

# Weekly Teaching

July 21, 2017

I came across an interesting list of great achievements that were done by men and women at an advanced age.

Here are 20 examples (in reverse chronological order):

1. At 100, Grandma Moses was painting.
2. At 94, Bertrand Russell was active in international peace drives.
3. At 93, George Bernard Shaw wrote the play *Farfetched Fables*.
4. At 91, Eamon de Valera served as president of Ireland.
5. At 91, Adolph Zukon was chairman of Paramount Pictures.
6. At 90, Pablo Picasso was producing drawings and engravings.
7. At 89, Mary Baker Eddy was directing the Christian Science Church.
8. At 89, Arthur Rubinstein gave one of his greatest recitals in New York's Carnegie Hall.
9. At 89, Albert Schweitzer headed a hospital in Africa.
10. At 88, Pablo Casals was giving cello concerts.
11. At 88, Michaelangelo did architectural plans for the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli.
12. At 88, Konrad Adenauer was chancellor of Germany.
13. At 85, Coco Chanel was the head of a fashion design firm.
14. At 84, Somerset Maugham wrote *Points of View*.
15. At 83, Aleksandr Kerensky wrote *Russia and History's Turning Point*.
16. At 82, Winston Churchill wrote a *History of English Speaking People*.
17. At 82, Leo Tolstoy wrote *I Cannot Be Silent*.
18. At 81, Benjamin Franklin affected the compromise that led to the adoption of the U.S. Constitution.
19. At 81, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe finished *Faust*.
20. At 80, George Burns won an Academy Award for his performance in *The Sunshine Boys*.

After a certain age, many of us begin to worry a bit about turning a year older.

But, within our Judaism we are told that each day is a gift, and we should try to constantly strive to discover new ways to bring meaning to our own lives and to the lives of others.

Roseanne and I recently celebrated our 30th wedding anniversary. In a few weeks I celebrate my 52nd birthday, and then a few weeks later our youngest daughter will enter her last year of high school.

As Rabbi for our congregation, I will soon lead my 22nd year of High Holiday Services for Temple Shalom.

Lately time feels like it's passing more quickly, and yet the truth is that each day is the same length as the others. The only question that should be asked by me is what shall I try to make of this gift of a New Day?

My own goal will be to try and redouble my efforts to continue exploring new ways to present the eternal values and teachings of our beautiful Jewish heritage. And, to continue my own rabbinic mission to find new ways by which I can help meaningfully engage the members of our congregation to join me in our sacred mission.

I hope at an advanced age, I'll be named on a list by which I could be cited as someone who helped provide encouragement to another, so that they more richly embraced their own treasures of Jewish heritage, and found a Temple community that helped their fellow members embrace and care about each other in love.

In the poem *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, poet Robert Browning writes: “Grow old along with me! The best is yet to be...”

I pray that this should be the privilege we should all be able to continue to enjoy together in happiness, health, and peace, for many, many years to come.

Shabbat Shalom,

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