

Yizkor 5784 No need to ENVY

I had a moment of compassion for some of the most corrupt people in the news. Of COURSE they want yachts and fancy cars... our world has taught us that that is what matters.

But OH HONEY, have they not seen SUCCESSION??

I have only seen four episodes on an airplane, but it was enough to know that all that glitters is not gold. Logan Roy, the biggest of the big, the most successful of the successful, or as our prayers would say,

He is of the *ANSHEI HASHEM*... a man with a NAME...

DIES OFF CAMERA, IN A BATHROOM. We never get to see him again, except a random shot of his deceased body.

Clearly the Psalmist is right: You can't take it with you. In the end we are all the same.

אַל-תִּירָא כִּי-יֵעָשֶׂר אִישׁ כִּי-יִרְבֶּה כְּבוֹד בֵּיתוֹ:

*Do not be afraid when a man becomes rich,
when his household goods increase;*

כִּי לֹא בָּמֹתוֹ יִקַּח תְּכַל לֹא-יֵרֵד אַחֲרָיו כְּבוֹדוֹ:

*for when he dies he can take none of it along;
his goods cannot follow him down.*

כִּי-גִפְשׁוּ בְּתַנּוּ יִבְרַךְ אִיזְלָהּ כִּי-תִיטֵּיב לָהּ:

*Though he congratulates himself in his lifetime
—“They must admit that you did well by yourself”—*

תָּבוֹא עַד-דָּוָר אֲבוֹתָיו עַד-יָצֵחַ לֹא יֵרְאוּ-אֹר:

*yet he must join the company of his ancestors,
who will never see daylight again.*

Psalm 49

That is absolutely a takeaway of Yom Kippur.... Our own mortality links us to one another...we are all so deeply the same. At 3am none of us is up thinking about how fabulous our lives are!!

Tradition tells us that those whose parents are alive should leave during the Yizkor service, because of an *ayin hara*... I always thought it was because something would happen to my parents... but it turns out that's not it... Instead— classic— THOSE WHO STAY IN might resent them and pass on bad luck in their resentment.

There's actually no escaping the envy... when we are having a hard time, we look at people who don't seem to be having a hard time and we may wish them... a hard time.

But it's only a matter of time before ALL of us end up in the same place. We are all deeply deeply the same in our core mortality. This will all be taken away.

Francis Weller — The Wild Edge of Sorrow: Rituals of Renewal and the Sacred Work of Grief

As a psychotherapist for more than 30 years, Weller says **the one emotion that has touched everyone is grief. It may be the grief we finally allow ourselves to feel for the life we did not choose. It may be our sorrow for losses that happened early in our life, losses that we were unprepared to grieve. It may be for relationships that fell apart, friendships that have vanished, times of violation and abandonment, or for the suffering we feel for our ravished earth.**

Weller talks about the changes in his grief counseling over the decades, and he writes:

For most of our time as a species, the primary association with grief has come through the death of someone we loved. What I have come to see is that much of the grief we carry is not personal; it doesn't arise from our histories or experiences. Today, the sources of loss are multiple, dying coral reefs, melting polar caps, the silencing of languages, the collapse of democracy, and our lost innocence. These losses tumble into our lives continually, and they circulate around us. We register them in our psyches, consciously or not, the fact of our shared sorrows.

We suffer from what the poet William Blake called "divine discontent."

But we don't always recognize it in each other. Part of the problem is a lack of ATTUNEMENT.

Attunement is a particular quality of attention, wedded with affection, offered by someone we love and trust. This deep attention is what enables us to make painful experiences tolerable. We feel held and comforted, reassured and safe.

And many of us just have not had that... no one has said: Hey it's okay to feel what you feel, I get it.

Our broken hearts have the potential to open us to a wider sense of identity, one capable of seeing through the partitions that have segregated self from world. Through grief, we

are initiated into a more inclusive conversation between our singular lives and the soul of the world.

Grief and love are sisters, woven together from the beginning. Their kinship reminds us that there is no love that does not contain loss and no loss that is not a reminder of the love we carry for what we once held close.

AND we are all so deeply the SAME on this. AFRAID, scared, but ultimately just wanting to love:

There's a poem that is often attributed to Yehuda Halevi.

Rabbi Chaim Stern, the foremost liturgist of Reform Judaism, wrote that we are ALL scared to love and lose... this is a universal thing...

'Tis a Fearful Thing

Tis a fearful thing
to love what death can touch.

A fearful thing
to love, to hope, to dream, to be –

to be,
And oh, to lose.

A thing for fools, this,

And a holy thing, a holy thing
to love.

There's nothing to envy... we will all end up in the same way. But the good news is our fears and broken hearts can offer us a way to connect to one another. Bringing grief and death out of the shadow is our spiritual responsibility, our sacred duty. We are all the same. Let Yizkor bring us closer to our humanity and to the deep gratitude for all that we love.