



HIGH HOLY DAYS 5782

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We are a weird mob. We love to know who is Jewish and then to *shep nachas* from their successes. We are ashamed when Jews make mistakes. You can't "unJewish" Jews. We are stuck with some reprehensible villains. We fret about idiots who ape anti semitic slogans in public and deface fences and seats. We worry about Israel's welfare and see in the callous abandonment of Afghanistan an ominous echo of things to come.

And we rejoice. Being Jewish is a wonderful gift. It enhances our books, the films we watch, the music we like. The Yom Tov table, the challah and the wine are bonus points along the passage of each year. And while

we are in lockdown we realise how important shul is. I miss going to shul. I miss the "regulars", the people on the Bimah, the music. I even miss the irregulars who can't open their siddurs because they "know" they won't be able to follow the service. If only they would try but they too are part of the exciting, exasperating, colourful, wonderful Jewish world. They may be our greatest challenge. On reflection, perhaps they are not. Our greatest challenge is remaining sane in this mad locked down world.

It has been hard. Hard for families and very hard for people who are alone. Jewish life involves people and the High Holyday Machzor is all about

us. Everything is written in the plural. We confess our sins and the sins we didn't commit because everyone is involved with the good, the bad and the indifferent. And this year we should add "and the lonely."

The Book of Psalms and the Machzor both tell us that we are but little lower than the angels and there is a spark of divinity within each one of us. The High Holy Days are designed to help us realise this great Jewish truth.

*Shanah Tovah U'metukah....
A good year...a sweet year!*