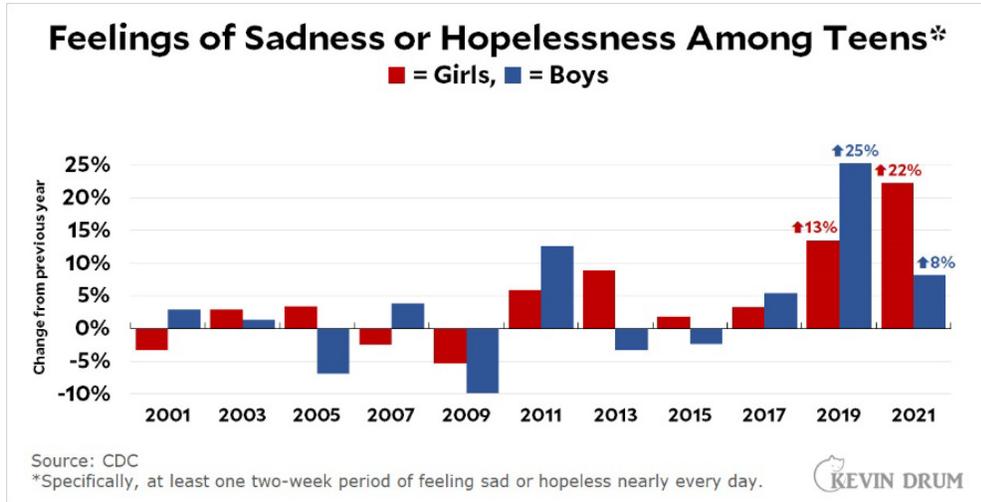


Seven Modalities of Jewish Resilience
 Rabbi Dr. Jay Michaelson
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Introduction



1. “God”

1a. 1 Samuel 1:9-15

ט וַתָּקָם חַנָּה, אַחֲרֵי אֲכֹלָה בְּשִׁלֹה וְאַחֲרַי שָׁתָה; וְעָלִי הַכֹּהֵן, יָשֵׁב עַל-הַכֹּפֶא, עַל-מִזְבֵּחַת הַיֵּכָל הַיְיָ

9) So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk – as Eli the priest sat upon his seat by the door-post of the temple of YHVH –

י וְהִיא, מֵרַת נַפְשׁ; וַתִּתְפַּלֵּל עַל-הִי, וּבָלָה תִבְכָּה

10) and she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto YHVH, and wept, crying...

יג וְחַנָּה, הִיא מְדַבֵּרַת עַל-לִבָּהּ—רַק שִׁפְתֶיהָ נִעוּת, וְקוֹלָהּ לֹא יִשְׁמָע; וַיַּחְשְׁבֶהָ עָלַי, לְשֹׁכְרָה

13) Now Hannah, she spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice could not be heard; and so Eli thought she was drunk...

טו וַתַּעַן חַנָּה וַתֹּאמֶר, לֹא אֲדֹנָי, אֲשֶׁהָ קִשְׁת־רוּחַ אֲנֹכִי, וַיִּין וְשָׁכַר לֹא שָׁתִיתִי; וְאַשְׁפָּךְ אֶת-נַפְשִׁי, לַפְּנֵי הַיְיָ

15) Hannah answered and said, “No, sir, I am a woman of a spirit; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I poured out my soul before YHVH.

1b. Isaiah 12:2

הִנֵּה אֵל יְשׁוּעָתִי אֲבִטָּח, וְלֹא אֶפְחָד: כִּי-עֲדִי וְזָמַרְתָּ יְהוָה, וַיְהִי-לִי לִישׁוּעָה

Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for Yah YHVH is my strength and song; and has become my salvation.'

2. Contemplative Practice

2a. Zohar 3:59b

Rabbi Pinchas went out and kissed Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai, and said 'I have merited to kiss the *Shechinah*! Happy is my portion!

2b. Zohar 3:132b

Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai said, "I see my face shining like the powerful light of the sun... and what is more, I know that my face is shining, whereas Moses did not know, nor did he contemplate it."

2c. Zohar 2:176a-b (trans. Daniel Matt)

This may be compared to a man who dwelled among the cliffs and knew nothing of those dwelling in the town. He sowed wheat and ate the kernels raw. One day he went into town and was offered good bread. The man asked: "What's this for?" They replied: "It's bread, to eat!" He asked, "And what is this made of?" They replied, "wheat!" Afterwards they brought him cakes kneaded with oil. He tasted them and asked, "And what are these made of?" They replied, "wheat!" Later they brought him royal pastry kneaded with honey and oil. He asked, "And what are these made of?" They replied, "wheat!" He said, "Surely I am Lord of all these, since I eat the essence of all of these!" Because of that view, he knew nothing of the delights of the world; they were lost on him. So it is with one who grasps the principle and does not know all those delectable delights, deriving, diverging from that principle."

2d. BT Shabbat 33b:7

נִפְקוּ, חֲזוּ אִינְשֵׁי דְקָא קָרְבִי וְזָרְעִי, אֲמַרִין: מַנִּיחִין חֲסִי עוֹלָם וְעוֹסְקִין בְּחַיִּי שָׁעָה. כָּל מְקוֹם שְׂנוֹתְנִין עֵינֵיהוֹן מִיַּד נִשְׂרָף.
!צַתָּה בַת קוֹל וְאֲמַרְהָ לָהֶם: לְהַחְרִיב עוֹלָמִי וְצַתָּם?! חִזְרוּ לְמַעַרְתְּכֶם

They emerged from the cave, and saw people plowing and sowing. Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai said, "They forsake eternal life and are busy with temporal life!" Everywhere they turned their eyes was immediately burned. A Divine Voice emerged and said to them, "Did you emerge from the cave in order to destroy My world? Return to your cave!"

3. Activism and Altruism

3a. Numbers 27:1-7

א ותקרבה בנות צלפחד, בן-חפר בן-גלעד בן-מכיר בן-מנשה, למשפחת, מנשה בן-יוסף; ואלה, שמות בנותיו-מחלה נעה, וחקלה ומלכה ותרצה.

1) Then drew near the daughters of Zelophehad, the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph; and these are the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Tirzah.

ב. ותעמדנה לפני משה, ולפני אלעזר הכהן, ולפני הנשיאים, וכל-העדה-פתיח אהל-מועד, לאמר.

2) And they stood before Moses, and before Eleazar the priest, and before the princes and all the congregation, at the door of the tent of meeting, saying:

ג. אבינו, מת במדבר, והוא לא-היה בתוך העדה הנועדים על-יהוה, בעדת-קרח: כי-בטאו מת, ובנים לא-היו לו.

3) "Our father died in the wilderness, and he was not among the company of them that gathered themselves together against the LORD in the company of Korah, but he died in his own sin; and he had no sons.

ד. למה יגרע שם-אבינו מתוך משפחתו, כי אין לו בן; תנה-לנו אחזה, בתוך אחי אבינו.

4) Why should the name of our father be done away from among his family, because he had no son? Give unto us a possession among the brethren of our father."

5) And Moses brought their cause before YHVH. ה. ויקרב משה את-משפטו, לפני ה'.

6) And YHVH spoke unto Moses, saying: ו. ויאמר ה' אל-משה לאמר:

ז. כן, בנות צלפחד דברת-נתן ותתן להם אחזת נחלה, בתוך אחי אביהם; והעברת את-נחלת אביהן, להן.

7) "The daughters of Zelophehad speak right: thou shalt surely give them a possession of an inheritance among their father's brethren; and thou shalt cause the inheritance of their father to pass unto them."

4. Study and Wisdom

4a. Pirkei Avot 2:15-16

(טו) רבי טרפון אומר, היום קצר והמלאכה מרובה, והפועלים עצלים, והשקר הרבה, ובעל הבית דוחק

15) Rabbi Tarfon said: The day is short and the work is much, and the workers are lazy and the reward is great, and the Master of the house is pressing.

(טז) הוא היה אומר, לא עליך המלאכה לגמר, ולא אתה בן חורין לבטל ממנה. אם למדת תורה הרבה, נותנים לך שכר הרבה. ונאמן הוא בעל מלאכתך שישלם לך שכר פעלתך. ודע מתן שכרן של צדיקים לעתיד לבא

16) He used to say: It is not your responsibility to finish the work, but neither are you free to desist from it.

5. Ritual (Especially Shabbat)

5a. Exodus 31:1-13

- 1) And YHVH spoke to Moses, saying: א. וַיְדַבֵּר ה', אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:
ב. רֵא, קְרָאתִי בְשֵׁם, בְּצִלְאֵל בֶּן-אֹרִי בֶן-חֹר, לְמִטֵּה יְהוּדָה
- 2) "Behold, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah,
ג. וְאַמְלֵא אֹתוֹ, רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים, בְּחָכְמָה וּבְתַבּוּנָה וּבְדַעַת, וּבְכָל-מְלָאכָה
- 3) and I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship,
ד. לְחָשֵׁב, מִחֻשְׁבֹת; לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּזָהָב וּבַכֶּסֶף, וּבַחֲשֵׁשֶׁת
- 4) to devise skilful works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass,
ה. וּבְחַרְשֵׁת אֲבָן לְמִלְאָת, וּבְחַרְשֵׁת עֵץ; לַעֲשׂוֹת, בְּכָל-מְלָאכָה
- 5) and in cutting of stones for setting, and in carving of wood, to work in all manner of workmanship.
ו. וְאֲנִי הִנֵּה נֹתְתִי אֹתוֹ, אֶת אֶהֱלִיאֵב בֶּן-אֲחִיסָמָךְ לְמִטֵּה-דָן, וּבְלֵב כָּל-חָכָם-לֵב, נֹתְתִי חָכְמָה; וְעָשׂוֹ, אֶת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִךְ
- 6) And behold, I have appointed with him Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan... that they may make all that I have commanded thee...
- 12) And YHVH spoke unto Moses, saying יב. וַיֹּאמֶר ה', אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר
יג. וְאַתָּה דַבֵּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, לֵאמֹר, אַךְ אֶת-שַׁבָּתֹתַי, תִּשְׁמְרוּ: כִּי אוֹת הוּא בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם, לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם-לְדַעַת, כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה מְקַדְּשֵׁיכֶם
- 13) "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'Ah! Keep my sabbaths, for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am YHVH who sanctifies you.'"

5b.

"More than Jews have kept Shabbat, Shabbat has kept the Jews."

- Ahad Ha'am (Asher Ginsberg, poet, philosopher, 1856-1927)

6. Philosophy & Wisdom

6a. Ecclesiastes 2:1-15

I said in my heart: "Come now, I will try mirth and enjoy pleasure"; and, behold, this also was *hevel*. I said of laughter: 'It is mad'; and of mirth: 'What does it accomplish?' I made great works, I built houses, I planted vineyards... I had great possessions of herds and flocks, above all that were before me in Jerusalem.. and whatever my eyes desired, I did not withhold from them....

Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had done, and, behold, all was *hevel* and a striving after wind, and there was no profit under the sun.

So I turned myself to behold wisdom... and I saw that wisdom exceeds folly, as light exceeds darkness. The wise one has eyes in their head, but the fool walks in darkness.

But I also perceived that one event happens to them all. Then said I in my heart: "As it happens to the fool, so will it happen to me; and why was I then more wise?" Then I said in my heart, that this also is *hevel*.

6b. Ecclesiastes 1:4-7

One generation passes away, and another generation comes, and the earth stands forever. The sun also rises, and the sun goes down, and races to the place where it arises again. The wind goes to the south, then turns around north, turning and turning the wind spins around, and back again. All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; and the rivers run back to where they return again.

6c. Mary Oliver, "Wild Geese"

You do not have to be good.
You do not have to walk on your knees
for a hundred miles through the desert repenting.
You only have to let the soft animal of your body
love what it loves.
Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.
Meanwhile the world goes on.
Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain
are moving across the landscapes,
over the prairies and the deep trees,
the mountains and the rivers.
Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,
are heading home again.
Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting -
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things.

7. Community

7a. Judges 4:4-8

וְדִבְרָה אִשָּׁה נְבִיאָה, אֲשֶׁת לְפִידוֹת-הַיָּא שִׁפְטָה אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּעֵת הַהִיא

4) Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, she judged Israel at that time.

ה. וְהָיָא יוֹשֶׁבֶת תַּחַת-תֶּמֶר דְּבֹרָה, בֵּין הַרְמָה וּבֵין בֵּית-אֵל-בְּהַר אֶפְרַיִם; וַיַּעֲלוּ אֵלֶיהָ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, לְמִשְׁפָּט

5) And she sat under the palm-tree of Deborah between Ramah and Beth-el in the hill-country of Ephraim; and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment.

ו, ותשלח, ותקרא לברק בן-אבינעם, מקדש, נפתלי; ותאמר אליו הלא צנה הי אלהי-ישראל, לך ומשכת בהר תבור ולקחת עמך עשרת אלפים איש, מבני נפתלי ומבני זבולון.

6) And she sent for and called Barak the son of Abinoam out of Kedesh-Naphtali, and said to him: "Hasn't YHVH, the God of Israel, commanded, 'Go and draw toward mount Tabor, and take with you ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun?"

ז. ומשכתי אליך אל-נחל קישון, את-סיסרא שר-צבא יבין, ואת-רכבו, ואת-המונו; ונתתיהו, בידך.

7) And I will draw Sisera, the captain of Yavin's army, to the brook Kishon, with his chariots and his multitude, and I will deliver him into thy hand."

ח. ויאמר אליה ברק, אם-תלכי עמי והלכתי; ואם-לא תלכי עמי, לא אלה.

8) And Barak said unto her: 'If you go with me, I will go; but if you won't go with me, I won't go.'

7b.

"We are here to help each other get through this thing, whatever it is."

- Kurt Vonnegut

7c. from Adrienne Rich, "Diving into the Wreck"

And now: it is easy to forget
what I came for
among so many who have always
lived here
swaying their crenellated fans
between the reefs
and besides
you breathe differently down here.

I came to explore the wreck.
The words are purposes.
The words are maps.
I came to see the damage that was done
and the treasures that prevail...

We are, I am, you are
by cowardice or courage
the ones who find our way
back to this scene
carrying a knife, a camera
a book of myths
in which
our names do not appear.