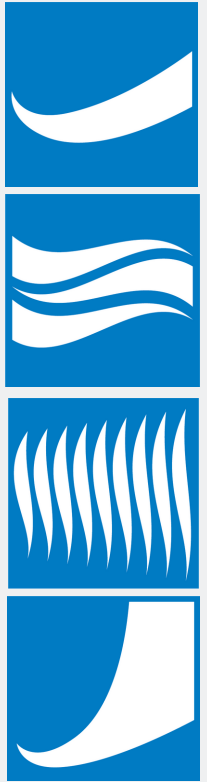


HHD.I.Y TOGETHER

Making Days of Awe

The words that we use for what we think of as our 'holy spaces' for Jewish services, past and present, are rich with meaning. The *Mikdash* (~kadosh) is a holy place. The *Mishkan* (~shechinah) is a place for God to dwell. 'Synagogue' in Hebrew is *Beit K'nesset*, our place of meeting (each other and so, perhaps, God). Somehow, each year, an ordinary tent or sloping marquee, can feel special or holy. This year, with care, with thought and with planning, we can transform our own homes, our everyday living spaces, into holy places for Days of Awe, where God may dwell among us.



RADLETT
REFORM
SYNAGOGUE

CULTIVATING HOLY SPACE

Talmud Megillah 29a

"Yet I have been to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they have come" (Ezekiel 11:16). Rabbi Yitzchak said, 'This is referring to the synagogues and study halls in Babylonia. Rabbi Elazar said: This is referring to the house of our master, i.e., Rav, in Babylonia, from which Torah issues forth to the entire world. Rava interpreted a verse: What is the meaning of that which is written: "Eternal God, You have been our dwelling place in all generations" (Psalms 90:1)? This is referring to the synagogues and study halls. Abaye said: Initially, I used to study Torah in my home and pray in the synagogue. Once I heard and understood that which King David says: "Eternal, I love the habitation of Your house" (Psalms 26:8), I would always study Torah in the synagogue, to express my love for the place in which the Divine Presence resides.

From *The Art of Public Prayer*

By Rabbi Lawrence Hoffman

We mistakenly take for granted the spaces that we occupy. We label one place as the living room and another as the study, for instance, as if their definitions were derived from a source higher than ourselves. The easy chair, we think, goes only here, for the simple reason that it has always gone here. We change our clothes with casual abandon, spending small fortunes to keep up with new styles. But rearranging the spaces in which we live goes distinctly against the grain. We relate to the spaces we occupy as if they had an objective life of their own, sometimes to the point that we allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by their arbitrary limitations that permit some activities and prohibit others. A useful starting point is a full appreciation of the way we allow space to determine our activity rather than the other way round.

Sometimes just naming our spaces one way rather than another predetermines what we do in them...

QUESTIONS TO CONTEMPLATE

Our homes have suddenly become our workplaces, our social meeting spaces... and our synagogues! We've spent more time at home than many of us ever have done before. How can we transform one space into another? How can we create different spaces and ambiances while in one place?



ACTIVITIES TO DO AT HOME

Start preparing 'HHD space' in your home. Where will you position your computer for joining our services on-line? Will you have flowers? A white table-cloth? What will you wear - maybe something new? Can you invite anyone to share the space with you?

Can you and/or grand/children make decorations?

Download these beautiful images, many taken by our member Richard Burn, to print out or use as your computer background during the High Holydays.

LISTEN TO A SETTING OF EXODUS 25:8 BY DEBBIE FRIEDMAN:

וַעֲשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם:

"V'asu li mikdash,
v'shachanti b'tocham"

Build for Me a sanctuary,
and I will dwell among them.