

# The Delray Democrat

## Hurricane Ian Brings the Day of Judgment to America<sup>1</sup>

*Rabbi Barry Silver*

Mother Earth has brought Judgment Day to America as Hurricane Ian slams into our coast with a vengeance and warns of even greater catastrophes if we fail to atone for our environmental sins. Ripping through the Southeast between the Jewish Day of Judgment and the Day of Atonement, Ian has delivered nature's fatal decree upon our species for desecrating our precious planet and only home.

Hurricane Ian admonishes us "Don't continue to overpopulate the planet, leave some open space for other species, don't pave over wetlands, the lungs of the earth, don't burn down the rainforests and let me breathe." Ignoring ominous signs and portents, we continue to dump CO2 and methane into the atmosphere, destroy nature and place large centers of human population in vulnerable areas, while Neanderthals among us shout "burn baby burn". As a result, our oceans reach 90 degrees, which fuels superstorms, while many still wonder why such disasters occur with increasing regularity.

"Myth-guided" religion has seized the reins of power to deny women bodily autonomy and force them to bring more children into an already overcrowded world with compelled childbirth that threatens their lives and bodies. As a result, the Book of Life has been cut short for many people, especially women, with chapters of destruction and devastation written on the pages of the survivors.

While a supernatural ruler in the sky is fantasy, the natural is super and an overheated sky is fatal. Although there is no father in the sky, Mother Nature is real and as the adage goes, cannot be fooled, even by the spin of FOX news, Republican distortions, and the ramblings of false prophets who "prey" upon, rather than "praying" for the gullible in the name of Jesus.

During these Days of Awe, we are urged to reconsider our actions and change our ways. Rather than arrogantly playing God in a vain effort to "conquer" nature, we must learn to live in humility and harmony with our fellow creatures. Hubris was the fatal sin of Greek and Hebrew mythology, and always ends in tragedy. Today's humans have arrogantly launched the Anthropocene Era, where humans choose which animals live and die based solely on whether they serve our needs. We have become the angel of death to billions of farm animals whose miserable lives are cut short only when the time has come to feed us with their bodies, as we bring judgment upon ourselves with heart disease, cancer, environmental collapse and other ills caused by the abuse of animals.

Tragically, the indigenous people who could have taught us how to live in harmony with the land were wiped out by a vicious, malicious and avaricious genocide across the continent.

Today, we attempt to play God during the adolescence of our species, with the childish notion that

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despite our high-risk behavior, we are invulnerable and will live forever. Sadly, most religions feed into this delusion by trivializing life in this world with fantasies of a better world to come. Blinded by religious and political indoctrination, armies of the absurd, battalions of the brainwashed and legions of lunatics, elect charlatans who lead us into the abyss.

Political necessity has caused Governor DeSantis to have a “come to Biden moment”, as he takes a pause from thoughts and prayers and breying against Washington to plea not to his heavenly father, but to his earthly “Uncle Sam” for salvation with federal funds. His mentor, Donald Trump, contributes nothing to this humanitarian relief as he is “too smart” to pay taxes and leaves it to working people to help those in need.

At this season of Judgment, let us judge those “polluticians” who fiddle while our forests burn, recklessly denying climate change “come hellish fires or the high waters” of the oceans with lies that don’t hold water.

Will we honor our father and mother, by using Father Time to save Mother Earth before it is too late? Or will we emulate Pharaoh, who was literally in “De Nile” refusing to acknowledge climate change as the waters of the Nile turned deadly, just as our oceans now bring death and destruction upon us? The only hope for our planet is a “sea change” in thinking and true atonement (“at one”ment) with all life.

To save our planet will require a spiritual transformation that goes way beyond useless prayers, meaningless rituals and empty fasts. In synagogues across the country, we read the words from the Torah “choose life” on Yom Kippur. For the sake of our children and future generations, may we take these words to heart.

The modern prophet Albert Einstein observed that science without religion is lame and religion without science is blind. Let us use both of these great revelations to unite the people of the world in a common quest to save our planet from ourselves with a glorious redemption of peace, love and harmony with our fellow creatures.

Rabbi Barry Silver is the founder of the Palm Beach County Environmental Coalition and Temple of Understanding, an abortion rights attorney, who serves Congregation L’Dor Va-Dor, which is suing Governor DeSantis over his anti-abortion law, HB 5. As the only rabbi to have served in the Florida Legislature, State Representative Barry Silver was named the most effective environmental legislator by the Sierra Club. He can be reached at [barryboca@aol.com](mailto:barryboca@aol.com).