

## GLOBAL WARMING AND TISHA B'AV

As I've said often in recent days, one of my favorite memories of Dr. Walter Ehrlich (of blessed memory) was listening to him quote from 'Camelot' when he blessed our young people as they became B'nai Mitzvot. Hearing those words always reminded me of President Kennedy's love for 'Camelot' and how that musical then came to represent JFK's aura of idealism, passionate commitment and positive social change. I often wonder, especially during the patriotic atmosphere surrounding the 4<sup>th</sup> of July: what can I do to help influence young people so that such a 'Camelot' sensibility trumps the cynicism, indifference and commercialism that I see all around me? Rabbi Susan often reminds us that we are not only the descendants of those who came before us, but we will one day also be the ancestors of all who will live after we are gone. More than ever these days I am concerned about how our descendents will experience the world we are going to leave for them.

That concern became even more pronounced last night as I watched the Al Gore documentary *An Inconvenient Truth* with our member and JCRC Social Justice Coordinator Marci Mayer-Eisen and other members of the Jewish Environmental Initiative. Reb Zalman often refers to the Gaian idea that the Earth is a living organism. If this is true, the movie shows, in direct and dramatic fashion that, primarily due to our own behavior, she is running an alarmingly dangerous fever. Unless the global community works to bring Earth's temperature down by dramatically reducing the use of carbon dioxide, scientists predict that disease and natural disasters will cover the globe and the definition of being alive on this planet will surely be changed for the worse—for those who will call us their ancestors. None of our holy work for *tikkun*-for peace, love, compassion and inclusion; for universal health care and for racial and economic justice-none of it will make a lasting impact if the future means people will have to face one mammoth environmental crisis after another.

The midrash imagines God speaking to us in the very beginning: "See my works and how fine and excellent they are! For you have I created them. Consider this and do not destroy and desolate My world, for if you corrupt it, there is no one to set it right after you." To that end, CRC has become a pilot community of *Kehillot Shomrot Adamah* (Communities Guarding the Earth) and we hope the program's guidelines will lead us to change our ecological behaviors so we can better exercise this moral imperative. In addition, this fall we will participate, during Shabbat Noah, (this time, we need many Noah's and Noa's to preserve life on the planet!), in a Jewish community wide teach-in on climate change and the various ways we can alter the scientific prophecies.

On **Wednesday, August 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:30**, we will once again gather on the ninth day of the Hebrew month of Av to share our grief at the personal losses and the losses we have faced as a Jewish people. Jewish mythology has taught that the ancient Temple (which was said to have been destroyed on *Tisha B'Av*) was actually the world in its entirety. Now, in our day, there is a potential disaster that may truly affect the entire world. It tears me up to

think of the Lamentations my children's grand-children may be forced to compose and recite. I would prefer they continue to quote 'Camelot,' inspired by the holy way their ancestors responded.

B' Ahavah,

Rabbi Randy