

Transformative Teshuvah

Traditional, innovative, personal davening: what liturgy should we use for planetary transformation?

There is a prayer in the machzor that hazanim usually offer, with different melodies and so on, but it's really not a prayer for hazanim, it's a prayer for the congregation and their leaders.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, הִיָּה עִם פִּיפְיוֹת שְׁלוּחֵי עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, הָעוֹמְדִים לְבַקֵּשׁ
תְּפִלָּה וְתַחֲנוּנִים מִלְּפָנֶיךָ עַל עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל. הוֹרֵם מֵה שִׂיאֲמָרוֹ, הִבִּינֵם מֵה שִׂידְבָרוֹ,
הַשִּׁיבֵם מֵה שִׂישְׁאָלוֹ, יַדְעֵם הֵיךְ יִפְאָרוּ. בָּאוֹר פָּנֶיךָ יִהְלֹכוּ, בְּרַךְ לְךָ יִכְרַעוּן, עַמְּךָ בְּפִיָּהֶם
יְבָרְכוּן, וּמְבָרְכוֹת פִּיךָ כֻּלָּם יִתְבָּרְכוּן. עַמְּךָ לִפְנֵיךָ יַעֲבִירוּן, וְהֵם בְּתוֹךְ יַעֲבִירוּן. עֵינֵי עַמְּךָ
בְּסִתְלוּיוֹת, וְעֵינֵיהֶם לְךָ מִיַּחְלוֹת. גְּשִׁים מוֹל אֲרוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּאֵימָה, לְשֹׁכֵךְ כַּעַס וְחֲמָה,
וְעַמְּךָ מִסְבִּיבִים אוֹתָם כְּחוֹמָה, וְאַתָּה מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם תִּשְׁגִּיחַ אוֹתָם לְרַחֲמָה. עֵין נוֹשָׂאִים לְךָ
לְשָׁמַיִם, לֵב שׁוֹפְכִים נִכְחָךְ כַּמִּים, וְאַתָּה תִּשְׁמַע מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם. שְׁלֵא יִכְשְׁלוּ בְלִשׁוֹנָם, וְלֹא
יִנְקְשׁוּ בְשִׁנוֹנָם, וְלֹא יִבּוֹשׁוּ בְּמִשְׁעָנָם, וְלֹא יִכְלְמוּ בְּסִיאֲוֹנָם, וְאַל יֹאמְרוּ פִּיהֶם דָּבָר שְׁלֵא
כִרְצוֹנְךָ. כִּי חֲנוּנֶיךָ, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, הֵמָּה חֲנוּנִים, וּמְרַחֲמֶיךָ הֵמָּה מְרַחֲמִים. כָּמוֹ שִׂידְעָנוּ, יְיָ
אֱלֹהֵינוּ, אֵת אֲשֶׁר תַּחַן יוֹחוּ, וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר תִּרְחַם יִרְחַם, כִּפְתוּב בְּתוֹרַתְךָ: וְחֲנַתִּי אֵת אֲשֶׁר
אֲחוּן וְרַחֲמַתִּי אֵת אֲשֶׁר אֲרַחֵם. וְנֹאמַר: אֵל יִבּוֹשׁוּ בִי קוֹיֶיךָ, אֲדַנִּי אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת; אֵל
יִכְלְמוּ בִי מִבְּקֶשֶׁיךָ, אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.

It's all about the consciousness at the time when we lead, the prayer that we should say what we're guided to say, that we should understand what we're saying, that we should get a response, and that we're fully aware of Whom we're addressing and what's the momentousness.

This tefilah is so beautiful. I suggest that you look it up. Before the service begins, rewrite it in such words that it would be easier for the congregation to say it. So they will pray for you.

I once was attending a service at a Presbyterian church where I had to give a talk on Eldering. I was so beautifully surprised when the minister said, "Pray now that I may have words to speak to your condition." That was really wonderful.

I want to get into two metaphors that deal with the high holy days.

One metaphor is Ha-Melech. The word melech goes through the whole thing. It's not an easy word for us today. But in kabbalah there is *binyan ha-malkhut*; in other words, we have to create somehow a royal place, a royal field in which the king can be a king. In kabbalah and Hasidus we talk about how there is no king

without a nation, and that by accepting *ohl malkhut hashamayim*, by hearing the shofar, we're asking the king to be crowned on our behalf.

Along with this metaphor there's something looming on the horizon: there's a big **Yom Ha-Din** coming up, Election Day. When I think of what we have to deal with and pray for, the kind of *binyan haMalkhut* we have to create socially and politically and so forth –! We'll get to that in a little bit again.

There's another metaphor that has not come up much in our tradition, and that has to do with the words *hayom harat olam*. This day is the birthing, the conceiving; it talks about something that a mother does. The whole issue of teshuvah. When you look at in the *shmoneh esrei*, "*Hashiveinu elecha v'nashuva*" you're looking at *binah*, at what has to do with mothering.

We're very much concerned about ecology, about the planet, about wellbeing and how all of us are in need of great nurturing and the planet is in need of nurturing and healing. So it's a teshuvah that wants to keep the mother-aspect in here. And about this too I want to talk more.

When you look at the way in which we're talking about certain things, you see the beginnings of that feminine element. *Ibbur*, *leidah*, and *y'nikah*. Talking about the way in which the year is pregnant now. And on Rosh Hashanah there is a process with labor that goes through Yom Kippur, and there's a birthing and there's almost if you will the celebration of the child on Succos. Look at this metaphor of the feminine through these days, it will be helpful.

Nessirah, sawing apart the back-to-back of Adam and Chavah or rather the masculine and the feminine Adam; My sense of that is like cutting the umbilical cord. So if you keep these images with you, I'll continue now with the next part.

Whatever we're going to do, somehow we'll touch on Rosh Hashanah on *malkhuyot*, *zichronot*, and *shofarot*. All of these present certain problems, certainly *malkhuyot* creates problems. I couldn't imagine, if I were to be introduced to the current *melech* of this country, that I could say the *bracha* *Ashe Chalaq mik'vodo l'bassar vadam* for that! So that's a real problem, how do we deal with the issue of kingship today?.

And the issue of memory. There are times when we have to deal with memory in a way of honoring. But some memories sit with us: with trauma, with stress, the holocaust years, they're still haunting us, and we have to be able to get rid of the toxic and negative ballast of some memories. In *Zichronot* we need to deal with that.

Shofarot, the blowing of the shofar. But *ki chok l'Yisrael hu* is an important part of shofar.

In 1973 I led a service in San Francisco. I couldn't use any of the available prayerbooks in that time. It was in the days when Jewish Renewal was still testing out things and experimenting. I wanted to make sure we would be able to daven in Hebrew and in English at the same time. (Do any of you remember the audiotape that I recorded with Hebrew for one ear in English or the other to be listened to simultaneously?) There is something about the Hebrew flow of words and the melodies that go along with them; it touches something that is deep and archaic in us. On the other hand, the English was usually done by people who wanted to translate often literally for the head.

When I was leading the congregation in New Bedford my line in the Birnbaum prayer book was: "And thou hast exalted my power like that of the wild ox." Then there were those who wanted to make it high falutin and fancy and Episcopalian, "vouchsafe" and "bestow." There are very few translations you can sink into with your heart.

Also it's necessary to be able to use the nusach! It touches something much deeper than the cortex.

So here's the translation I did of *Zichronot*. [sings] *"You remember how You made the world, how You conceived the beings before they were shaped. Everything hidden is manifest to You, even the matters of mysteries which were secret when You began. Where You sit there is no forgetting, where You look no-thing can hide You even remember all that went into making action...The All is open, the All is known to You, as You scan and check to the end of time. So You bring back memories engraved in awareness, conceiving each spirit, each breath, each soul. So the endless actions are shown in the minds of conscious creatures' lives and thoughts... Today is the very first day of Your actualization, just as it was when you recall the first day."*

The English is necessary. With the right kind of nusach, it's impactful on the people.

I am not happy when I see congregations in which people who are not able to read Hebrew – and all the time we are pushing niggunim with Hebrew phrases on them, which they don't quite understand! For this reason I've done all this vernacular work. If you dare to try it out on yourself first, you'd use it. If you don't try to sell you secure people will also feel insecure doing it. Before I wrote the vernacular prayers in English to my congregation I davened for 40 days and English myself so that I could feel unselfconscious able to face God in English

I want to say that this time, during the High Holidays, we have to address some very deep and primitive places of our psyche. This is why we use the traditional *nusach*. *Skarbovve* – which the Yiddish dictionary translates as hackneyed, routine, but the word is derived from "*sacre beau*," it is a sacred and a beautiful *nusach*.

Many people who lead services jump into Shlomo niggunim, but what happens is, whatever has to happen on Rosh Hashanah – if you just do it like you do a happy Friday night, with all the dancing around; a little bit of that may be good at the end of the first evening of Rosh Hashanah, so people have a sense they're moving into a new year. But there's also a part of the momentousness and the awe, and that which takes people to a higher vibratory level. That's really what this is supposed to be.

If you have learned in *Yishmeru Da'at*: Yom Kippur is in *keter*, Rosh Hashanah is in *chochmah* and *binah*, *chesed* in Pesach and Shavuot is *gevurah* and *tiferet* is Sukkos, etc. So we understand that we have to bring things to a new conceptual way of looking, finding ourselves in the universe. If that doesn't happen, they're schlepping all the old obsolete things into this new year. If you talk computer language: You have to have a good update, and clean out some of the files of the old software, on Rosh Hashanah.

So the simple melodies, some of them you have to use. But stay with the *nusach*, and bring people to that. There are deeper layers that awaken the ancestors within us.

For all of them being archaic – what does archaic mean? It means it takes us back even to the limbic system and to the reptilian system, the place where we are animals, plants, minerals, and all these things make for the holistic whole being in the presence of God.

So the sound of the shofar: it's not something that stimulates us intellectually. It's not "ta-dah, here's an idea!!" It's "oooh, go to the deep place, the very bottom of your kishkes." Blast, break, shatter, and blast. *Tekiah*, *shevarim*, *truah*, and then back to *tekiah* blast. *Tekiah* represents *chesed*. Every one of those sounds we make that we get has to be wrapped in *chesed*. We always have to have a *chesed* before and afterwards. And the *tekiah gedolah* represents *rav chesed*. So the shofar is not for the mind; it is a lot more for the totality and the deep things. It teaches very deeply, touches us there, and goes in a shamanic way into our psyche.

If you remember, much of my teaching has been about the paradigm shift, moving away from the mechanical understanding of cosmology to the one that's organic and organismic. It isn't only mind, philosophy, verbal, but it's deep and

total. Judaism is one of the vital organs of the planet and it needs to be a healthy organ. It's a recalibrating. How does the body know which way to be healthy? There are some systems which are systems of meditation or bodytalk, all of which are trying to get the body to abandon old systems that are not fitting and to reconstellate itself into the most effective way.

That is *rofeh chol basar umafli la'asot*. *Mafla la'asot* is that amazing way through which all the processes of the body, metabolism etc, all these things together in a way that's beyond understanding and yet organismic and whole together. If we could be that kind of an organ, what would that mean? It would mean that from an organismic understanding, *klal Yisrael*, everyone of us is deployed to be a cell of a particular organ. Some are deployed to study Torah, some are deployed to do the political stuff, *gemilut chasadim*. We don't all have to do and be the same thing.

I perceive, for instance, of the haredim as the bones and skeleton of the Jewish body politic. I conceive of us in Renewal as the skin through which the environment breathes in and out to us. Skin is also part of the brain, if you will, the way in which it thinks things through. We're the growing edge.

Not everything is verbal. Once we understand this, see that each one of us is deployed in the way we have to be deployed; we are not against any other group of Jews but we are for them and want them to be healthy ones.

Yesterday I celebrated with a group of people who are involved in creating an eruv for our city. It was such a kiddush haShem! The klal of Boulder celebrating. To find that the rabbi who represented Haver, the rabbinic body, who leads the outdoor services in the mountains, to find that she was there celebrating with us – there's this beautiful thing of sharing with klal Yisrael. We have to put into what we're teaching this Rosh Hashanah that we should not feel we are different, separate. Rather, they contribute to us and we contribute to them.

One of the reasons why people are drawn to seek a spiritual fix in the synagogue on the High Holidays is that they feel a need to be re-energized in a way that's beyond the rational.

Pesach is called *chok*. *Chukat olam*. And about Rosh Hashanah also, *ki chok l'Yisrael hu*. It's easy to give reasons and be verbal about *mishpatim*. If you are doing things nicely with aesthetics, you can make everything about the *edut* look reasonable and palatable. *Chukim* are much, much harder. Why, with this specific thing, do we have to do it in this way?

I had the privilege of being present at an ayahuasca ceremony. The way the shaman prepared everything, there was no detail that wasn't handled in a way that was very specific, very conscious, with a lot of kavanah. But if you were to ask him 'why are you doing this?', he would give you answers but they're afterthoughts. Because **"this is the way it's done, and only then it works"** that's the real answer.

Shofar does something. We have made from shofar a fun thing. But people should get a sense that *tekiat shofar* is like the primal scream of a *neshama* that wakes up and says, oy gevalt, who am I and what am I doing here? That's how the preparation needs to be.

So people who come for a Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur fix, they're looking also for that chok experience. If they don't get it, they remain hungry. There's a hunger that is not for bread and a thirst that is not for water, and nothing can satisfy it except that which is transpersonal and holy.

I'm sad that many of the rabbis and cantors are totally unaware of the deeper dimensions of the High Holidays. If one hasn't experienced these dimensions in a conscious way it's very hard to transmit them to the people with words alone. We have wonderful chokhmas to give over, but if you're not in touch with the deep chthonic, archetypal, shamanic realities which you're trying to give over --- the people won't feel it, they won't know in what realm these things are really true.

If I'm not attuned, I look at the word/metaphor and say: garbage, it's just a fancy word, it doesn't mean anything. So the nonverbal matrix, the vibratory higher and deeper level stuff is really important.

I would like to suggest that you tell your ushers to tell people: as happy as you are to greet people, do that in the lobby enjoy each other! But once you wash your hands before you enter the sanctuary, from that moment on you don't make conversation. You look over the year and you go inside of yourself and attune yourself. If you want to have the right kind of music, soft contemplative music that will bring people into this meditative way, that would be very good.

To see you sitting there, facing the *aron hakodesh* with your tallis over your head and being silent at that time, will give a sense that the people have to be on tiptoe. When it comes to these nonverbal things, we need to do something like biofeedback. It is not verbal; when you are in touch with it, you transmit it to others.

We need to involve the **mirror neurons** of the people in the pews to attune to those in ourselves. If we're attuned to that, they will also. We don't want to be disconnected from people. People tune into you more.

The Apter said, if you want to learn how to daven, you have to learn it from a davener. The words in the siddur will not come alive unless you get the right vibratory level on which to connect them. You can't learn it from books. You have to be infected, as it were, by a spiritual virus that takes hold of deep-seated programs in the soul.

Regardless of the kind of education and Jewish background that you have or not have deep in the *neshamah* there is something waiting to be awakened, like Sleeping Beauty! And most of the time it doesn't get awakened in people because that kiss that has to happen, doesn't happen to awaken them. That's why I'm speaking about the business of the attunement of the *baalei tefilah*.

There is a longitudinal dimension, and that we can't avoid either. Sometimes we want to show how contemporary we are, how we are in our current day and the old stuff isn't right. But there is a dimension that goes from Abraham to Sinai to us. It's not that they had the same cosmology that we have, but they did have the brit, which sits very, very deep. The ancestral forms are in our cells; the previous lives we live before this current incarnation they all mingle when we get into davenen.

In Hasidus and kabbalah we speak of *binyan haMalkhut*. To build a divine and shared morphogenetic field that can touch the miraculous order in order for transformation.

A divine and shared morphogenetic field. To have a sense that on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur there will be active shules of people all over the planet. As we are doing our work, it will transmit like the hundredth monkey to other people too! They will get to feel a little bit more of that lift that we want to experience and share. The Hasidim of Bratzlav will meet in the Ukraine for very intensive davenen as well the folks at the Kotel. Somehow, we need to log on to that huge field of fervor.

Look at all the magnification in *yitgadal, yigdal* – what does it mean that we make God great? *Gadol Adonai um'hulal me'od*: He is great because we are creating that greatness in God. In carving out the Godspace to say, I don't fill all my consciousness, all my being with my me-ness. It's true that I work a lot on the presentation of self to make sure that I'm seen as nice and accepted and a fin esocial being, but when I make this self image my *ikkar* then I have created an *avodah zarah*. Like the guy who is a self-made man who worships his maker.

If you start looking at the *avodah zarah* that's happening now around the election you see how they are spinning words building this persona, that distorted caricature of a character, advertising the appearances that will amass votes.

If we were to take a poll today: how many points of approval does God have? Sounds strange when I say it, but give it a reflection. That's what they said in the *gemarah*. *Lhossif ko'ach b'pamalya shel ma'alah* -- *Pamalia is really familia* . Has to do with the latin word *famulus* servant, means a servant; *familia* is the whole household. The household is the energy system that holds us in life. When you say *shehecheyanu*, we're saying, we give thanks to the *pamalya shel mala* that is sustaining us. Someone who is in *cherem*, it's like disconnected from the Heavenly life support from him. At this point our spiritual life support is anemic. The High Holidays mean to bring in to charge the field with some of the awareness that we're putting energy, intention, into it. This doesn't happen in the consciousness of the shopping mall! You have to look at the spectrum of the total reality. There are some dimensions in us that are waiting to be activated by focused consciousness that we call *kavanah*.

Here is the rub. Even if we were *kulanu chachamim etc. yod'im et haTorah*, could we do that in one moment at the eve of Rosh Hashanah? The whole issue of what needs to happen – all of Elul has to be there – we ourselves are not going to be in touch with the spiritual dimensions of that vibratory place if we don't do preparation! And if we are unprepared, we'll take the people tom liturgical calories that are not nurturing.

So the month of Elul with the additions to the liturgy bring the external reminders and waker-uppers so that we ourselves will have a greater, an easier access, of the files or to that level of vibration where we have to be on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

I like the way in which in our *kahal* here in Boulder we have the four huts made according to the letters of the name. So in which of the four worlds do people want to transact their business. Ushers who urge the people to keep silent, the right kind of music-all of these are important.

The use of *selichos* to prepare the people is important. When I used to have a congregation or when I used to go and lead for the High Holidays and I was there for *slichos*, I would spend two hours before the *slichot* service to rehearse with people the responses and melodies they need to know. So there would be a different flavor. [singing]

I would encourage the people that if they want to say the words, they should say them with that melody; or hum along with that melody. You wouldn't be thinking about, say, baseball or how your shares are doing on the market when you're humming along with the sublime nussah tunes. Something in the heart will get going at that time. You want to bring this to the people.

The basic intention of the High Holiday cards that we sent out was to ask forgiveness from the people we may have wronged during the year. It's gotten to be now like Valentine cards. It's sad that it's gotten so denatured. This needs to be made real – perhaps with a personal; encountered to apologize of at least a phone call.

There is also the question of the time between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. If you have a group in the same city as you, to have some evening things during that time during which people can come and do some exercises that take them through cheshbon hanefesh. Taking on action directives that would make sense for them for the coming year *mah tov umah na'aim*.

Yihyu l'ratzon imrei fi – I hope I have spoken to the condition that we need to have addressed.

Q-and-A:

Q. Working as a cantor, I was struck by what you said about asking the congregation pray that I may be able to pray? I'm trying to figure out: where do you think might be the best place in the service for that to happen, for me to make that request?

A: It's hard to say because I don't know how your liturgy is built. Some people do the shofar service as part of shacharit, etc. But when you actually go and look around: Unetaneh Tokef would be a good time, e.g. You can count on having the majority of people there by then. Or before HaMelech, if people will be there then! There has to be a certain preface, to tell the people: we're not just having a social thing here. We're having something that addresses a Cosmic Presence, way beyond ourselves; I need your presence to lift me in this thing.

(Follow-up: can you do it two days in a row? A: Oh, yes!)

Q. I feel this year that outside events have put my neshamah in turmoil. I'm afraid that whatever I say about those outside events, my congregation will view that as being very political, and on the other hand there's so much to be said.

Last week there were so many things happening every single day, and when we got to the end of the week, I decided I was just in too much turmoil and I was just going to talk about Elul. How do you balance that tension, esp. when the planet and our country seem to be so sick?

A. You have to raise questions, and not give answers, at this point. That's going to be the best.

In which way should we enter the ballot box?

In which way should we think about these things? Pray about that.

You have your own feelings and your ideas and prejudices about this, and some of them are good and some are not so good, but: what is the way in which God wants us to think about these things?

What is the way in which our mother the Earth who is so sick wants us to deal with these things?

What is the best way of supporting the tax system that will keep health education and welfare going? —

Always asking these as questions, and not offering answers. That will save you from the partisanship of the people. Because the questions are good questions no matter which side you're on. What we need is to have questions.

Q. A hyperlink for you: you've taught about this before. With two days of Rosh Hashanah, on weekdays, more and more of our communities are seeing Day 1 as the traditional day and Day 2 as the funky day. But there's a deeper cosmology that you've taught about before that I'd love to see you address so we can see the trajectories not just as First Day and Alternative Day.

A. You understand the issue that even in Israel we keep two days of this yontif. The gemara says it's one long day. In the Zohar it says chochmah and binah, it's like the two hemispheres you can't separate one from the other. On the other hand, we've all heard about the woman who had a stroke on the left hemisphere. If you invite people for a second day of doing "funky," that would be the place to ask them to just imagine for the next 15 minutes that you are this woman who is now seeing no separation from her skin to the rest of the universe at this point. Can you go for a moment beyond the verbal and feel your identity with all that there is. That would be the way to use the metaphors. That's number one.

Number two: there has been always the question that chochmah is in kabbalah called Abba/Father masculine. But I'm not so sure. Remember the idea of Rosh Hashanah as a birthing process. The labor is in Elul, the birthing is happening and it goes through up to the point where the baby is being brought to be nursed during Succos, and so on. Once you begin to see it in this way, you begin to look at chochmah not as Abba but as Sofia, in the feminine. And then you go back to the second day and call that the masculine. It depends: if you've worked it out to

create a feeling-canvas in your own inner panorama then the likelihood is that you'll be able to give it over to the people so the second day won't only be a repetition and boring. That's going to be very helpful.

Q. You mentioned the issue of zichronot, and how we have to acknowledge the trauma and the memories that hold us back. We talk so much about letting go. It seems that we pay lip service to the zichronot. What might we be able to do with the most troublesome zichronot?

A. This is where the liturgy is so wonderful. What are the zichronot that Yitzchak has from the akedah? That's exactly what we are going to be davenen about during zichronot, right? You realize he has to have a sense of, is he going to dwell on, what kind of a father is God, or on the question of how he's going to become a father and deal with his children? The way in which he deals with Esav is a result of how he handled his own zichronot. I don't think that the people can do this during a service alone, but you can flag it and say, those of you who would like to come in the evening and work on the zichronot, and be able to say "I will bring that up to full awareness in me and I will release it." Unless it gets released, zichronot are going to stay in the muscles and the guts and everything else. You may want to have a second tashlich. You cannot take the aveiras that you throw away without acknowledging their (positive??) place in your life; then it can become biodegradable. You could have a couples night in which people get rid of their difficult zichronos together, for instance.

I'd like to add: for simple nusach, go to www.virtualcantor.com. Downloadable stuff, no coloratura but very simple ways of being able to do it. You might share that also with people who are homebound, to log on and hear some of the liturgy to help them.

Q. I spoke with Chabad rebbe last week; he was saying that the second Temple was a higher level than the first Temple. As we come to Rosh Hashanah, I want to get a sense – I know you've taught the same thing. How does the light grow as we move into Rosh Hashanah?

A. The wonderful teaching goes like this. In the Zohar it says the 13 attributes of shining during Elul. The next time they are shining is on Yom Kippur. And during slichos we also say "*Hashem Hashem E-l rachum v'chanun.*" Reb Schneur Zalman asked, if we are already dealing with the 13 *middos* of *rachamim* before, what's the difference? He comes up with a mashal of *melech b'sadeh*, I think it's from the BeSht. The king is on his way. Anyone who feeds the king and makes a bed for him, it's easy to be with the king and talk with him. Once the king has come into the palace it's a harder thing, he's surrounded by his retinue, it's not easy to come, and so forth. That's the teaching.

I don't want to talk about the third Temple at this point because the whole mythic element of where the third Temple is and how it's going to be dealt with, there are some people who are kohanim who are preparing to offer animal sacrifices, and after what we've been through with the plant in Iowa I just don't feel that I want to talk about a third Temple in this way. And if there's a third Temple – which is **my House is a House of prayer for all people**, the third Temple is our planet sanctified and healed! "**bchol maqom muqtar muggash bishmi - mimizrach shems ad m'vo'o mhullal shem Hashem** ---That's the way I'd want to say. If there is that planet sanctified and healed somewhere in the future, I want to draw down to us right now the vibe that comes from that sacred future. And when on Yom Kippur we go into the holy of holies it should feel not like a limited place but a place that can't even be measured **makom ha'aron eyno min hammidah..**

Q. Working with people who are secular, struggling to get people just to take their kids out of school for Yom Kippur! Feeling spiritually myself struggling; it's such a tall order. I feel overwhelmed by the Yamim Nora'im. Is there a way to cut to the essence, to take all these wonderful gifts and ideas and distill them to some kind of simplicity that I can actually attain?

A. May the Shekhinah bless us with appropriateness so that as we are connecting with the people with whom we have to work, we should always find **that which allows us to be an ally to the good part of their neshamah!** Usually when we are trying to overcome a reluctance, we are not taking hold of that willingness that is already there. To be able to say, "what would be the best thing you could imagine should come out of that?" Always to allow for that, instead of imposing.

The second thing is, for years I have been having a conversation with some of my chaverim in which I ask them before the Yamim Nora'im, is there anything you have seen in me during this year that I really need to be made aware of? Without good chaverim – if you have a good chaver, there's two yetzer ha-tovs against one yetzer ha-ra! It's very important to have good chaverim. Call each other on the afternoon before Rosh Hashanah and give hugs, so you don't feel like you're going in to this thing alone, you know? Give them a *bracha* and they'll give you a *bracha*. And be really ready to be an ally to what is good in the people.

Vkhol mi sh'osqim b'tzorchy tzibbur shel emunah haqadosh baruch hu yichtvem viychatmem l'shanh tovah uvruchah!