



Temple Beth Shalom

Service of
Spiritual
Sharing

*Songs, Readings, and Stories to
Inspire us in the New Year*

Return Again/Hashiveinu

Return Again (2x), return to the land of your soul.

Return again (2x), return to the land of your soul.

Return to who you are , return to what you are, return to where you are born and reborn and reborn.

Hashiveinu (2x) Adonai ei-le-cha, v'nah-shu-vah (2x)

Cha-deish, cha-deish ya-mei-nu k-ke-dem.

Whatever God has created has a spark of holiness in it.

- Ba'al Shem Tov

How can this be? There is so much evil and ugliness in our world. How can they contain a spark of holiness? Whatever God has created - you and me, the natural forces of the universe, the animals and the plants - has a spark of holiness in it. And one of our jobs, as Jews and children of God, is to find and release that spark, to fan it into a flame, a flame that will warm and heal our world. It is there. We may not see it at first glance. But God does not create anything without attaching a signature. And that signature is the spark of holiness.

At Havdalah, when we say farewell to our Shabbat day of holiness, we hold our fingers up to the light of the candle in order to see the spark shining in our fingertips. It reminds us that the spark is there, as it is in every human being. It reminds us to treat each person with the knowledge that s/he contains that spark - the spark of holiness. What do you do to remind yourself that all of creation holds the spark? What are you doing to fan the sparks into a flame? What can you do?

Before he died, Rabbi Zusya said, "In the world to come they will not ask me, 'Why were you not more like Moses?' They will ask me, 'Why were you not more like Zusya?'"

We go around thinking that we have to be like somebody else, comparing ourselves with others, living up to another's standard or expectation. We drive ourselves crazy by thinking that no matter what we do or accomplish, somehow it is just not good enough, when all along all that God wants of us is that we be ourselves. You will be you and I will be me. That's all. That is enough.

How simple it is, and yet how difficult we make it.

So who are you trying to be? What image of yourself are you trying to live up to? Are you ready to stop and just be yourself? As you meditate today, announce who you are. Dear God, I am _____, son/daughter of _____. That is all you have to be. Today and every day.

Eili (D. Zahavi/H. Senesh)

Ei-li, Ei-li

She-lo ye-ga-mer le-olam

Ha-chol ve-ha-yam

Rish-roosh shel ha-ma-yim

Be-rak ha-sha-ma-yim

Te-fi-lat ha-a-dam (repeat)

O Lord, my God

I pray that these things never end:

The sand and the sea

The rush of the waters

The crash of the heavens

The prayer of the heart (repeat)

Spiritual Sharing Speaker

Blowin' in the Wind (B. Dylan)

How many roads must a man walk down

Before you call him a man

How many seas must a white dove sail

Before she sleeps in the sand

Yes, 'n' how many times must the cannon balls fly

Before they're forever banned

The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind

The answer is blowin' in the wind

Yes, 'n' how many years can a mountain exist

Before it's washed to the sea

Yes, 'n' how many years can some people exist

Before they're allowed to be free

Yes, 'n' how many times can a man turn his head

And pretend that he just doesn't see

The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind

The answer is blowin' in the wind

Yes, 'n' how many times must a man look up

Before he can see the sky

Yes, 'n' how many ears must one man have

Before he can hear people cry

Yes, 'n' how many deaths will it take till he knows

That too many people have died

The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind

The answer is blowin' in the wind

Each of Us Has a Name

Each of us has a name

Given us by the seasons and given by our blindness

Each of us has a name

Given us by God and by our parents.

Each of us has a name

Given us by the sea and by the way we die.



Letting It Go

Forgiving is not easy, especially when we were unjustly wronged or wounded. Children of parental abuse, abandoned spouses, workers who are downsized, elderly who are warehoused by their children... many of us have legitimate reasons to be hurt and angry. Righteous indignation is often the most appropriate response we can have. And our tradition does tell us to “hate evil.” But the irony of holding on to these feelings and not forgiving those who wronged us is that we get hurt a second time. Refusal to forgive is a sin against the self. We can do better.

These holy days are an opportunity to finally forgive those who sinned against us. It does not cancel the effects of their actions, but it does allow us to get on with our lives. Think of people you have yet to forgive. Will this be the day you forgive them?

Come Healing by Leonard Cohen

If one sanctifies her/himself a little, s/he will be sanctified a great deal.

- Talmud, Yoma 39a

It begins as service, but ends up as reward. It begins with us making the effort, doing the work, but ends up with our receiving more than we gave. We do not have to do it all. Just a little. I am not sure how this works, but I have seen it so many times that I am convinced it works just this way. It is as if once we have created a space for holiness in our lives, nothing unholy can exist there any longer. And the more space we create, the more holiness there is.

Sanctified action raises the stakes, which are our lives, and lifts us and all that we do to a higher plane of holiness. This is the blueprint behind the idea of a Holy Land - a place in which all actions aim at holiness, a place in which even God can dwell. There is something very powerful, even life-transforming, in taking these steps toward holiness. What are some little steps you can take today?

Al Kol Eleh

Al hadvash ve'al ha'okets
Al hamar vehamatok
Al biteynu hatinoket shmor eyli hatov.

Al ha'esh hamevo'eret
Al hamayim hazakim
Al Ha'ish hashav habayta
min hamerkhakim

Chorus:

Al kol eleh, al kol eleh,
Shmor nah li eyli hatov
Al hadvash ve'al ha'okets
Al hamar vehamatok.

Al na ta'akor natu'a
Al tishkakh et hatikvah
Hashiveyni va'ashuva
El ha'arets hatovah.

Shmor Eli al ze habayit
Al hagan, al hakhoma
Miyagon, mipakhad peta
Umimilkhama.

Shmor al hame'at sheyesh li
Al ha'or ve'al hataf
Al hapri shelo hivshil od
Veshene'esaf

It is better to deserve honors and not have them, than to have them and not deserve them
- Mark Twain

Hayom - Today

Some of the saddest words too frequently spoken at the end of one's life go something like this; He worked so hard all his life, but never took the time to enjoy any pleasures. Now, when he could enjoy life, he ran out of years." Whenever I hear this melancholy summary I always ask myself, "Why, why did he postpone the enjoyment of life? Why did he wait? Is it possible to enjoy at 60 the pleasures that are available only at 40? Does financial security enable us to retrace our steps and to do now what should have been done then and could only have been done then? Is there a way of rewinding and replaying the film of life?"

There is no future joy which can compensate us for the legitimate joys we need-

lessly deny ourselves today. We are reminded today that God is waiting - waiting for us to stop waiting and to proceed with all haste to begin to do now, this day, all of the things for which this day was made.

Lechi Lach (D. Friedman)

Le-chi lach, to a land that I will show you
Lech le-cha to a place you do not know
Le-chi lach on your journey I will bless you
And you shall be a blessing (3x) le-chi lach

Le-chi lach, and I shall make your name great
Lech le-cha, and all shall praise your name
Le-chi, lach to the the place that I will show you
Le-sim-chat chayyim (3x) le-chi lach.
And you shall be a blessing, and you are a blessing
You shall be a blessing, le-chi lach

Spiritual Sharing Speaker

Oseh Shalom

Oseh shalom bimromav
Hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu
V'al kol V'al kol Yisrael
V'imru, amen.

Ya'aseh Shalom ya'aseh shalom,
shalom aleinu v'al kol Yisrael

May the One who makes peace in the High Heavens, cause peace to reign among us, all Israel, and all the world.

You need to claim the events of your life and make them yours.
- Ann Wilson Schaefer

Everything that happens to us, is us. There are so many times when we want to deny this, to blame others, to pretend it never happened, to distance ourselves from the ugliness we may have been a part of. There are other times when we cannot accept our success. We downplay our goodness, we slough off our accomplishments, we fail to take credit when it is due, we do not allow others to be grateful for what we have done. Both the negative as the positive, as well as all the moments in between - that is our life. And in order for us to be wholly and truly ourselves, we will need to take responsibility for it all.

Think about the things you have done this year for which you have yet to claim credit. Write out a claim check for each one, and when you are ready, go and pick them up.

Salvation is attained, not by subscription to metaphysical dogmas, but solely by love of God expressed in action.

We spend so much of our lives looking for truth in complex ideas. We want to shape our lives around a philosophical principle, an ideology, a theology that puts all the pieces together for us. Yet Judaism insists that God is to be found in the common deed, in the so-called trivial moments of life. It is by doing that we attain ultimate truth. Simple actions. That's it.

What actions will you take today to heal and repair the world? Think about it. The possibilities are literally endless.

Halleluya (L. Cohen)

I heard there was a secret chord
that David played and it pleased the Lord,
But you don't really care for music do you?
It goes like this—the fourth, the fifth,
the minor fall and the major lift—
The baffled king composing halleluyah...
Halleluyah, Halleluyah, Halleluyah, Halleluyah

You say I took the Name in vain
But I don't even know the Name
But if I did, well really, what's it to you?
There's a blaze of light in every word
It doesn't matter which you heard
The holy or the broken Halleluyah...
Halleluyah, Halleluyah, Halleluyah, Halleluyah

I did my best it wasn't much.
I couldn't feel so I learned to touch.
I've told the truth, I didn't try to fool you.
And even though it all went wrong,
I'll stand before the Lord of Song
with nothing on my tongue but Halleluyah
Halleluyah, Halleluyah, Halleluyah, Halleluyah

*May The Book of Your Life
Be Written and Sealed in
Goodness in This New Year.*



Service Booklet Compiled and Edited by Rabbi Benjy Bar-Lev