

## **Face App Limnot Yameinu**

**For a brief while this summer, America became obsessed with what it would look like to grow older. Tens of millions of people downloaded the now notorious Face App - an application that takes a current photo of you and digitally projects what you will look like when you're older. And then people posted their pictures to social media. There was a quick panic about privacy and suspicion that the Russian developers were going to use the data and images collected from the app to steal people's identities. In the fine print of the user agreement (who reads those anyway) - which went as viral as the app itself - users agreed to grant the company a license to their photos that is "perpetual, irrevocable, nonexclusive, royalty-free, worldwide." There was then a panic that ensued, and then a normalization of the panic that came from reminding everyone that we regularly cede our privacy to Internet companies. One headline from Wired Magazine ominously read, "Think FaceApp Is Scary? Wait Till You Hear About Facebook." As an aside I saw a meme recently that read "Adam and Eve - the first people to ignore Apple terms and conditions."**

**But I was less interested in the privacy concerns and more interested in what it says about us as a society that we were willing to roll the dice with our privacy in order to get a glimpse of what we'll look like when we're older. I think that in a culture obsessed with youth and beauty, one that explores the possibility of extending lifespans by injecting the blood of the young into aging bodies, that we are curious about and concerned with the inevitable - which is that we all age and we are mortal.**

**Life is a chronic, not a curable condition.**

**And you don't need an app to help you realize that. Yom Kippur is intended to serve the same purpose. In many ways, Yom Kippur is a rehearsal for your own death. We fast to feel what it's like for our bodies to shrivel and wilt. We wear a kittel as a symbol of the burial shroud. We create a sense of urgency to achieve atonement because we know not who will live and who will die. And even the experience of standing in this room helps us realize the progression of time. I'm one year older than I was last time I was in this same space saying these same words. I see the kids have grown taller. And some of the members who we love and relied on are no longer here with us. This space is a Face App of sorts - we look around the room and we see the faces of people of different ages and life stages and we remember when we were young - tugging on our mother's dress hem for a snack. And we're asked to FACE UP to the fact that change is the only constant in this world. On Yom Kippur, we don't run from our mortality. We recognize that doing so would be futile anyway. Death is a part of life. Aging is a natural process.**

**Rather than denying death, we confront it on our most sacred day and ask a question - now that you know you're going to die, how do you choose to live? When the shofar sounds, how will you live your life better. If this were your last day, what would you need to say and to whom. Who would you ask for forgiveness? Who would you forgive? Who would you tell that you love? Who would you hug? Whose hand would you hold?**

**Don't wait, the time is now.**