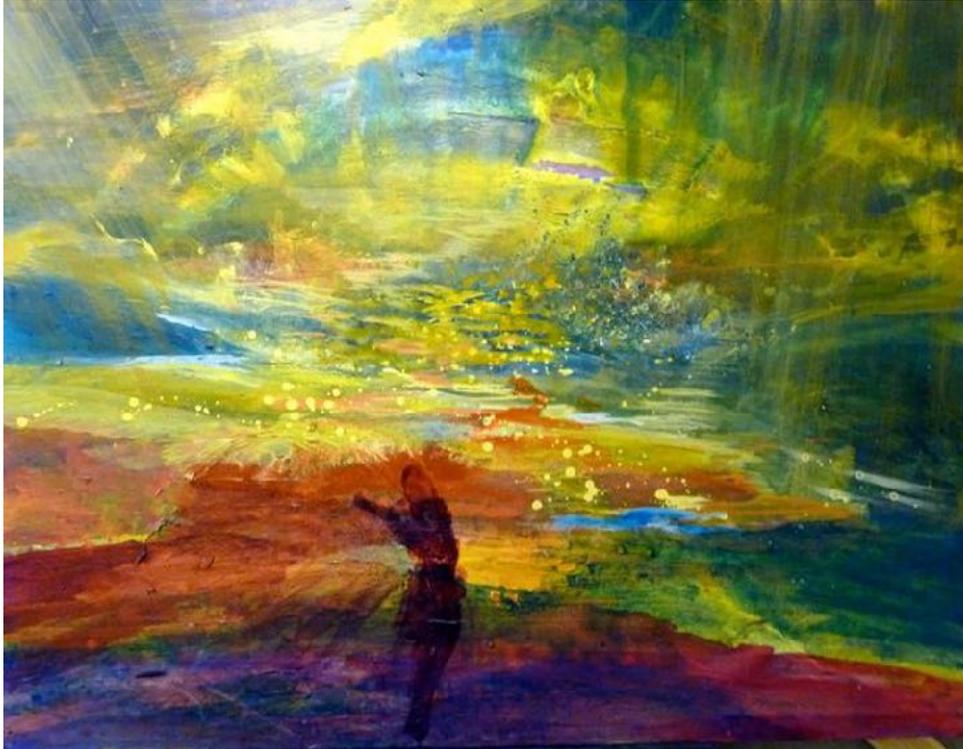


Thoughts for Bein Ha'Mitzarim The Three Weeks

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 THREE

Day 15 - When we see G-d's hand in our lives, we participate in an act of consecration: recognizing the sacred...We who suffer sometimes feel that we are sundered from our loved ones, set aside, alienated from others and our past. Yet as Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik writes, all suffering is a summons. If in our suffering we discover a sense of mission, a special sense of enlarged purpose, we participate in preparing and redeeming the world, creating a lifeline of resilience.

Day 16 - There are losses in our life that burn forever, yet we can burn without being destroyed. Most people are oblivious to this world of burning. So many bereaved people tell me that others ask them, "You're over it, right? I mean it's been a few years now." But the burning bush is a symbol of hope...Even when we fear that our personal loss may destroy us, the burning bush tells us that we will not only endure but will discover an impassioned and urgent mission; a sense of destiny.

Day 17 - Tikkun olam, repairing the world, comes from a place of deep pain and suffering. We no longer stand mute in the face of chaos. We seek repair, shift, or disclosure that is only possible because of what we have undergone. It's as if you have been granted a personal prophecy that serves to rally and mobilize you...that sense of mission, that personal prophecy, can also inspire and motivate others.

Day 18 - At the close of a radio interview a few months ago, the host asked me, "I understand that after a loss, you have to find a new sense of normal. Is that true?" I thought about it and then answered her, "No, I don't think so. Normal isn't enough. One has to find a new extraordinary."

Day 19 - We do not deny our sadness; it will always be present. Yet our sense of joy expands...our laughter will be larger, truer laughter. For when one has tasted great sadness, the repertoire of one's emotions may expand. In that expansion, there is celebration and joy.

Day 20 - You are no longer imprisoned in your suffering, in the small place of ego... You have expanded your view...You do not deny suffering, but help to alleviate it; you do not ignore another person's pain, but offer compassion...You know that you are part of an ongoing divine chorus in which each person helps the others lift their voices so that all can harmonize in one great melody.

Day 21 - The letters of the Hebrew word for Israel can be rearranged to form the words, G-d's song. From the midst of your pain you have discovered the spiritual art of resilience. Your life is now a song to G-d.

