

Rabbi's Column

We enter the roller coaster of modern days of commemoration and celebration this week, with Yom HaShoah v'haG'vurah (The Day of the Conflagration and Strength). On Thursday at 2 pm in the Synagogue Sanctuary, a service which I put together a few years ago will be repeated. The program was written in a community with no survivors, so a couple of lines will be incorrect. The first two candles will be lit by Helen and Zolie. The poster display will again take over the social hall for the day.

If your schedule permits, please make every effort to attend. We are not only victims, but sometimes we were victimized, and it is important to continue to recognize that. People sometimes call those who perished in the Holocaust martyrs, but I think victims is better. Martyrs often have a means of avoiding suffering or death, but choose not to.

Words begin to fail, yet still I write some. I think now even more that the book of Job is an allegory of how people treat victims, and how all words somehow miss the point.

For a long time to come, I believe, the words must come from those who were victimized and not from those who would talk about their victimization, or offer promises that are not connected to reality.

I will mention here that there are several moments selected for commemorating events linked to the Shoah. Internationally, a day is observed in January on the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The day that Israel, and most Jews worldwide commemorates is linked to Passover, and is related to the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. Many German Jews have preferred to stress Krystallnacht on November 9. All of these dates are important.

If you would like to be involved in organizing next year's commemoration in late April, please contact either Dave or myself.