

# SEASONS OF THE MOON

The Month of Tishrei

Tishrei / 5758 October 2, 1997 - November 1, 1997

**T**he seventh is always holy. The seventh day is Shabbat, the seventh year is Shmitta. So too,

the seventh month — Tishrei — is sanctified with more *mitzvot* and *Yamim Tovim* than any other: *Rosh Hashana*; *The Ten Days of Return*; *Yom Kippur*; *Succot*; *Shmini Atzeret*; *Shofar*; *Lulav*; *Etrog*; *Hadassim*; *Aravot*; *Succah*; etc.

The sign of the month of Tishrei - Libra - is called in Hebrew “*Moznaim*” which literally means “balances.” It’s not difficult to see the connection between the symbol of the balances and the month of Tishrei, for the

## THIS MONTH'S SIGN Libra / Moznaim

first day of Tishrei is Rosh Hashana - a day when the future of the world and all its inhabitants literally hangs in the

balance

The Rambam (Maimonides) writes that a person should see himself and the whole world as being on a knife edge, precisely and exquisitely balanced - half meritorious and half culpable. If he does one sin, he tips the balance of his own life and that of the whole world to the negative side. **However, with just one positive action, he can alter the balance of his own life and that of the whole world to the side of blessing and life!**

**A**nyone who is prepared to admit that he lived long enough ago to remember the sixties, will recall a unique period in modern history. It seemed for a few years that there was a new idealism. There was something in the air...

A whole generation was finding its cultural feet through a revolution in the world of music. Black folk music, the music of slavery, was adopted and adapted by a young white audience. The simple, inexpensive, acoustic guitar was transformed from an instrument that could fill a small room to a juggernaut that could out-blast the largest symphony orchestra. At the same time there was an equally sweeping revolution in the recording stu-

## THE DAY THE MUSIC DIED

dio: Instead of merely pointing a microphone at a sound source, sound recording achieved the sophistication and flexibility of an aural motion picture.

### WHO WRITES THE SONGS?

Wasn't it Daniel O'Donnell who said “Let me write the songs of a nation, and you can write its laws”? If ever there was a generation that expressed itself through Music, it was the generation of the sixties. There was a feeling that “*All you need is love*” and “*With a little help from my friends*,” “*The times*” would be “*a'changing*.”

However, there came the day the music died. An entire generation woke up to find that its pot-induced reverie had turned into a Lysergic acid nightmare which had ruined or corrupted maybe hundreds of thousands of lives.

And yet, like all great lies there must have been a single pure note of Truth in all the excess and immorality.

*Continued over*



## THE DAY THE MUSIC DIED continued

Nothing can exist which is entirely false. It cannot have a foothold in this world. In every lie, there must be a grain of truth. What was single note of truth that became distorted into the great lie of the sixties?

When the Holy Temple was standing, there was an event of great joy that took place during the festival of Succot. Water was brought up from the Gihon Spring south of the Temple Mount with great ceremony and procession. It was poured on the Altar and from there the water would descend to the depths of the earth. The Talmud tells us that if you never experienced the joy of the *Simchat Beit HaShoeva*, you had no idea what real joy was.

At night, the water-drawing ceremony was accompanied by music and dancing of incomparable joy. Massive candelabra, taller than a house, shone out into the night. There was not a courtyard in Yerushalyaim that was not bathed in their light.

And they danced. They danced and they danced. And who was it that danced. The ordinary people? The young? No. The greatest Torah sages, the Talmidei Chachamim, were the ones that danced, for it was only they who were certain to harness this tremendous excitement and direct it to the service of G-d.

The chapter of the Talmud which describes this celebration is *HaChalil* - 'The Flute.' The word *chalil* is related to *chalal* meaning 'an empty space,' for the sound of the flute comes from the empty space inside

it, from the vibrating column of air.

But the word *chalil* is also connected to another word in Hebrew, *chilul* - 'desecration.' That empty space, that column of air, is like a sound canvas on which the sounds of holiness, of the greatest *simcha* can be painted. However, that *chalal* can also generate a music which can be a spiritual vacuum, a drainpipe into which thousands of lives can vanish. Music can be a stairway to Heaven, but it can also be an elevator ride in the other direction.

### ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE?

The Talmud teaches us that the Second Holy Temple was destroyed because of *Sinat Chinam*, which is usually translated as 'baseless hatred.' The cure for baseless hatred - *Sinat Chinam* - is *Ahavat Chinam* - unconditional love. The literal translation of *Sinat Chinam* is 'free hate' and the literal translation of *Ahavat Chinam* is 'free love.'

If your memory serves you well, you'll remember that that was the slogan of the sixties - 'Free Love.' Of course, 'free love' in the mouth of the pop philosophers turned out not to mean unconditional love at all but rather unconditional taking and unbridled indulgence.

There was one note of truth in the distorted strange brew of sixties' philosophy: *All you need is Love*. But without a Love of G-d and an acceptance of the yoke of Heaven those echoes of messianism were doomed to vanish into a purple haze of selfishness and immorality.

# THE SCALES OF JUSTICE

*An earthrise  
underglobe Tilts,  
Swaying the axis in excruciating  
Slow-motion  
From side to side  
And finally - so finally  
Aligns.*

*All the world is quiet now  
Waiting for the word.  
It is coming,  
Unleashed like an arrow  
Across the light-years.  
In which cup will it land  
In the Scales Of Justice?*

Sources: Talmud Succah, Perek HaChalil, Aruch Hashulchan, Rabbi Mattisyahu Glazerson, Rabbi Moshe Averick;

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