> Enough of our boys being killed." Rabin, who had been a field general, was speaking of the kind of wars he knew between the Arabs and the Israelis, when young men on both sides confronted each other on the battle field. Rabin did not know of suicide bombers killing innocent women and children, nor did he know of Israeli tanks invading populated urban areas. The war between the two peoples has escalated over time and become ever more blind to what kind of human target is being victimized/hit.

Rosh haShanah is a spiritual holiday, and we come to synagogue to pray for peace, inner peace, peace for our people in Israel, and peace <sup>FOR</sup> of all peoples and nations. <sup>many American</sup> <sup>Among the questions, Arab American</sup> All Rabbis are asked at this season, <sup>is,</sup>

"Rabbi, how can we help to stop the fighting in Israel?"

<sup>Now, I don't pretend to have</sup>

~~Now I certainly don't know~~ a specific answer to that question.

I do know that we want our people in Israel to survive, that we want our people to succeed in their historic and heroic attempt to <sup>RE-</sup> <sup>their</sup> establish a homeland in Israel. Certainly, we want the Palestinians to find happiness in their own domicile in this section of the Near East. <sup>AN IMPORTANT PART</sup> The heart of the problem is that the Palestinians want as part of their own state an important part of the land the



FOR THEIR PART, THE PALESTINIANS  
CLAIM THAT WE JEWS ARE INTERLOPERS, THAT THEIR OWN  
ANCESTRY GOES BACK TO THE CANANITES, A CLAIM BY THE

→ Jews claim as their ancient heritage. The problem is aggravated when the  
extremists on either side claim a greater share of the pie. The Palestinians  
want a significant part of Jerusalem and some Jews want more and more  
settlements to establish footholds in what has been for half a century solidly  
Arab, as in Nablus and Hebron.

way that has no scholarly or historical merit.

Not satisfied with the offers of Prime Minister Barak, the  
Palestinians negate his attempt at negotiations and forced a political crisis in  
Israel, which brought in the more militant government of Prime Minister  
Sharon, a man who is widely hated by the Arabs.

For their part, the majority of Israelis felt that when the Arabs  
rejected what Israelis considered to be a generous offer, it signaled the  
worst! The majority of Israelis concluded that the Arabs were not interested  
in a compromise; they wanted to take the whole territory. They want an all  
Arab "Arabian peninsula." Fear began to dominate the people on both sides,  
and with fear came increasing hatred.

We should all read the book "The Siege" by the Irish historian, Conor  
Cruise O'Brien. O'Brien journals the history of the many attempts to



arrange peace between the Palestinians and the Israelis over the decades in which the modern Jewish state has been in existence. O'Brien states that there have been many occasions where the Arabs or the Jews, but especially the Arabs, have rejected a reasonable peace arrangement. O'Brien, the neutral historian, seems to feel that reason has had little place in the discussions between the two groups. He concludes that the history of the discussions seems to be a tale of futility. He further adds that <sup>"</sup>if an agreement is ever reached, the Israelis should watch their back. <sup>"</sup>

O'Brien reminds us that negotiations are made the more difficult by national pride. In such a situation, it is often blind patriotism that dictates the feelings and actions of the respective peoples. Religious extremists may further complicate the efforts to come to an agreement.

*As a sympathetic but relatively*  
As a distant observer, as one who does not live in Israel, to do the fighting, to experience the loss of life, I feel I do not have the right to tell the Israelis what to do; <sup>but I do know what our task is.</sup> Our task is to support our people, <sup>if we feel their</sup> <sup>so long as</sup> cause to be just and worthy.



We can criticize Sharon's heavy-handedness, perhaps, or we can understand it as a necessary tactic for survival, but in any event, we have to support the <sup>TINY</sup> Jewish nation and its suffering and sacrificing citizens. They are, after all, our people, our brothers and sisters. If our parents or grandparents had not come to America, <sup>They</sup> ~~we~~ would have either been killed by Hitler or <sup>They</sup> ~~we~~ would have been fortunate enough to escape to the land of Israel. The United States was admitting only a few Jews at the time. We all know the story of the ship, the Saint Louis, which came heavy laden with Jewish <sup>see</sup> ~~refugees~~ to America's shores and was turned back to carry its weary and heart-broken human cargo back to Europe and the concentration camps. We cannot be proud of the role of the United States towards the Jews during that period.

ALONE  
Throw open  
ITS ARMS  
+ welcome  
ALL Jewish  
Refugees

THE Jewish  
WOULD BE REFUGEES  
THE  
MAZI  
PERIOD.

~~Israel was the only true land of refuge for the Jews who sought to escape Hitler and live.~~

IF OUR PARENTS HAD BEEN AMONG THOSE ESCAPING THE NAZIS ~~TO~~ FROM EUROPE, OR IF OUR PARENTS

2 And if our parents had gone to the land of Israel at that time, then they would have participated in the difficult work of draining the swamps and <sup>CULTIVATING THE</sup> ~~in the sowing of~~ arid desert. We and our children would have fought in the wars of defense, and our sons and daughters might have been



+ Women Join ALPAC, which attempts to educate congressmen  
with respect to Israel and its needs. There is no end  
to the ways in which we can help.

Recently, the nine coal miners who were imprisoned deep  
below the earth's surface for <sup>many</sup> ~~three~~ <sup>amazingly</sup> days, were all rescued alive. This rescue  
was considered to be a miracle by most of the world watching prayerfully  
from our safe haven above the earth. The rescued coal miners themselves,  
however, did not believe the rescue was a miracle. When interviewed on  
TV, the spokesman for the long imprisoned miners, told the interviewer, "we  
never gave up hope, even when we hadn't heard a sound from above for  
eighteen hours. We knew that our comrades were working for us, and we  
knew that God wanted us to be saved."

We can visit Israel  
or when things settle  
down, we can have  
our kids attend a  
Reform Camp or  
take a course  
in one of  
its excellent  
universities

So it is with Israel. So long as the embattled Israelis know that  
<sup>their</sup> ~~other~~ comrades are working for them, they will be encouraged to hope that  
they will ultimately breathe the air of freedom. Peace.

With their success and ours, a new creation will take place – the  
creation of a place where Jews will <sup>once again</sup> control their own fate, safe from those  
who have sought to demonize them. "By-yom Ha-hoo," on that day, let us  
pray that both Jews and Palestinians will have cause to be content and  
grateful.

H.B.



killed in the wars against the Arabs, who <sup>sought</sup> ~~wanted~~ to deny us <sup>a foothold</sup> in rocky lands.

### LECTURE

So we can stand here 5,000 miles away and ~~say~~ to our people;

<sup>When can say,</sup> "Your actions are not consistent with the highest teachings of Judaism," <sup>FOR OUR Tradition</sup> ~~or he~~

<sup>of teachers, He</sup> who takes one human life is as if he had destroyed the world." Or we can

say, "there but for the grace of fate, go I" and try to understand that the

Israelis are doing the best they can in a highly hostile and life-threatening

environment. <sup>Only yesterday, I heard that Israeli police discovered a taxi packed w/ a bomb that could kill 600 people.</sup>

Can we do less than extend every possible help to our brothers and sisters? Not in good conscience, not if we have a shred of loyalty to our extended family.

Yes, we can criticize. I myself am not a fan of Sharon, But help we must. And we must help to the greatest extent we possibly can. If there is to be a new creation on this anniversary of the day on which the world was created, then we have to help in that new creation.

<sup>How 5000 miles away</sup>  
You may ask How can we help?  
We can help by helping Federation & through ARZA, the Reform Zionist movement. ARZA is working to liberalize the religious situation in Israel, among other things. We can help the JAC, the Joint Distribution Committee in its work for all Jews in need of assistance. We can buy Israel Bonds, we can