



Shabbat B'ha-alot'cha/15 Sivan 5777  
June 9, 2017

Dear Shir Tikvah:

June 5th marked 50 years since the Six Day War with Israel and her Arab neighbors.

The war marked 50 years since the Reunification of Jerusalem.

And 50 years of Occupation of Gaza and the West Bank.

There is so much to say:

So much joy having Jews being able to celebrate and move about freely in Jerusalem!

So much agony at our people oppressing another people and denying them their self determination and freedom!

I share with you three insightful perspectives on this complicated anniversary:

The first by my friend and colleague, Dr. Yehuda Kurtzer, the President of Shalom Hartman-North America: <http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-news-and-politics/235527/unsettled-2>

The second by Yossi Klein HaLevi, a faculty member and thought leader at Hartman: [https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/06/opinion/israel-1967-war.html?smprod=nytcore-iphone&smid=nytcore-iphone-share&\\_r=1](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/06/opinion/israel-1967-war.html?smprod=nytcore-iphone&smid=nytcore-iphone-share&_r=1)

And the third by my dear friend, colleague, and human rights visionary, Rabbi Jill Jacobs, the Executive Director of Truah; The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights: <http://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-1.691101>  
You may not agree with all of them. In fact, you may disagree with all of them! I share these with the hope of deepening our collective conversation and moving us towards greater understanding and compassion.

I hold these competing, powerful, important ideals on this anniversary and as I prepare to lead 43 congregants as we begin our journey to Israel and the Palestinian Authority in just over a week's time.

Our prayers, our hearts, our insight, our holy activism, our commitment to our people and our ideals are all vital to build a world where Israelis and Palestinians can live and thrive in peace.

With abundant and unrelenting prayers for peace,  
Shabbat Shalom,  
Michael