



Shabbat Chazon/5 Av 5777  
July 28, 2017

Dear Shir Tikvah:

The Jewish calendar has a way of paralleling and giving us language and ritual for what we feel anyway.

We are in the period of semi-mourning leading up to Tisha B'Av, next Monday night through Tuesday. My feelings about Tisha B'Av are mixed, especially when we hold the focus on the destruction of the Temples and all the persecutions against our people.

As a people, our understanding continues to evolve with regard to all of our holy days. The rituals, the clusters of meanings, give us food for thought (or the absence of it re: Tisha B'Av and Yom Kippur!) to deepen our sense of what matters.

Tisha B'Av is a fast day which falls seven weeks before Yom Kippur. It is the beginning, a beginning, of the annual cycle of turning inward, and doing teshuvah - returning to what matters. Rabbi Sharon Cohen Anisfeld pointed out how easy it is to conflate teshuvah with self-improvement. It's different.

The images of Tisha B'Av are of destruction and burning. The expansiveness of early summer has shifted to the heat and shorter days of late summer. No matter our lifestyle, many of us at some level still feel that sense of contraction and loss.

I find it helpful to remember that destruction is the first step, and ultimately the fertile ground, for new life, new growth.

What buildings or facades are crumbling? What's not working? Tisha B'Av offers a ritual space to grieve and let go. It's the first step of our teshuvah, the inner work of the season.

Shir Tikvah will be observing Tisha B'Av with either of two community programs Monday night, July 31, beginning at 8 pm

St Paul Synagogues -Mt. Zion, Temple of Aaron, and Beth Jacob to be held at Beth Jacob Congregation - 1179 Victoria Curve, Mendota Heights.

- 8 pm Steve Hunegs: 50 Years of Reunified Jerusalem; 9 pm Maariv & Eicha (Lamentations) Reading/Songs Minneapolis Synagogues - Mayim Rabim, Adath Jeshurun, and Sharei Chesed at Mayim Rabim, 4401 York Ave S, Minneapolis.
- 8 pm Mincha; 8:15 pm Study session led by Hazzan Joanna Dulkan of Adath Jeshurun; 8:45 pm -9:45 Ma'ariv (evening service) and reading of Megilat Eichah (Lamentations)

I hope to see many of you this evening at 6 pm at our Annual Potluck Shabbat at Wabun Park.

Shabbat Shalom,  
Debra