

## Fate and Destiny

I wish you all shana Tova. Good on you for making the effort for a 2 day yom tov, I will let you on to a secret tomorrow is Shabat Shuva a 3<sup>rd</sup> day in a row and service commences 9.10am. I trust that you derive fulfilment purpose, pleasure and a good deal of self satisfaction in your attendance. You give yourself every opportunity to be blessed, to become imbued with the spirit of Tom Tov so that it may linger on for the entire year. In any event there is a double dosage of nachas on offering; the prize has jackpotted from yesterday and the winnings are tantalising! We do have other prizes on offer; a double dosage of health prosperity happiness; and if you decide to attend tomorrow you are able to enter into the draw of our weekly door prize!

A Rabbi, Chazzan and President were captured by terrorists and given one last wish. The Rabbi said my last wish is to make this fascinating inspiring and thunderous sermon for two hours. Wish granted

The chazzan asked it is my wish to the cantorial pieces of the Kol nidrei with a philharmonic orchestra for over two hours wish granted and Mr President what is your wish? Just shoot me now

Most of the symbolism of Rosh Hashana is self understood. I understand about the shofar being either an exultant call of victory or a cry of repentance; the white kittel symbolise the purity of the angels, the prayers and judgement is understood, the apple dipped in honey are understood; but what about this obscure Tashlich custom. After Synagogue yesterday we joined in the custom of Tashlich. Tashlich means to throw or cast away; figuratively speaking the custom is to go down to a body of water, contemplate the symbolism of water being the source of life and the holder of secrets; then empty your pockets of the crumbs and cast away your sins becoming a free, wholesome and pure individual, now able to turn over a new leaf to start the year a fresh.

Reminds me of an episode I had with Miri after she had just finishing brushing out the car seats front back and boot in our Tarago; so she placed the swept crumbs and contents in a plastic bag. In my innocence picking up the bag and always being restless call out to Miri, great bag of Mixer- eaters here Miri where did you buy them from. I tell you after that I felt cleansed! I don't know why we throw away the crumbs from our pockets it would be probably better to throw away our credit cards or mobile phones for a few days.

So

For ordinary sins, we cast away, plain white bread  
For dark sins, we cast, black and heavy pumpernickel bread  
For complex sins, we cast away - Multi grain bread  
For sins of chutzpah – fresh bread  
For promiscuous sins – French bread.

For substance abuse – stoned wheat

Here in Coogee we have one of the top spots for Tashlich in the world. Even the Bondi people have to walk down to the Beach where as we in Coogee are right on the Beach, made for tashlich; little does Mel Gibson know that the Jews use Coogee Beach for Tashlich. It is not the first time Coogee was used as a sacred site; a few years ago thousands of pilgrims would flock to see this optical illusion of mother Mary that appeared on the northern headland each summer afternoon at Coogee. In Crown Heights Brooklyn everybody goes to this little moss laden opaque pond in the backyard of 770 with 2&1/2 goldfish swimming around in it, you can't compare the 770 gold fish pond to our pristine wave swept coastline, - we are a mega Tashlich site.

For being holier than thou - we cast away bagels

For being racist - we cast away crackers

For saying bad jokes about priest's, pastors and Rabbis - we cast away hot cross buns

For being ill tempered - we cast away – sourdough

For being eccentric - we cast away nut bread

And for car theft - we cast caraway bread

At Coogee we are able to cast our gaze toward the distant horizon; we are able to be aroused with the spirit of wonder looking out towards the broad distance and contemplate “mo rabo masecha Hashem” how great are your deeds Hashem . We can be filled with a spirit of humility, and respect for the magnificence of the world that we live in. We can look to the deep blue waters of the ocean and contemplate the vast multitude of species that exist within the water none of which can be seen. We can, as we pray the Tashlich service, only just marvel that we are only a minuscule, minuscule part of this vast and infinite universe; We can laterally draw a line in the sand and ask ourselves the big questions; we can draw a line in the sand and endeavour to start the year afresh cleansed and pure with a new beginning. We can cast our lot as the beach fisherman do each afternoon and ask God to fulfil the destiny promised to Abraham and multiply like the fish in the sea , well at least our Bank balance should multiply like the fish in the sea.

We could if we wanted cast our rod of hopes into God's wide open embrace. And try to become empowered by finding where does our destiny lie.

For sins of money – we cast away Glicks oily rich challah

For sins of not honouring your grandma – we cast away grandma bakery challah

For sins of fraternising (socialising) with the Sth Africans; we cast away challah from Biancas Grub store.

So as we reel in on the Tashlich that we have cast out; and reel in our portion of destiny for the year; we wonder what is it that we have caught and what will our catch be like.

In the Torah Numbers 10:2 when speaking about the Mitzvah of Shofar the verse reads "Make yourself trumpets to summons the tribes and the camps."

The verse uses two words to describe the Israelites, Machaneh - tribes and Eda - camps. The verse also uses two words to describe the sounds as the Israelites were summonsed.

Tekiah and Teruah.

Tekiah is the firm and exultant sound of joy in summonsing the Israelites to festival and victory. Teruah is the broken sounds, staccato, the sounds of fear and summons to war.

These two sounds the Tekiah and Teruah take us back to the beginning to the two covenants which formed us. The first, the covenant of Abraham, on Mt. Moriah as he saw the ram caught in the tree, God established a new relationship, a parent child relationship an everlasting familial tie as the children of Abraham Isaac Jacob Sarah Rivkah Rachel and Leah. This covenant of family promised a home for Abraham's descendants for all time, it also foretold, that families have challenges and war and exile will be an inevitable part of this covenant.

The second covenant was the covenant at Sinai a covenant not of family but of nationhood with a people. This added a transcendent (awe inspiring) and spiritual dimension to the relationship. The covenant of Sinai added a way of life of law and justice. It introduced God's code of practise and universal morality and ethics. It enabled us to move from being a family to becoming a holy nation.

The covenant of family is a Convenient of fate; one can not really choose the family to which they are born in, unless you are adopted, one can not choose rich or poor, wise or simple, but we seek solace and a haven in familial surroundings. This is the covenant of the Machaneh the tribal covenant. The second covenant is the Covenant of destiny. It takes us one step further turning fate into destiny. It is an inspiring journey imbued with national spirit and hope. It is the stuff of dreams. It is the destiny of the edaH

The first covenant the formation of our family is symbolised by the teruah sound; the fearful trembling broken staccato sounds. It reminds us of the binding of Isaac on Mt Moriah. It encourages us to close ranks seek refuge in the solidarity of the family.

The second covenant is symbolised by the exultant Tekiah sound of nationhood. It is the road of destiny and expresses a divine mission of Israel, as Gods witnesses.

On Rosh Hashana we blow the shofar, the literal translation of the word shofar means beauty; on Rosh Hashanah we blow both sounds tekiah and teruah, we try to do a beautiful thing we endeavour by this mitzvah to change the teruah into a tekiah to

transform fate into destiny. We rise from the ashes of Auschwitz to the vigour of the establishment of the state of Israel.

As it applies to the national sphere, so too it applies to the personal sphere. Every individual is born to a certain set of parents in a certain place at a certain time and is subject to certain genetic limitations; all these factors comprise the individual's fate.

However to turn fate to destiny, to take lemons and make lemonade, is the greatest challenge of anyone's life. Whenever we feel stymied by our personal challenges or fate, all you have to think of are the many beds that are taken up in the POW children's hospital up the road.

The Tashlich service on Coogee Beach takes us to yet a greater level of covenant. The Tashlich service brings us to the realisation that the covenant of Israel is to be transformed to a covenant for all mankind. It is not sufficient to be inward looking but rather to cast our gaze to the horizons and to embrace not just a national destiny but a universal destiny; it is the mission of the chosen; not chosen as in better, but chosen to be Or Lagoyim, to be a light unto the nations; chosen to share the message of God; to bring light and the stuff of dreams to all of mankind. Jews somehow are at the fore-front of every sphere of endeavour so if the Jew can do it so too can everybody. That's the simple message of Tashlich.

Kaiser Wilhelm the emperor of Prussia once asked Moses Mendelssohn who was the father of Reform Judaism, he himself was a frum Jew; The Kaiser asked, prove me Moses, that there is a God. Without blinking Mendelssohn replies the Jews. The Jews prove the existence of God, for if the Jew can survive the nightmare torment and tribulation of his fate and transform it to the hopes and dreams of a destiny then it can only be because of a powerful covenant of family, a covenant of nation and a covenant of the transcendent.

For war mongering – we cast away Kaiser rolls

For egotism – puff pastry

For raising your voice - challah

The free world today faces powerful financial cultural and nationalistic challenges; the secret to our survival in the west is the secret of the covenant. To survive, Western culture must reaffirm and restate its universal covenant. When Christians went to church on Sunday it helped keep families together, families helped keep communities together, and communities helped keep society together. When Jews go to shule on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day and on every Shabat, we keep families together which keep our community together we strengthen all of klal Yisrael.

The Kaiser Wilhelm of Prussia was going for a stroll with his good friend and confidant Moses Mendelssohn and asked him, Moses, "what are your plans for the day". Moses

answered I am not sure your highness. The Emperor was furious what was he hiding and had him immediately thrown into a dungeon for the day. At night the Kaiser visits and admonishes Moses , you see Moses you must be honest with me I asked you what your plans were for the day and you must inform me. Moses paused and said to his Emperor “your highness I honestly did not know of my plans for the day you see this morning I thought I was going for a stroll in the Park with my emperor and by the evening such was my fate that I found myself in a dark dungeon.

On Coogee Beach as we cast away our sins we sometimes may catch a real big one, a beauty. If you are Jewish, don't get excited because it is probably the back of your pants that you have caught. I guess when you are searching for destiny the real answer lies at home the real answer lies within; the real answer is that we have the power to shape our own destinies.

So as the old Aussie saying goes after the shofar blowing lets all go fishing.

Thank you and Shana Tova to you all. May we all be inscribed in the book of life success and prosperity and nachas from our children.