



# Carnegie Shul Chatter

## September 1, 2021



## High Holiday Reservations

Rosh Hashanah starts this coming Monday evening, September 6.

If you have not already done so, you can still email [mrmike7777@yahoo.com](mailto:mrmike7777@yahoo.com) to make your reservation to attend High Holiday services in our sanctuary.

You may also attend on-line by going to our live stream on You Tube at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEPckPbLDbAzGg-tiXITNA>

### Choose Wisely

And so a new year is about to begin.

Many of us wish others a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year. We should always be happy. That is for sure. Yes, we will have some troubles along the way. That is part of life. And maybe there will be a few tragedies. But there will also be, God willing, many joyous occasions and celebrations as well. Find joy in your simchas. As the old song goes, "Don't worry, be happy."

And what about health? Yes, there are illnesses that can befall us. Some are beyond our ability to prevent. But others can be prevented by exercise, good diet, and by following the advice of our doctors. Choose life. Do what your doctor tells you to do. You have free choice to do so.

And prosperity? We all want to be financially prosperous. And we all want to reap the rewards of our hard work, but let's not forget the ethical and moral obligations we have in doing business. Here again we have free choice. We can choose to be just in our dealings with others, or we can choose to get rich at the expense of others. The choice should be obvious. The Torah always emphasizes justice and equity in all that we do.

So chose to follow the mitzvot that God has given us, and you will have a happy, healthy, and prosperous year.

# Nitzavim in a Nutshell

**Deuteronomy 29:9–30:20**

*From Chabad.org*

The Parshah of Nitzavim includes some of the most fundamental principles of the Jewish faith:

**The unity of Israel:** “You stand today, all of you, before the L-rd your G-d: your heads, your tribes, your elders, your officers, and every Israelite man; your young ones, your wives, the stranger in your gate; from your wood-hewer to your water-drawer.”

**The future redemption:** Moses warns of the exile and desolation of the Land that will result if Israel abandons G-d’s laws, but then he prophesies that in the end, “You will return to the L-rd your G-d . . . If your outcasts shall be at the ends of the heavens, from there will the L-rd your G-d gather you . . . and bring you into the Land which your fathers have possessed.”

**The practicality of Torah:** “For the mitzvah which I command you this day, it is not beyond you, nor is it remote from you. It is not in heaven . . . It is not across the sea . . . Rather, it is very close to you, in your mouth, in your heart, that you may do it.”

**Freedom of choice:** “I have set before you life and goodness, and death and evil: in that I command you this day to love G-d, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments . . . Life and death I have set before you, blessing and curse. And you shall choose life.”

## Choose Life

This week’s parshah, Netzovim, emphasizes that although the Torah sets forth 613 laws or mitzvot ultimately the choice to obey these mitzvot is ours. We have freedom of choice. Everything is not predestined. We can live our lives as we choose. Yes, there can be punishment if we make poor choices, but the choice is ours. God does not decide everything for us.

And in this parshah, Moses tells the Jewish people just as they are about to enter the Holy Land, “Life and death I have set before you, blessing and curse. And you shall choose life.”

The blog entry that follows, from The Times of Israel, connects the option to choose life with the Rosh Hahanah holiday that we are about to observe.

I hope you enjoy the article and Shana Tova to all!



# Rosh Hashanah: Choose Life

Sep 7, 2018, 12:51 AM

The Torah portion of Netzavim is always read immediately before the high holidays. Before completing the teshuvah of Elul and preparing for the even higher teshuvah of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, God commands us to choose life. The choice of life is the essence of the Torah, which is all life. The fact that God commands us to choose life also indicates that we do have the power of free choice.

In the Torah portion of Netzavim God sets three choices before us. The verses begin with the word re'eh ("see") implying that the choices to follow all have to do with sight. We may choose between life and death, good and bad, and blessing and curse. All of these choices are incorporated into the final exhortation of this unit of verses: ...and you shall choose life

Choosing the positive over the negative is always ultimately the choice of life. The negative side of reality defines the positive, puts it in proportion and gives it balance. The ultimate purpose of evil is to be incorporated into the good, which it reinforces. Nevertheless, we always strive to manifest the positive in reality. When we choose life, God also gives us the power to overcome the evil inclination that urges us to choose death.

The first letters of the three positive choices – blessing/bracha, good/tov, and life/chaim spell the Hebrew word betach, which means "sure," "confidence" or "trust." Trust in God is the fullest manifestation of our faith in Him, and is an acronym for these three positive choices. When we trust in God, He gives us confidence in ourselves, empowering us to pursue those positive goals that we define for ourselves.

One of the deepest teachings of Kabbalah and Chassidut is that good and evil are not two different sides of reality. Rather, both good and evil coexist at every point of existence. Around every blessing there is a surrounding shell of curse. When we activate the power of our eyesight to its fullest, we can penetrate that shell of death and access the life within. The life within is the betach – the blessing, good and life that exists at every point of choice that we face.

The Torah summarizes our potential choices with the directive to choose life. Our ability to focus on the positive in reality is the ultimate power of our sight, and ultimately brings us life.

The power of wisdom is identified with the power of sight. Of all the three positive energies, when we focus the inner eye of our souls, we see life. On the surface, it would seem that prosperity or goodness are easier to see than life. The classic work of Chassidut, the book of Tanya by the first Lubavitcher Rebbe, quotes the Arizal to explain how we can see life. He explains that every elementary particle of creation has a spark of Divinity, and is alive. The ability to see that all of reality is alive with God's Divine spark is the deepest insight of



the inner eye of the soul. When we focus on the life in all reality, God gives us the power to actualize it, to choose life and to be creative at every point of our existence.

## About the Author

*Rabbi Ginsburgh was born in St. Louis, Missouri in 1944. He initially pursued an academic career in mathematics and philosophy, later studying Torah under the guidance of several great sages—most notably, the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Rabbi Ginsburgh made Aliyah to Israel in 1965. His familiarity with mathematics, science, philosophy, psychology and music has enabled him to lecture throughout Israel, relating the ancient wisdom of Torah to many current trends in academic thought and art.*

# High Holidays

This year we will conduct High Holiday Services both in Shul and on-line. Advance reservations are required to attend in person, as are masks, regardless of vaccination status. Seats are assigned to maximize social distancing. Reservations can be made by sending an email to Mike Roteman at [mrmike7777@yahoo.com](mailto:mrmike7777@yahoo.com). Below are the High Holiday schedules.

## Rosh Hashanah

### Monday, September 6

Evening Services ..... 7:15 pm

### Tuesday, September 7

Preliminary Service..... 8:30 am

Shacharis ..... 9:00 am

Torah Reading..... 10:00 am

Sermon ..... 10:45 am

Musaf ..... 11:15 am

Recess ..... 1:15 pm

Tashlich..... 6:15 pm

Minchah ..... 7:00 pm

Maariv ..... 7:15 pm

### Wednesday, September 8

Preliminary Service..... 8:30 am

Shacharis ..... 9:00 am

Torah Reading..... 10:00 am

Sermon ..... 10:45 am

Musaf ..... 11:15 am

Recess ..... 1:15 pm

Minchah ..... 7:00 pm

Maariv ..... 7:15 pm

## Yom Kippur

### Wednesday, September 15

Kol Nidre ..... 7:15 pm

Maariv ..... 7:30 pm

### Thursday, September 16

Preliminary Service..... 9:00 am

Shacharis ..... 9:30 am

Torah Reading ..... 10:30 am

Sermon ..... 11:15 am

Yizkor ..... 11:45 am

Musaf ..... 12:15 pm

Recess..... 2:30 pm

Minchah ..... 5:45 pm

Neilah ..... 6:45 pm

Shofar ..... 7:45 pm