**EREV, EREV, EREV**
**Rabbi Dan Moskovitz**
**September 30, 2016**

1. What kind of sermon do you get from your rabbi 2 days before RH?
    a. A few disconnected and not fully formed thoughts
    b. All could be a sermon, but they have the misfortune of occurring now on
    *Erev, Erev, Erev Rosh Hashanah*

2. Shimon Perez
    a. A question that used to puzzle me was, "When does one stop being a child and become a grown up?"
        i. Some say when you have children of your own
        ii. But my observation is that the change actually occurs when your own parents die
            1. Its at that moment that you realize that you are it, the safety net is gone and you are very much on your own
            2. Ready or not, you mature instantaneously in that moment
                a. Not there to call for advice or to bail you out when you get in over your head
                b. Not there to tell you how proud they are of you, or to challenge you with their loving disappointment.
                c. In the loneliness that comes with suddenly becoming an orphan – you grow old quickly
        iii. I thought of that when I learned like many of you of the death of Shimon Perez this past Tuesday

evening, the last of the founding fathers of the State of Israel.

1. Israel is now an orphan
2. Moses and Aaron and Miriam have died and Joshua has crossed over to settle the promised land

iv. What will Israel be like without that paternal voice, will they still hear it in their head, will they listen or will they reject it as they seem to be doing in some fit of adolescent angst.

v. Will they try to prove they know a better way than the old way, or as Judaism has so engrained in us, will they see that legacy, Shimon's legacy as tradition that must be nurtured and preserved?

1. I fear it will be the former but pray for the later.

vi. I guess on one level the measure of having been a successful parent is if your own children are good parents themselves.

1. What kind of leaders will this current generation of Israeli leaders raise?
    a. If this moment had a soundtrack I think one song might be Barbara Streisand as Yentl crying out to her father of blessed memory, "Papa can you hear me?"

3. Forgiveness
    a. I apologized for something today, as a true Canadian I say sorry a few times every day, but this was more than a sorry, I did not live up to my best version of myself and it hurt some people that depend on me. It

wasn't hard to own it and say I was sorry; it wasn't hard to make the simple changes that will make things better between us going forward. What is hard is knowing that I hurt them thoughtlessly and that my apology could not remove that pain.

b. I know that I can change, I am committed to that, but can they forgive me, can things go back to how they were when it was better?
c. Then a colleague sent me the following story and it helped:
    i. In the middle of the rabbi's Kol Nidrei sermon a baby girl began to cry in the congregation, the kind of cry that makes a parent self-conscious and uncomfortable.
        1. Why did I bring my child to this service, its past her bed time – the parent was saying to no one and everyone was echoing with their eyes
        2. The parent got up to leave but the rabbi at that moment stopped his sermon came down from the bema and asked the parent to hand him the child.
    ii. For a moment the baby girl stopped crying.
    iii. Oh what a rabbi a miracle worker I tell you.
    iv. The Rabbi held the baby as he continued with his sermon
    v. BUT THEN the baby girl, feeling the Rabbis attention shift away from her, reached forward and grabbed his nose. Gently he freed himself and continued the sermon.
    vi. After a few minutes, she took his tie and put it in her mouth. The entire congregation chuckled.

The rabbi rescued his tie and smiled at his child. She put her tiny arms around his neck. Looking at us over the top of her head, he said, "Think about it. Is there anything she can do that you could not forgive her for?" Throughout the room people began to nod in recognition, thinking perhaps of their own children and grandchildren. Just then, she reached up and grabbed his eyeglasses. Everyone laughed out loud.

vii. Retrieving his eyeglasses and settling them on his nose, the rabbi laughed as well. Still smiling, he waited for silence. When it came, he asked, "And when does that stop? When does it get hard to forgive? At three? At seven? At fourteen? At thirty-five? How old does someone have to be before you forget that everyone is a child of God?"

viii. Back then, God's forgiveness was something easily understandable to me, but personally I found forgiveness difficult. I had thought of it as a lowering of standards rather than a family relationship.

1. I know I can change, that is totally in my control
2. I pray now that they can forgive

4. Last Thought
    a. In the horrible and horrific shooting of Keith Scott in Charlotte NC, his wife Rakeyia Scott took a cellphone video.
    b. The video is in conclusive of whether her husband had a gun, and if so was a danger to the officers

c. But it is conclusive of something else – this has gotten out of control
    i. When Rakeyia Scott saw cops surrounding her husband, Keith Scott, she immediately worried they might shoot him. She pulled out her cell phone camera.
    ii. The horrifying video she captured has now been seen millions of times. One poignant moment, however, stands out.
    iii. As officers huddle around her dying husband, she shouts out: “Did y’all call the police?”
    iv. Call the police. It’s what one does, or is supposed to do, when a crime has been committed, when someone is in need of help. The idea that the police exist to protect and serve is so powerful that it broke through the reality of what she had just witnessed: police shooting her husband to death.
    v. She quickly caught her mistake. “I mean, did y’all call the ambulance?”
    vi. Given the nonchalant attitude officers betrayed as Keith Scott lay on the pavement bleeding, she didn’t wait for an answer and took it upon herself to call 911.
    vii. To Protect and to Serve – that’s the motto of most US police departments, but who do you call when those that as supposed to protect you are your greatest threat and danger?

5. Three disconnect and not fully formed sermons, each needs more time and more thought.
    a. I wish I had more of both to given them.
    b. But the hour is late and the Shofar is calling.

i. See you Sunday evening.