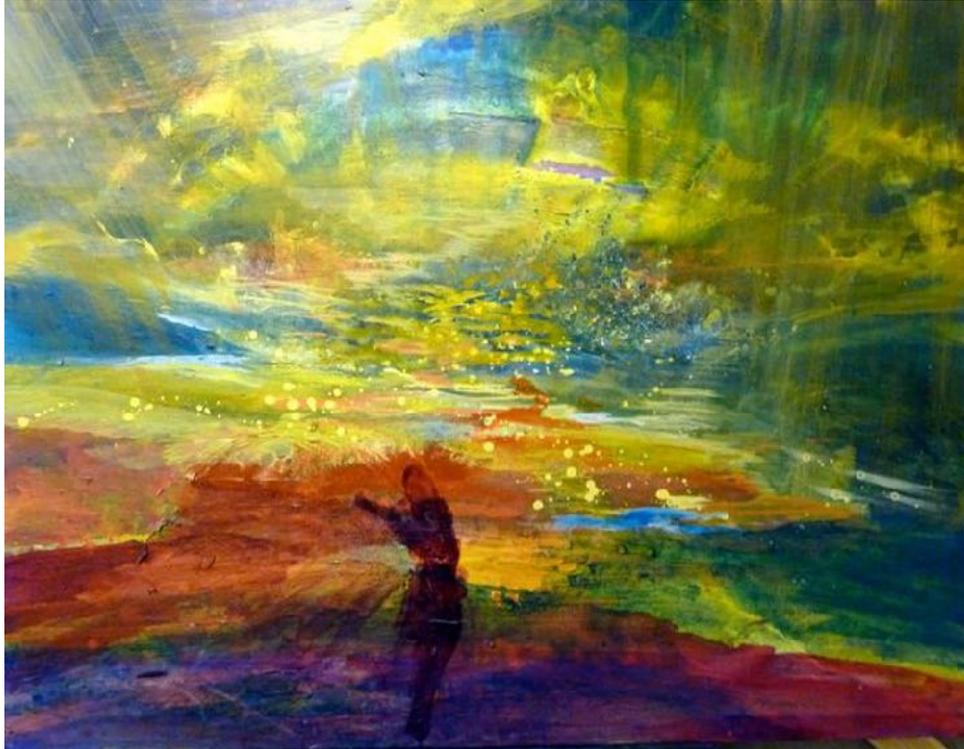


Thoughts for Bein Ha'Mitzarim The Three Weeks

Three ways are open to a person who is in sorrow. One who stands on a normal rung weeps, one who stands higher is silent, but one who stands on the topmost rung converts sorrow into song.¹



How happy are those who live in your house;
they never cease to praise you! (Selah)
How happy the man whose strength is in you,
in whose heart are highways.
Passing through the valley of Baka (valley of weeping),
they make it a place of springs,
and the early rain clothes it with Berahot (blessings).
They go from strength to strength
and appear before G-d in Tziyon.³

The following quotes are all taken from Sherri Mandell's book, *The Road To Resilience*.

¹ Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk

² Yoram Raanan, *Dancer*

³ Psalm 84:4-7

WEEK ONE

Day 1 - The Jewish concept of resilience does not mean being impermeable. Nor does it mean to bounce back...Jewish philosophy teaches us that resilience is not overcoming. It's becoming. Becoming more, becoming our fullest and deepest selves as a result of adversity...We don't leap over troubles as if they don't exist. We allow them to be our teachers. We experience resilience when we are enlarged rather than diminished by our challenges, when facing adversity causes us to change, grow, and become greater. Moreover, resilience offer us the opportunity to deepen our relationship with the Divine.

Day 2 - By entering the chaos and creating from your pain, you will find that doubt, pain, and brokenness will mold your character so that you are more compassionate and live in an enlarged context. You will discover a more authentic self who forms deeper connections to others. Your process of healing may in fact exalt you and propel you toward a more intimate relationship with the Infinite and the Eternal.

Day 3 - You're not going to bounce back to who you were. Because of your encounter with loss, you are going to bounce forward to become someone you are not yet acquainted with.

Day 4 - Crying doesn't mean that you will break apart. On the contrary, it is the first, most essential step in mourning, in finding your elemental voice, in mending yourself. Please understand that being brokenhearted does not mean being depressed. Depression is a black hole, a vortex that seizes us with a power from which we can't escape, a molecular sadness. But being broken is, in a way, the human condition. All of us will be broken at one stage or another.

Day 5 - In Jewish thought, creating resilience rests not only on the individual but on the community...In order to overcome the isolation of suffering, we need the presence of someone who cares...[In turn] One who helps the bereaved needs to learn to receive from others so that she is not depleted. But when a person helps others with their pain, together they join in a sacred space of love and caring and truth.

Day 6 - If I can find G-d in the midst of my sorrow, that helps me believe that G-d is present even in evil, and signals the possibility of a world that is greater than the one I can perceive.

Day 7 - Paradoxically, loss can lead toward greater awareness of the everyday pleasures that surround us... Suffering can highlight the miracle in the mundane.

