

April 26, 2019 /21Nissan 5779

Dear chevreh,

A lot is happening on the Jewish calendar at this time of year. We are near the end of Passover; Reform Jews, those in Israel and some Reconstructionists have almost finished it, many of us are observing it for one more day. Our Oneg this evening will still be kosher for Passover. We will also have a Yizkor service at the end of Shabbat services which begin at 7:30 pm.

This coming Wednesday evening marks *Yom HaShoah*, Holocaust Remembrance Day. This year we are fortunate to have a local survivor who was in hiding during the war tell his story publicly for the first time on Monday evening, April 29th at 7:00 pm at KHN. He will introduce himself and tell his story. We will listen, and if we have questions at the end, he is open to answering them. All are welcome.

Rabbi Michael Berenbaum writes, "The Jewish Calendar had been remarkably stable for many centuries until the two great upheavals of the 20th century – the Shoah and the establishment of the state of Israel. Both monumental events reshaped Jewish history and transformed Jewish memory; thus, each in their own way required inclusion in the Jewish calendar." [Walking with God, AJU, 2010]

Yom Hashoah is observed one week before *Yom Hazikaron*, Israel's Memorial Day to the fallen soldiers, and eight days before *Yom Haatzmaut*, Israel's Independence Day. We go from the celebration of Passover, to the remembrance of those who were murdered in the Holocaust, to a memorialization of Israel's fallen soldiers, followed immediately by a celebration of the rebirth of Jewish sovereignty. This sequence is felt more acutely in Israel, but even here, moving from Passover, a time of the Exodus and the shaping of a people, to the perishing of six million of our people, to an acknowledgement of the rebirth of a Jewish homeland, is profound. This is the story of our people but it also reflects the universal reality of incredible journeys, devastating losses, a cataclysmic outcome of hatred, and miraculous, if complicated, new beginnings.

I bless us that we should have the fortitude to celebrate and mourn -when the timing calls for it -the vast range of human experience as reflected in our Jewish calendar and in our personal lives.

Wishing everybody a Shabbat shalom,

Rabbi Diana