

## ***Parashat Devarim, Shabbat Hazon [Vision --וִזְיוֹן]***

some materials for prayer and learning on this special Shabbat, possibly of general interest beyond. Temple Micah. 9 Av, 5779/Aug 10, 2019

**"Nishmat,"** Marge Piercy (living)

from *The Art of Blessing the Day* (NY: Knopf, 1999)

....We are given the wind within us, the breath  
To shape into words that steal time, that touch  
Like hands and pierce like bullets, that waken  
Truth and deceit, sorrow and pity and joy,  
That waste precious air in complaints, in lies,  
In floating traps for power on the dirty air.  
Yet holy breath still stretches our lungs to sing.

We are given fire to see against the dark,  
To think, to read, to study how we are to live,  
To bank in ourselves against defeat and despair  
That cool and muddy our resolves, that make us forget  
What we saw we must do. We are given passion  
To rise like the sun in our minds with the new day  
And burn the debris of habit and greed and fear.

We stand in the midst of the burning world,  
Primed to burn with compassionate love and justice,  
To turn inward and find holy fire at the core,  
To turn outward and see the world that is all  
Of one flesh with us, see under the trash, through  
The smog, the furry bee in the apple blossom,  
The trout leaping, the candles our ancestors lit for us.

Fill us as the tide rustles into the reeds in the marsh.  
Fill us as the rushing water overflows the pitcher,  
Fill us as light fills a room with its dancing.  
Let the little quarrels of the bones and the snarling

Of the lesser appetites and the whining of the ego cease.  
Let silence still us so you may show us your shining  
And we can out of that stillness rise and praise.

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**"On the Sabbath Day,"**

Fanny Neuda (1819-94), trans. Dinah Berland  
from *Hours of Devotion* (NY: Schocken, 2007)

My God and Holy Parent,  
My Creator and Sustainer...  
on the seventh day you established  
Your blessing and your sanctification,  
Making it a day of rest for all people....

On the Sabbath we put aside service to the world  
And dedicate ourselves instead  
To the service of God.  
We lay down our work for our earthly portion  
And allow ourselves to live whole, undivided lives  
For our spiritual, eternal redemption --  
So we are not flooded  
By a stream of worldly concerns and struggle,  
So our moral convictions  
And the highest stirrings of our hearts  
Do not get lost amid the demands of our lives,  
So the noisy cries of the outside world  
Do not overwhelm and silence the holy songs within.

...Grant that the feelings and sentiments of the Sabbath  
That stir my soul today  
Accompany me tomorrow  
Through the activities of the week  
So that even amid the busy workday  
I may carry the sense of Sabbath in my soul...

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“...in Your light we see light.” – Ps. 36:10

**HOW** אֵיכָה אֶשָּׂא, לְבַדִּי, טְרוֹחַכֶם וּמִשְׁאָכֶם, וְרִיבְכֶם  
can I bear unaided the trouble of you...  
--Deut 1:12, today's Torah

**HOW** הֲיִתָּה לְזוֹנָה קְרִיָּה נְאֻמָּנָה אֵיכָה  
is the faithful city become a harlot...  
--Isaiah 1:21, today's Haftarah

**HOW** יֹשְׁבָה בְּדָד, הָעִיר רַבְתִּי עִם אֵיכָה  
lonely sits the city...  
--Lamentations 1:1, Tisha B'av reading

"The sages connected all three 'hows' by bringing them into liturgical relationship with one another." -- Plaut commentary

Thereupon I said to you, "I cannot bear the burden of you by myself. The LORD your God has multiplied you until you are today as numerous as the stars in the sky. — May the LORD, the God of your fathers, increase your numbers a thousand-fold, and bless you as He promised you.--

**How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife?"**

Pick from each of your tribes men who are wise, discerning, and experienced, and I will appoint them as your heads." You answered me and said, "What you propose to do is good." So I took your tribal leaders, wise and experienced men, and appointed them heads over you: chiefs of thousands, chiefs of hundreds, chiefs of fifties, and chiefs of tens, and officials for your tribes. I charged your magistrates at that time as follows, "Hear out your fellow men, and decide justly between any man and a fellow Israelite or a stranger. You shall not be partial in judgment: hear out low and high alike. Fear no man, for judgment is God's. And any matter that is too difficult for you, you shall bring to me and I will hear it." -- Deuteronomy 1:9-17

**<<<from Torah, Shabbat Hazon  
from Haftarah, Shabbat Hazon**

Your new moons and your appointed seasons  
My soul hates; they are a burden unto Me; I am weary to bear them. And when you spread forth your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; when you pray at length, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes, cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow....

**How is the faithful city become a harlot!  
She that was full of justice,  
righteousness lodged in her,  
but now murderers.**

...And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning; afterward thou shalt be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed with justice, and they that return of her with righteousness.  
-- Isaiah 1:14-17, 21, 26-27

**Reading, Tisha B'av:**

**How doth the city sit solitary,  
that was full of people!  
How is she become as a widow!  
She that was great among the nations,  
and princess among the provinces,  
how is she become tributary!**

Bitterly she weeps in the night, Her cheek wet with tears. There is none to comfort her Of all her friends. All her allies have betrayed her; They have become her foes.

Judah has gone into exile Because of misery and harsh oppression; When she settled among the nations, She found no rest; All her pursuers overtook her In the narrow places.

Zion's roads are in mourning, Empty of festival pilgrims; All her gates are deserted. Her priests sigh, Her maidens are unhappy— She is utterly disconsolate!  
-- Lamentations 1:1-4

### Three-Part *Eichah* Midrash in Three Versions

Three prophesied with the language of *eichah*: Moses, Isaiah and Jeremiah.\*

Moses said, (Deuteronomy 1:12), "How (*eichah*) will I carry alone..."

Isaiah said, (Isaiah 1:21) "How (*eichah*) she has become a prostitute..."

Jeremiah said, (Lamentations 1:1) "How (*eichah*) does she dwell..."

Said Rabbi Levi: It is compared to a noble woman who had three friends. One saw her at peace, one saw her in her recklessness, and one saw her in her degradation. So did Moses see Yisrael in their honor, and in their tranquility, [yet] he said, "How will I carry their burden alone?" Isaiah saw them in their recklessness, and he said "How she has become a prostitute..." Jeremiah saw them in their degradation, and he said, "How does she dwell..." *Akeidat Yitzchak* (15th Century CE Spain) offers the same parable with the noble woman first "at the height of her beauty and wealth," then "committing excesses," and finally "in disgrace." -- Older midrash: *Eichah Rabbah* 1 (Roman Palestine). Both via sefaria.org

It's hard to de-gender the biblical images, but perhaps we can rethink the midrash as three stages at which the prophets meet Yisrael:

- 1) Moses knew them during a carefree period (God and the People are "honeymooning" in the desert) but was still prompted to cry "How...";
- 2) Isaiah knew them when they were treating greater riches carelessly and warned them about power imbalances;
- 3) Jeremiah knew them at a time of complete disaster and cried out at their misery, not recognizing their carefree, even careless, past.

\*NOTE: The assumption here is that Jeremiah wrote Lamentations. There are additional uses "*eichah*" in the *Tanakh*, but they are not "prophecies."

### More on "*eichah*"

The Hebrew word אֵיךְ [how] -- an adverb/interrogative with an incredulous, negative connotation (the Evan Shoshan concordance calls it "question of rebuke"), appears six times in Genesis and Exodus. For example: when Abimelech says to Isaac: "...she's your wife! so how then did you say 'she is my sister!'" (Gen 26:9), and when Moses says to God: "...the children of Israel haven't listened to me, so how will Pharaoh hear me, of uncircumcised lips?" (Exod 6:12).

The word does not appear at all in Leviticus or Numbers. This form (including אֵיךְ) appears 55 times in the Prophets and Writings.

The form אֵיכָה first appears in Deuteronomy, where it is used five times, beginning with 1:12. This is more than in any other book, even the Book of Lamentations (*Eichah*), where it appears four times. The use in Isaiah, included in the midrash above, is the only appearance in that book. This form of the word shows up an additional seven times in the Tanakh: in Judges, 2 Kings, Song of Songs (twice in one verse), and Psalms, along with twice in Jeremiah.

In total, the Evan Shoshan Concordance only lists 78 occurrences of *eich/eichah*, plus four instances of "אֵיכָה *eichachah*," which appears twice in the Book of Esther and twice in Song of Songs. (Strong's lists 82 occurrences, including all three forms -- it's nice when they match!) "How?!" is not among the rarest words in the Tanakh, but it's unusual (and IMO interesting.) See also "Trouble and How?!" page 6.

## "The Three Weeks" (17th of Tammuz to 9th of Av): *bein hametzarim*, i.e., "within the straits" or "within the borders"

some observances, according to Ashkenazi practice (based on My Jewish Learning and Halachipedia)

17th of Tammuz	The Three weeks	The Nine Days	Tisha B'av
<b>Calendar:</b> 40 days after Shavuot	semi-mourning: no new clothes,	Beginning with Rosh Hodesh Av,	<b>Numbers:</b> After Spies, generation
<b>Exodus:</b> after Golden Calf incident,	eating new fruit, other occasion for	intensified mourning: restricted	condemned to die in the desert
Moses breaks first Tablets	reciting <i>Shehecheyanu</i> ; no weddings,	bathing, no doing laundry; no wine	<b>586 BCE:</b> 1st Temple destroyed,
<b>69 CE:</b> Roman rulers forbade	public celebration, dancing; many	or meat, except on Shabbat;	Babylonian Exile
sacrifices in the Temple	skip haircuts, shaving; some avoid	restrictions on business, travel, and	<b>70 CE:</b> 2nd Temple destroyed
<b>70 CE:</b> Walls of Jerusalem breached	live music, others recorded music too	many forms of pleasure	<b>MISC:</b> many historical disasters

## "Days Between," Robert Hunter; music by Jerry Garcia. First performed live by Grateful Dead, 2/22/93 (excerpts)

There were days  
and there were days  
and there were days between  
Summer flies and August dies  
the world grows dark and mean...

There were days  
and there were days  
and there were days besides  
when phantom ships w/phantom sails  
set to sea on phantom tides  
Comes lightning of the sun  
on bright unfocused eyes  
the blue of yet another day  
a springtime wet with sighs...

There were days  
and there were days  
and there were days I know  
when all we ever wanted  
was to learn and love and grow  
Once we grew into our shoes  
we told them where to go....  
gave the best we had to give  
how much we'll never know

There were days  
and there were days  
and there were days between  
...hoping love would not forsake  
the days that lie between

## The Nine Days (of Av), The Nine Days of Jerry, and the Days Between

Since 2008 at least, music promoters have been marking what was originally called "Jerry week" (although nine days), between the August 1 birthday and August 9 death date of Jerry Garcia (1942-1995). More recently, fans have been marking what are now called "the Days Between." Locally, for example, the Hamilton Live venue has been celebrating for three years now. While plenty of Jews celebrate, "the Days Between" don't have the same Jewish resonance of the "Nine Days of Jerry."

In 2010, Lorelai Kude, a huge Dead fan with a sense of personal connection to the band and to Jerry, in particular, launched the "Nine Days of Jerry" on her audio streaming program called "Radio Free Nachlaot" (RFN). She had started RFN, named for her Jerusalem neighborhood and using the tagline "Where Shlomo meets Jerry," the year before.

I met Lorelai at a Jewish Deadhead camp of sorts, "Blues for Challah," at Camp Isabella Freedman in 2011. It seemed clear that the Nine Days of Jerry were, for her, more than simply a chance to reflect and remember -- as Rabbi Cohen describes "the Days Between" in his essay, and as many fans experience the period -- but much more of a marking of Jerry's *yahrzeit* and an attempt to deal with major loss, both relating to the Jewish calendar and to Jerry's death and the subsequent changes in the Dead universe.

Many fans, Jewish and not, mark "the Days Between," wherever they fall in the Jewish calendar. Lorelai and many of her listeners, however, avoid music in observance of the Nine Days (of Av). Depending on how August and Av line up, RFN is frequently shut down entirely, in mourning, while others are celebrating. This year, the Nine Days of Jerry begin August 12.

--V. Spatz 8/6/19

## from "Tuning In" by Granville Ganter

...The Dead's psychedelic sound is composed of two stages of transformation. The first type occurs during the segue ways between songs, where one song changes into another. Generally speaking, this is where the psychedelic quality of the Dead's music is most evident. In some instances, the transformation is particularly exciting, shifting from a loose, exploratory drifting to a decisive pursuit of a new rhythm or melody. Other so-called jam bands...also perform this first kind of transformation.

At the same time, however, there is a *second stage of transformation* that also takes place....

At this stage, even the notes start to atomize and develop a topography or rhythmic texture---almost becoming "songs" within themselves---exponentially compounding the rhythms of the original song. (As bizarre as it sounds, I suspect that everyone who has heard a lot of the Dead's music will agree with many of these outlandish claims, and people do not need drugs to hear it.)

...the psychedelic effect of the Grateful Dead's music is a psychological process. It only unfolds during the time it takes to listen to it. As the band's lyrics constantly point out, the music is about itself. This non-conceptual self-referen-

tiality is also what separates Grateful Dead from other forms of cult music, like punk, where the music is about "something" identifiable in the outside world, such as rebellion or par-tying or politics. The Dead's music has always been about listening to the transforming collective experience of the moment.

I believe that the Grateful Dead's music is actually part of a *lifeworld* created by active listeners. This lifeworld is learned, either from hearing Grateful Dead music on numerous occasions, or from being open to hear the music in a certain way.

Earlier version of essay in *Dead Reckoning: The Life and Times of the Grateful Dead*. Edited by John Rocco (NY: Schirmer Books, 1999) Now available on-line.

## "What the Grateful Dead Can Teach Us About Tisha B'av" by Rabbi Simeon Cohen, Times of Israel, July 2017

..In a strange coincidence, the date [of Jerry Garcia's death] gave Deadheads their own Nine Days--Garcia's birthday was August 1 and he died on August 9. [Aug 1-9 is now] referred to as the "Days Between" (after one of their songs); it is a time during which Grateful Dead fans reflect upon and remember Garcia and his music....

Jerry Garcia was the foundation upon which the Grateful Dead empire was built -- not only was he lead guitarist and vocalist for the band, but he was also the group's spiritual center, and a guiding light for their tens-of-thousands of fans.

When Garcia died, it seemed inconceivable that the band could continue. How could the music go on without its foundational pillar to uphold it? Yet like Yohanan ben Zakkai, the surviving members of the group knew that they could not simply put an end to their way of life. If they wanted to survive, they needed to adapt.

And so, in the 22 [now 24] years since Garcia's death, the four surviving members of the band have evolved and grown in an effort to keep the music alive....Their music is arguably as popular now as it has ever been.

World Jewry is in the midst of an incredibly fraught moment. Tension between Israel and the Jewish community of the diaspora has never been higher....Yet I take comfort in the adaptive, evolutionary spirit of Yohanan ben Zakkai and the Grateful Dead. No matter how dark things become, we have always found a way to survive. After Jerusalem was destroyed, an entirely new, revolutionary form of Judaism was born. It has now far outlasted its predecessor. As the old Hebrew adage goes, *gam ze ya'avur*.<sup>\*</sup> Or as Jerry Garcia put it, "we will get by."<sup>\*\*</sup>

<sup>\*</sup> "This too shall pass."

<sup>\*\*</sup>"We will survive/We will get by" did come out of his mouth for many years. (First performance 9/15/82. Recorded on 1987 *In the Dark*, with single release plus video.) For clarity, though, pedantic as this may be: the only Dead lyrics Jerry Garcia (1942-95) wrote were "Cream Puff Wars" (1967) and half of "That's It for the Other One" (also '67). As he did for so many of the Grateful Dead's songs, Robert Hunter (living) wrote the lyrics to "Touch of Grey" -- arguably (& IMO) the worst Dead song and so, as such goes, the only one that ever made it to the top ten on any radio chart -- and Jerry wrote the music.... As Robert Hunter put it in the very same song: "It's even worse than it appears, but it's all right."

## **Parashat Devarim, Shabbat Hazon [Vision וְחִזּוֹן]**

Temple Micah. 9 Av, 5779/Aug 10, 2019

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It is sometimes said that the Haftarah portion was chosen for this date for reasons that don't relate to the content of the Torah portion. But there is a second unusual vocabulary overlap, in addition to "*eichah*," which highlights the "burden/trouble" theme in both readings: in one case Moses carries it; in the other, God. In addition, the Torah and Haftarah portions include a lot of similar language and content around judges and justice.

### **איכה and טרח -- Trouble and How?!**

In addition to sharing the word "*eichah*" with the only verse in Isaiah to use "*eichah*," as discussed above, Deuteronomy 1:12 shares the word "*torach*" with the only verse in Isaiah (or anywhere else in the Tanakh) to use that word. "*Torach*" only appears in these two verses in Tanakh.

חֲדָשִׁיכֶם וּמוֹעֲדֵיכֶם שְׂנֵאָה נִפְשִׁי  
הֵיוּ עָלַי לְטָרַח; נִלְאִיתִי, נָשָׂא  
Your new moons and your appointed seasons  
fill Me with loathing;\* They are become a  
**burden** to Me, I cannot endure them.  
-- Isaiah 1:14

אֵיכָה הִיְתָה לְזוֹנָה קְרִיָּה נְאֻמָּנָה  
מְלֹאֲתִי מִשְׁפָּט צָדֵק יָלִין בָּהּ וְעֵתָה מִרְצָחִים:  
**How** is the faithful city become a harlot! She  
that was full of justice, righteousness lodged  
in her, but now murderers.  
-- Isaiah 1:21

אֵיכָה אֶשָּׂא, לְבַדִּי  
טָרַחְכֶם וּמִשְׁאָכְכֶם, וְרִיבְכֶם  
**How** can I bear unaided  
the **trouble** of you, and the burden,  
and the bickering!  
-- Deuteronomy 1:12

\*This is the "New JPS" (Jewish Publication Society), 1985. The 1917 "Old JPS" has "My soul hateth," following KJV (King James Version), for "loathing" here; Alter has "utterly despises," noting that he incorporated into the verb phrase the intensity of the subject's added נִפְשִׁי *nafshi* [my soul].

טָרַחְכֶם, *tarchakhem* -- the trouble of you. טָרַח, *torach* is usually translated in Isaiah 1:14 as "burden," while the same Hebrew word, as it appears in Deuteronomy here, is translated as "trouble" or "(heavy) load," or, in the old JPS and the KJV: "cumbrance."

In the earlier version of Moses' complaint about the people being too heavy to bear (Numbers 11:11), the Hebrew is מַשָּׂא, *massa*, regularly translated in that verse -- as well as here (following "trouble of you" above) -- as "burden." *Massa* is a far more common word than *torach*.

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Let's see with our heart / these things our eyes have seen / and know the truth must still lie / somewhere in between  
-- Robert Hunter, "Blues for Allah," music by Jerry Garcia. Performed live only five times, all in 1975. Recorded on *Blues for Allah*, 9/1/75