

A MESSAGE FROM RABBI GELBER



Friends - Today is Rosh Hodesh Adar, the day on which we are to intentionally let joy enter into us. As our tradition teaches, *mi shenichnas Adar, marbim v'simcha* - as we enter into the Hebrew month of Adar, our joy is multiplied. Today, joy is muted in the wake of the murder of 17 sacred human beings preparing to end their day at school in Parkland, Florida just two days ago. This senseless loss of life has the Torah's call to action reverberating in my mind - *lo ta'amod al dam reyecha* - *do not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor* (Vayikra, 19:16).

The Sandy Hook massacre claimed the lives of 20 small children and 6 adults. The New York Times notes there have been over 200 school shootings nationwide since then. This loss of life is unfathomable to me. We cannot stand by while the blood of Gd's creation soaks the ground. The Purim story, which we will read in less than 2 weeks, ends with praise for Mordecai for the way in which *he sought the good of his people and spoke peace for his descendants* (10:3). And Esther took her life in her hands to speak out and shift a plan already in motion.

I urge you, be like those who came before us. Do something. Some thing. Call for wise gun legislation. Support organizations that hold up Jewish values and translate them into policy. Pray for strength, guidance, protection and peace in our topsy turvy world. Pray until your prayers move you to action. Pray like your child's life depends on it, because it does.

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Lisa B. Gelber