Receiving Torah in the Face of Trauma

Rabbi Ruti Regan
rabbi.ruti.regan@hey.com
rabbiregan.org
@RutiRegan

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It’s about to be Shavuot

Please ask questions in the Q&A
We celebrate accepting the Torah

Please ask questions in the Q&A  —>
What do we do with that in traumatic times?

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What trauma means — and what it doesn’t

• Trauma changes us, often permanently.
• We are still ourselves.
• We can still do things.
• We can still learn.
• We can still love.
• We can still do right by one another.
Choosing love, acceptance, and respect

• We’re changing, and our community is changing.
• We are still Jewish community.
• We are still operating within Jewish tradition.
• The Torah still belongs to us.
• We can do this.
She is a tree of life to all who hold fast to her
Trauma has always been with us

- Generational trauma.
- New collective trauma.
- Individual trauma.
The Torah knows about trauma

Trauma and response to trauma are interwoven with our tradition

Please ask questions in the Q&A
We can’t go back; we can go forward

Please ask questions in the Q&A
“A time to remember the Exodus from Egypt”
Finding liturgy and text that speaks to you and your community

Please ask questions in the Q&A
Reading the book of Ruth on Shavuot

**Ruth 1:8** But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Turn back, each of you to her mother’s house. May YHVH deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me!

**Ruth 1:9** May YHVH grant that each of you find security in the house of a husband!” And she kissed them farewell. They broke into weeping.

**Ruth 1:10** and said to her, “No, we will return with you to your people.”
Ruth 1:11 ¶ But Naomi replied, “Turn back, my daughters! Why should you go with me? Have I any more sons in my body who might be husbands for you?

Ruth 1:12 Turn back, my daughters, for I am too old to be married. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I were married tonight and I also bore sons,

Ruth 1:13 should you wait for them to grow up? Should you on their account debar yourselves from marriage? Oh no, my daughters! My lot is far more bitter than yours, for the hand of YHWH has struck out against me.”

Ruth 1:14 ¶ They broke into weeping again, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law farewell. But Ruth clung to her.
Ruth 1:15 So she said, “See, your sister-in-law has returned to her people and her gods. Go follow your sister-in-law.”

Ruth 1:16 But Ruth replied, “Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back and not follow you. For wherever you go, I will go; wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God.

Ruth 1:17 Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus and more may YHVH do to me if anything but death parts me from you.”
Ruth 1:18 When [Naomi] saw how determined she was to go with her, she ceased to argue with her;
Ruth 1:19 and the two went on until they reached Bethlehem.
¶ When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole city buzzed with excitement over them. The women said, “Can this be Naomi?”
Ruth 1:20 “Do not call me Naomi,” she replied. “Call me Mara, for Shaddai has made my lot very bitter.
Ruth 1:21 I went away full, and YHVH has brought me back empty. How can you call me Naomi, when YHVH has dealt harshly with me, when Shaddai has brought misfortune upon me!
Ruth 1:22 ¶ Thus Naomi returned from the country of Moab; she returned with her daughter-in-law Ruth the Moabite. They arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.
Reciting Hallel on Shavuot
Reciting Hallel on Shavuot

Psa. 116:9  I shall walk before YHVH
in the lands of the living.
Psa. 116:10  I trust [in YHVH];
out of great suffering I spoke
Psa. 116:11  and said rashly,
“All men are false.”
Reciting Hallel on Shavuot

Psa. 118:19 Open the gates of righteousness for me that I may enter them and praise Yah.

Psa. 118:20 This is the gateway to YHVH—the righteous shall enter through it.
Reciting Hallel on Shavuot

**Psa. 118:21** I praise You, for You have answered me, and have become my deliverance.

**Psa. 118:22** The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

Please ask questions in the Q&A
Honor your whole self
Honor partial presence

Please ask questions in the Q&A
Don’t separate people from the community
Be honest

- We’re different than we were before.
- We are adapting.
- Many things are unpredictable.
- Some things are hard in new ways.
- It is more possible when we acknowledge reality.
Persist

Please ask questions in the Q&A
About Rabbi Ruti Regan

Rabbi Ruti Regan is a feminist rabbi and disabled disability advocate working at the margins of Jewish community. She is a prominent rabbinic voice, renowned for her work about the intersection of disability and Jewish text, thought and practice. She is an Associate at the Harvard Law School Project on Disability, where she researches inclusive liturgies and ritual change. She previously served as Rabbinic Disability Scholar in Residence at Matan, where she taught Jewish educators strategies for inclusive teaching. She also leads a long-running #ParshaChat Torah study group on Twitter, and is the author of the realsocialskills.org blog. Rabbi Regan was ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary in 2017, and previously studied at the Drisha Institute for Jewish Education and the Conservative Yeshiva in Jerusalem.

RabbiRegan.org
@RutiRegan
rabbi.ruti.regan@hey.com