CBC ROSH HASHANAH RADIO INTERVIEW 5781
TALKING POINTS

- **Passover was relatively easy** to adapt to this online environment; it was a holiday celebrated at home. You couldn't have a large dinner party; but you could set your laptop on you dining room table and approximate the family meal, if anything the fact you could mute some family members may have made it better for some.
    - RH is different these are not holidays that are celebrated at home, you spend most of the day, and on YK which is 10 days later all day in synagogue.
        - Congregating as a community
        - offering prayers where we confront our sins in the communal plural
        - hearing the sounding of the shofar
        - the rabbis sermon
    - these are all much harder to do in isolation or and online. But our people have been innovating ways to practice Judaism when the normal way was unavailable to us for 5780 years; this year just requires a bit more tech support.
        - All of our service are being broadcast online and on Telus channel 876. Tonight at 8p and tomorrow & Sunday morning at 10a.
        - Everyone is welcome to join us there; you don't have to be Jewish to find something we all need at this moment
- **The shofar** is a ram's horn, its used to announce the new year and it reminds up of the cry of a parent for a child, a cry of concern and a cry of strength. Its not a child's cry for help, is a call to action to be the help; to get up and do what we have been praying about.
- **One of the prayers has a refrain, "Who Shall Live, Who Shall Die"** Leonard Cohen set it to music decades ago in his song Who By Fire. Its about the uncertainty of the moment; of every moment. It reminds us that we won't live forever, no one does so how we choose to live right now is most important. It's a haunting prayer at it lists all the ways one can meet their death, "who by fire, who by earthquake, who by plague". Coming from California I have said this prayer in the midst of wild fires like we have now, and after earthquakes; this year it will be in the midst of a pandemic. In some ways that's unprecedented in my lifetime, but also links me to the history of humanity that has faced disease on a massive scale before, and my the grace of God and human ingenuity and wisdom we have survived. I draw strength from that
- **Prayer in the collective plural**: One of the themes is that while we =make individual confessions of sins or transgressions, the majority are said in the plural, communally and collectively. The message is clear to quote the great late 20th century civil rights leader and theologian Abraham Joshua Heschel; "in a civil society some are guilty, but all are responsible". That is the message of our shared accountability for all that is befalling us, wildfires, pandemics, economic hardship, hunger, racism, inequality, in justice, political strife. Some are guilty but in a civil society each of us is responsible for the disfunction and for making the necessary repairs and resolutions.