

Shabbat Shirah 5781

30 JANUARY 2021 · PARASHAT B'SHALACH

Shabbat Shirah 2020 was among the last “*normal*” Shabbatot that any of us experienced BC—Before Covid. Nearly one year later and so much has changed, there’s no need to go through the list. Yet two dependable constants remain. First: Tom Brady is in the Super Bowl, albeit for the wrong team. And second: I am here, as is our Shaar Hashomayim custom, to deliver an inspiring thought on this annual musical occasion.

זכר ליציאת מצרים - we must always remember the miraculous series of events that brought us out of Egypt. We remember them every time we pray; we drink to them every Friday night over the kiddush wine; we celebrate them less than two months from now on פסח.

As bad as we think we have it, Code Red is nothing compared to the various catastrophes that we’ve weathered throughout our history. Using the Exodus as an inspirational mantra makes sense. It’s as if to say “We’ve been down before and we’ve come back, against tremendous odds.” Nothing will stop us, not BDS nor a vandal with a can of spray paint.”

Shaar Cares, Zoom classes, and vaccines—these are the wonders of our times, borne out of the desire to bring us closer together in times of distance; to enable us to congregate virtually when gatherings are forbidden; to give us the hope of healing as we languish in lockdown.

It is our faith that sustains us through tough times. Someday, with God’s help, my sons will tell their children about living through Covid. To my grandchildren, it will seem like so long ago, but to those of us who are living through it, it will be yet more proof that, collectively, we can overcome whatever obstacles we encounter along the way.

When that day comes, it will truly be a time to sing!