

September 2017 Message from President Howie Hirsch

Happy New Year to everyone in the congregation. This month we begin the preparations for the High Holidays. I always look forward to the holidays, as I get to see almost every one of you at some point during Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur. This is also a time of great introspection. The question I always ask myself at this time of year comes from Rabbi Zusya in the 17th century. He says, "When I get to the heavenly court, God will not ask me, 'Why weren't you Moses?' Rather he will ask me, 'Why were you not Zusya?'"

I love this line. To me it means simply "to thine own self be true". But the next question is the harder one: "Have you been the best person that you can be this year?" What have you done to make the world better? Have you spoken out against injustice? Have you fed the poor and clothed the naked? When you fast at Yom Kippur, will it be a meaningful fast? One that will inspire you to action for social causes? Or will you simply be hungry and get a headache and not appreciate the fast.

I wish you all a healthy year in 5778 and hope that you take the opportunity that the holidays present to all of us to take a good hard look at our lives and vow to do at least one thing better this year than last and not slip backwards.

I will end with a simple quote from my father. When discussing almost anything, but specifically about grades, the quote was "No Reversions". However well I did in the past, that becomes your baseline, and the idea is to improve upon the baseline without slipping. Thanks Dad, I love you for always pushing me to be my best.

L'Shanah Tovah,

Love, Howie