

August 16, 2019/15 Av 5779

Dear chevreh,

Today is the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Av, *Tu b'Av*, a minor festival of love, forgiveness, dancing, rebirth and festivity following only six days after the saddest day on the Jewish calendar *Tisha b'Av*.

Rabbi Jill Hammer teaches,

“This full moon of late summer represents the spiral of life rising out of death, union rising out of brokenness, planting rising out of harvest. In the Jewish calendar, Av is the month of the hinge, when death turns on itself and becomes birth once more. This is a time of healing, of rediscovering the miracle of being human....[when] mourning turns to dancing.” [Book of Days, pg. 369]

“Tu B'Av is an unlikely day of joy, coming as it does in a season of sadness...It is a door opening from death back into life.” <http://telshemesh.org/av/>

Whether we personally have been going through difficult times, or whether we identify with our calendar's cycles, we can appreciate the movement from feeling the brokenness of our lives and the world to reveling in the love in our lives, and the ability to bring more empathy to others from having touched the broken places.

We are just two weeks away from Rosh Chodesh Elul, pivoting away from destruction and mourning toward the season of return. I encourage us all to stay grounded in the beautiful wisdom of our calendar which invites us to experience internal and external seasons with awe, discernment and possibilities for growth.

Scott and I are headed to Utah next week to hike in the national parks. I will be leading services this evening at 7:30 pm. Next Friday, Lew Scheindlin will lead services at 7:30 pm. There WILL be services over Labor Day weekend this year, which I will lead at 7:30 pm. In case of emergency, rabbinic coverage information will be on my outgoing phone message and outgoing email message.

Wishing everybody a Shabbat shalom on this Shabbat Nachamu, Sabbath of Comfort.

Gut Shabbes,

Rabbi Diana