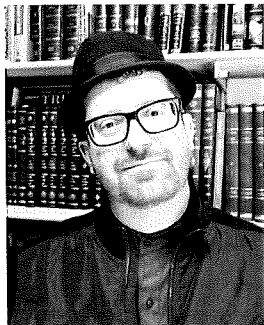


WADING THROUGH THE WAVES OF COMMUNITY

Rav Aubrey L. Glazer, PhD

What do ripples, tides, shocks and strings all have in common? They are all some form of a wave. If you have ever surfed, sailed, snorkeled or waded to fly-fish, you know that feeling of the wave



intimately as it envelopes you. Now take a moment and think: What kinds of transformative waves have you experienced in your life? From those moments of the stillness of ripples forming on the surface of water after a stone is thrown, to the awesome waves disrupting solid ground in earthquakes, the human experience of waves accentuates and patterns our journeys. Attuning to that spectrum is part of my calling as your spiritual leader. I'm interested in sound waves, coursing through the air, water and solid materials and ultimately, through our souls.

Some waves, like those we hear on a guitar string, are one-dimensional waves, spreading along a given direction only, while others, like ripples on the surface of water, fill space. How interesting then that this very same distinction is made by the 16th century *Safed* mystics between the creative energy of "linear light" known as '*Or HaYosher*' versus "circular light" known as '*Or Halgul*'. As I wade through the

sound waves of community in all their power, I take the time to listen. Taking the time to listen and see and feel these waves that surround us, both linear and circular, forms the basis of the spiritual sonority that makes community. Whether I find myself swaying to the cascading sounds of *davennen* Tefillah-prayer or Hebrew *piyyut* as Cantor Raizen co-leads us in prayer along with so many wonderful volunteers in prayer and Torah reading, or interacting with 30+ lifelong learners as we delve deeper weekly online into the treasure trove on the Jewish Book Shelf in Learning How to Learn, or studying one-on-one through layers of meaning with a current bat mitzvah student for her upcoming simcha - I always aim for those ripples of Torah and Tefillah to envelop me so I can really feel it with you in our unique relationship. The process of each of us making time and space for our collective spiritual journey as a communal family enables something remarkable to emerge, as the ripples begin to carry us forward into the sea of possibility this coming year.

But what is a wave after all? The quantum approach is to see a wave as a disturbance spreading through space, usually carrying energy. Whereas a ray of light emanates through a single line, a sound wave fills a space. Our High Holy Day prayer experiences at Beth Abraham have tended to follow the path of rays of light in the Main Sanctuary and continue to serve important purposes, enabling us to

congregate, connect and elevate through the liturgy and our fellowship as a community. What a gift. And yet, we still yearn... Our personal prayer lives need to be attuned to how we fill spaces and cracks, and how we create openings rather than seeing prayer as operating solely along single lines of emanation. I prefer to see these sound waves of community emerging as three-dimensional printers which help each of us to hear and see the soul of community at any given time. Our spiritual objective and *kavvanah* over the coming year is to deepen our wading in the waves of community, by filling sonorous spaces opened in the wail of the Shofar, to empower lay leadership and their communal songs, through the interweaving of all voices committed to this community.

Wading through the waves of community is about listening, feeling, learning and acting. You will notice some small waves of change, especially in coming experiences, and articulate a shared vision of more accessible, joyous Tefillah experiences, combined with exploratory Torah study and discussion— both as communal experiences that are welcoming and stimulating. Our sacred task together is to fine-tune linear energy experienced through circular energy emerging to maximize the spiritual energy of our emanating journeys of song through life this New Year 5783. May it overflow with ancient-new sounds of inspiration for us all.

IS THERE STILL A STATE OF UNION WITH YOUR PRAYER? LEARNING OPPORTUNITY WITH RAV GLAZER

Often we struggle with finding the right union between our innermost thoughts and feelings and the words we pray with, especially during the spiritual marathon from Elul to Tishrei, spanning the high holiday season. Beth Abraham members are invited to join a special panel discussion on **Wednesday, September 14th, from 7:00 to 8:30 pm**. Twelve complimentary sets of the 3 Panui books under discussion will be available to Beth Abraham members on a first come, first served basis - please call the office to reserve. Check News & Notes or the BA website for more info and to pre-register (required).