

Dear Friends,

Do you remember the opening lines of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*? . *If music be the food of love, play on! Give me excess of it...That strain again! O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound that breathes upon a bank of violets.....*

And so, once again, the beautiful music of Yom Kippur from the hearts and minds of Cantor Levy, our choir, and our other musicians enriches this solemn day.

It is a Keneseth Israel LEGACY and our good luck.

And speaking of luck, Jewish luck, Rabbi Kleinman's sermon will deal with food, on this, our fast day!!

There is a Hebrew proverb, *Eyn mazl le-yisroel*, interpreted as *Jews have no luck!* The proverb is Talmudic in origin. Even though the destinies of all OTHER peoples and nations are indeed determined by the stars, so the proverb goes, the destiny of the Jews is decided by the direct decree of God Himself.

God said, in Isaiah, I have tried you in the furnace of affliction and found nothing as good for keeping you pure-- as poverty. Rashi comments that poverty is intended as a means of purification, something to keep

the Jews from getting too full of themselves, too self-confident, too arrogant. There were prominent Jewish leaders who were outspoken opponents of Napoleon and his social reforms, and prayed for a Russian victory during his doomed eastern military campaign. The reason: anti-semitism and reactionary politics would help keep the Jews poor and pious, and lack of civil rights was a paradoxically small price to pay for the preservation of that old-time religion.

We take the idea of that proverb metaphorically or poetically, but our ancestors took it literally.

If you look at our history, this proverb rings true. Jews were herded together in ghettos, were expelled from country after country, experienced discrimination . Until the Holocaust the most disastrous experience was that of rampant poverty.

That proverb is a kind of Jewish LEGACY, too.

But that proverb does not hold anymore. We have unprecedented access to education, opportunity, political power, relative and absolute wealth. From this milieu we have produced leaders in virtually every endeavor of human life.

There is another type of LEGACY. In the past two years KI has been the beneficiary of unexpected bequests from

the estates of recently deceased members. These bequests have largely been invested in our endowment, but to some extent have, or will be, used for much needed capital improvements. This summer, our officers and senior staff decided to create a LEGACY working group or committee with the purpose of designing and activating a program to ask members to consider including KI in their wills. It is being led by a board member with long experience in such work, Bernie Liebowitz. What we need at first are people to help him, so please contact me if you would like to work in this very important area.

Look around---here at KI. We have a beautiful building, superior staff, magnificent opportunities for learning and both conventional and innovative services. We have wonderful relationships with one another. It is true we are going through difficult times economically, affecting individuals and the congregation as a whole. But these difficulties pale in comparison to events in our long history.

KI's financial house is in order. But although things are good, we have miles to go before we sleep---programs to put into effect, capital improvements to be made.

So let us remember another LEGACY of KI---contributing to the High Holiday Appeal to help cover present needs.

Let this year be one of peace and achievements for KI and for the Jewish world, and may it be a year of good, good, Jewish luck.

Shanah Tovah