



Friday, 27 March 2026 / 9 Nisan, 5786

Parashat Tzav

This Shabbat at CAS

Friday, Kabbalat Shabbat, 5:00 PM Come early and shmooze starting at 4:30

Saturday, Torah Study, 10:00 AM (we will finish by 11:30 to allow people to get to Elizabeth's memorial and/or the rallies.)



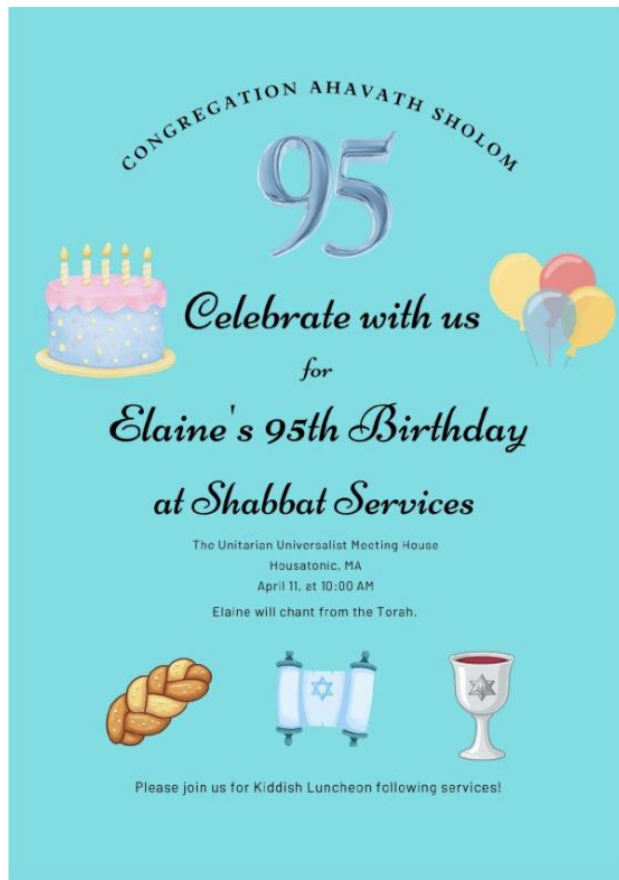
Thoughts on Parashat Tzav from Rabbi Rudin

Gratitude, it's a popular topic these days. Research shows that a practice of gratitude reduces the negative effects of stress, improves sleep and cultivates positive emotions. Establishing a gratitude practice is quite simple, for twenty-one days you commit to writing down three things for which you are grateful. Each day, after you write your new list, you go back and read the previous day's lists. Why twenty-one days? Studies have shown that it takes twenty-one days to establish a new habit. It doesn't sound difficult, right? Well I decided to try it and here's what happened.

I went out and bought a notebook, purple, my favorite color. I also got some fancy pens thinking they would make the experience of gratitude journaling more special. On day one right after finishing all my emails for the night I grabbed my gratitude journal and quickly jotted down the three things for which I was grateful that day. It was a sunny fall day and I was grateful for the weather. I'd had lunch with one of my daughter's and I was grateful for our time together. I called my cousin and she answered the phone...I was grateful for our conversation. Day one completed. All good. The second day of my gratitude challenge was a bit more challenging. It was a busy day with lots of meetings and driving around. I ended up with many more people at my house for dinner than I had anticipated. Around midnight I remembered that I was supposed to be grateful so I pulled out the journal and wrote, I am grateful to share meals with family and friends, I am grateful my for cousin, I am grateful the day is over. Far less inspired than day one but it was the best I could do. Needless to say, my attempt to establish a gratitude practice only became more difficult from there. Some days I would forget to write in the journal. Other days I'd be traveling and forget the journal at home. Then I would try to play catch up, clearly not the intent of the twenty-one-day system, and I would have difficulty remembering what I was grateful for yesterday or the day before. I gave up by the end of the first week and honestly, I felt guilty. I have a great life. I felt ashamed that I was having so much difficulty being grateful.

I put the journal away and put the pens in the canister on my desk and forgot the whole fiasco until this week when I read parashat Tzav. The sacrifice of well-being gave me some new insight into gratitude. The sacrifice of well-being must be made by the person who is offering the sacrifice. It cannot be offered by the Priests. Gratitude is a personal experience. The sacrifice of well-being must be eaten in one day. No leftovers may be kept for the next day. We have faith that there will be something to be grateful for tomorrow and the next day and every day to come. We'll never be hungry because there will always be something to be thankful for. The sacrifice of well-being is shared. Since it is eaten in one day it can be shared with many people. The practice of giving thanks is not a solitary experience. It needs to be shared with others.

So, what can I learn from the ancient rituals associated with expressing gratitude and thanks? How can this text inform my gratitude practice? First, writing down the things for which I am grateful while sitting alone in my room is probably not optimal. Although I laughed at my friends who shared their gratitude practice on Facebook for twenty-one days I now think they knew something I did not know. Expressing gratitude is best done publicly. Next, committing to writing down three things a day creates a false reality. There is no need to limit myself to choosing three things to be grateful for. I'm not going to run out of people or things to be grateful for, ever, so it's probably more authentic to write it all down every day. Having to select three things was difficult for me. Being able to write down as many things as I want feels freeing. And, sharing my gratitude with others is a gift. Expressing gratitude to a person rather than just writing it down provides me with positive reinforcement while bringing joy and appreciation to someone else. Gratitude isn't meant to be hidden away in a notebook or launched into cyber space. Gratitude is meant to be expressed person to person. When I begin my gratitude challenge again. I'll begin by expressing gratitude to the One to whom all gratitude is due, Thank you Adonai, Source of life and gladness and joy, for the words of Torah passed down from generation to generation, bringing knowledge from ancient times to the present, and from the present into the future.



"Music is Breath, Song is Life"

JOEY WEISENBERG IN CONCERT

Sunday, May 17, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.

Elayne P. Bernstein Theatre
at SHAKESPEARE & COMPANY

We invite you to join Congregation Ahavath Sholom for a memorable afternoon filled with song, inspiration, and spirituality. Experience a vibrant, participatory celebration as we welcome multi-talented Joey Weisenberg, the founder and director of Hadar's Rising Song Institute, making his debut appearance in the Berkshires.

Tickets available February 1st at Eventbrite

Shabbat Inspiration

Prepare for Shabbat with music 🎵
Min Hameitzar - Joey Weisenberg Ensemble
<https://youtu.be/QmOBoVA5DpE?si=oRLM98wDSBZIASmM>

Prepare for Shabbat with new ideas 💡
For Heaven's Sake Podcast
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/for-heavens-sake/id1522222281>

Prepare for Shabbat with text 📖
Rabbi Jonathan Sacks z'l <https://rabbisacks.org/covenant-conversation/tzav/the-thanksgiving-offering/>