

RABBI'S MESSAGE

Now's the Time

Timing is important. In these days of technology, we have found ways to make time convenient. Much of our communication comes through computer or television screens. We can choose to receive instantaneous communication but being glued to “smart” device or constantly watching and listening to “BREAKING NEWS.” Or, we can turn things off, read our emails and texts when we can focus our attention, record our favorite entertainment until we can enjoy it, and designate a special time to catch up on news and social media. If we patiently wait, rather than make immediate responses and reactions, we'll probably find out that we haven't missed too much. With so much communication available at our fingertips, it's hard to be patient. But if we are constantly overwhelmed with the outside, we won't have the opportunity to explore what's inside.

RIGHT NOW is a special time. I say this knowing full well there is a difference between the time I write this message (just before Shabbat, more than two weeks before Rosh Hashanah) and when you read it (now). You might be reading it during the first 10 days of the New Year 5780...or not. These first 10 days, leading up to Yom Kippur, are designed for introspection. We take some time by the water (see TASHLICH later in this newsletter) to cast away those elements of the previous year that we do not want to repeat and open our hearts to new possibilities. We also contemplate the mysteries of the coming year, hoping for the best and praying we will be prepared for whatever comes along.

Yom Kippur is not just about spending a day in synagogue. It's not just about praying or fasting or even repenting. It's about time. It's about taking the time to remove ourselves from outside distractions and be present with ourselves and our community. We can take this time to really think about what we've learned about ourselves and how that learning will enhance the experiences ahead. Hopefully, our growth and maturity help us face all these mysteries with courage for ourselves and empathy for others. Of course, we can contemplate these concepts any time; but the calendar gives us good reason to do it NOW.

On the bulletin board in my office, I keep a reminder of the importance of time. It comes from the wisdom of Winnie the Pooh.

“What day is?” asked Pooh. “It's today,” squeaked Piglet. “My favorite day,” said Pooh.

Happy New Year. It's time.

L'shalom,

Rabbi Dan Gordon