



Ruach Hamidbar

Spirit of the Desert

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BH
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24 Menachem Av 5771

Dear Friends,

In a few days (August 30) we will enter the Hebrew month of Elul. The sages say this is a time when G'd is more open and accessible – a time when the King/Queen steps out of the “castle” and comes to meet us in the field. During this final month of the year, G'd's compassion, love and support for us is tangible. We are lifted out of the harsh realities of our material existence and given a loving spiritual refuge. We are supported by the Shekhinah as we review this past year, evaluate our actions and deeds and begin our teshuvah process. (returning to the Source) This is carried through to Rosh Hashanah and culminates on Yom Kippur.

There are forty days between Rosh Chodesh Elul and Yom Kippur, corresponding to the breaking of the first tablets and the receiving of the second tablets. Yom Kippur marks the day of Hashem's ultimate forgiveness to the children of Israel. Thus the Rabbis teach that if we work on ourselves daily during this time, it is possible to make important changes in our lives that will enable us to live in honesty with the Divine light of our souls. We have a special opportunity to become more aware of G'd's plan for us and our unique purpose here on earth. What gifts and abilities have we been given and how can we better serve G'd? Many increase their Torah study, prayer and charitable deeds during this auspicious time. Hearing the shofar can light the fire that moves us into action. Our Shofar Hotline is at 602-420-1700 and on our website.

After this very challenging year, I am full of gratitude to be spending the High Holy Days with you and beginning the New Year 5772. I know that you will really enjoy our guests; Desert Wind, Yofiyah and Dr. Beth Hevda, as their music, chanting, teachings and meditations help bring about the joy, healing and transformation that we all desire.

Lastly, I want to thank you for all the kindness you have shown me over the last year as I went through the death of my mother and my own illness. I will always remember the last High Holy Days when my mom danced and also held the Torah for the first time in her life. Bubbie Fayga za”l was so happy to be there with all of you and said that it was the very best High Holy Days in her life. Thank you for your many kindnesses to her and for giving her good reasons to smile, laugh and celebrate for the first time with me and Ruach. Thank you also for the time and space you gave me as I recovered from my cancer surgery. Every act of kindness, patience and understanding has been a precious gift to me. I am very blessed that my healing is going well and that I am on the road to a full recovery.

May we all receive the power to begin anew. May we enter this new year with hope, joy and the commitment to make positive changes towards our wholeness and well-being.

Many blessings for a happy, healthy and prosperous new year,

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