



By Pam Morris, Early Learning Center director

Today I was talking with a colleague about Mercury being in retrograde. She said it was a time when the planets almost seem to stop and allow for reflection. I am not well versed in Astrology or the planets. I know that at one time I was a Gemini which seemed to fit my personality as I have the uncanny ability to see both sides of an argument at the same time. Often this makes me appear wishy washy; not able to settle on an opinion. However, I truly believe that it is a benefit because while I may not agree with the argument being put forward, I do understand where the deliverer is coming from.

But she also said this is a time to reflect. To stop and make plans. And that did resonate with me as this period between Rosh HaShanah (the Jewish New Year) and Yom Kippur is known as the 10 days of repentance. It is a time for reflection. To ask for forgiveness from those we have wronged. It is a time to truly look at what you have done over the past year and see where you made a misstep and ultimately where you can strive to do better in the future.

As part of Rosh HaShanah, we say Tashlich which is a special service to actually enumerate the missteps that you made; the missteps that I made. It is traditional to go to a body of water where there are living fish and take bread crumbs and throw a piece in for each thing you regret. I am sorry for not being as patient with my children. I am sorry for being too judgmental of my spouse. I am sorry for the parents I wasn't able to accommodate. I am sorry for not being as supportive of my teachers. I had a lot of pieces of bread thrown into the lake!

And as I threw in each piece, recognizing my shortcomings, I thought about how I can make it better in the new year. How can I be a better listener? What can I do to be more supportive of those around me? While listing each "oops" is important, it really is the focus on the fixing of those "oopses" that matter most.

Because, I know that I will have missteps this year. And I can forgive myself for that. But where I cast my focus is on how I can make a few less, catch them sooner so I can

fix them sooner, listen more, talk less, support more often, just in general be a better me.

In the MPR this morning, the Rabbi blew the Shofar and I talked with our 2s, 3s and Pre-K children about how the big sounds the Shofar make are to wake us up. They are telling us now is the time to focus on how we can be a better version of ourselves. Not be like the person next to us. That isn't the point. It's to reach deep down, focus on who you are and how you can let yourself be better.

Wishing you all a gmar chatima tova: According to Chabad.org, It translates as, "a good final sealing," in the Book of Life, in which we are inscribed on Rosh Hashanah and sealed on Yom Kippur. It is written in Hebrew as גמר חתימה טובה.