

January 21, 2023

28 Tevet, 5783

Shabbat Va'eira

It has been told to you, what is good, and what Adonai requires of you

Only to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)



Our sanctuary is a sanctuary. Please keep your mobile phone turned off.

We Celebrate the Bat Mitzvah of Asha Muthiah Kieffer

- Passing of the Torah..... Stephen Kieffer, Cyrile Kieffer, Shanthi Muthiah, Stuart Kieffer
- Aliyah I Julianna, Josephine, and Norah Caplan
- Aliyah II..... Sophia Kieffer, Luiza Kieffer, Sela Quiniones, Sara Lederman, Ari Lederman, Jesse Goldfarb, Kayla Goldfarb, Izzy Goldfarb, Eva Goldfarb, and Abby Liss
- Aliyah III Stephen Kieffer, Cyrile Kieffer, Alisa Kieffer, Paula Kieffer, Gil Quiniones, and Valeria Kieffer
- Aliyah IV Shanthi Muthiah, Stuart Kieffer, and Rohini Kieffer
- Aliyah V Asha Muthiah Kieffer
- Petichah I Muthiah Alagappa and Kalyani Swaminathan
- Hagbah Vikram Akwei
- Gelilah Arjun Akwei and Rohini Kieffer
- Petichah II..... Padma Muthiah, Radha Muthiah, and Adotei Akwei
- Ushers..... Julianna Caplan, Daphne Raviv, Samantha Rose

Lev Tahor

Lev tahor b'ra li Elohim

B'ra li lev tahor

V'ruach nachon chadesh chadesh b'kirbi.

לב טהור בְּרָא לִי אֱלֹהִים
בְּרָא לִי לֵב טָהוֹר וְ
רוּחַ נְכוֹן חֲדָשׁ חֲדָשׁ בְּקִרְבִּי.

Create a pure heart in me, Great Spirit
Create a pure heart in me

And renew a pure soul within me
And renew a pure soul within

DANIEL G. ZEMEL, Rabbi
JOSHUA BERAHA, Associate Rabbi | **STEPHANIE CRAWLEY**, Associate Rabbi
SAMANTHA FRANK, Rabbinic Fellow | **RACHEL SCHMELKIN**, Rabbinic Fellow
BETH WERLIN, Executive Director | **DEBRA WINTER**, Director of Spiritual Arts | **SHARON TASH**, Education Director
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Exodus שמות 6:26 – 7:13

- כו** ומִשֶׁה הָיָה רֹעֵה אֶת־צֹאן יִתְרוֹ חֹתְנֵנוּ כֹהֵן
מִדְּבַר וַיִּנְהַג אֶת־הַצֹּאן אַחַר הַמִּדְבָּר וַיָּבֹא
אֵלֵיהֶם הָאֱלֹהִים חֲרֻבָּה׃
- 26 It is the same Aaron and Moses to whom the Eternal One said, “Bring forth the Israelites from the land of Egypt, troop by troop.”
- כז** וַיִּרְא מֶלֶאךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי בְלַבְת־אִשׁ מִתּוֹךְ
הַסִּנְיָה וַיִּרְא וְהִנֵּה הַסִּנְיָה בֹעֵר בְּאִשׁ וְהַסִּנְיָה
אֵינָנּוּ אֲכָל׃
- 27 It was they who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt to free the Israelites from the Egyptians; these are the same Moses and Aaron.
- כח** וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶסְרֶה־נָּא וְאֶרְאֶה אֶת־
הַמַּרְאֶה הַגָּדֹל הַזֶּה מִדּוֹעַ לֹא־יִבְעַר הַסִּנְיָה׃
- 28 For when the Eternal spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt
- כט** וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר אֲנִי יְהוָה
דַּבֵּר אֶל־פַּרְעֹה מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי
דֹבֵר אֵלֶיךָ׃
- 29 And the Eternal One said to Moses, “I am the Eternal, speak to Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I will tell you,”
- ל** וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה לִפְנֵי יְהוָה הֵן אֲנִי עֶרְל שְׁפָתַיִם
וַאֲיִךְ יִשְׁמַע אֵלַי פַּרְעֹה׃
- 30 Moses appealed to the Eternal, saying, “See, I get tongue-tied; how then should Pharaoh heed me!”
- א** וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה רְאֵה נִתְּתִיךָ אֱלֹהִים
לַפַּרְעֹה וְאַהֲרֹן אַחִיךָ יִהְיֶה נְבִיאֲךָ׃
- 1 The Eternal replied to Moses, “See, I place you in the role of God to Pharaoh, with your brother Aaron as your prophet.
- ב** אַתָּה תְּדַבֵּר אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר אֶצְוֶךָ וְאַהֲרֹן
אַחִיךָ יְדַבֵּר אֶל־פַּרְעֹה וְשַׁלַּח אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל
מֵאֶרֶץ׃
- 2 You shall repeat all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall speak to Pharaoh to let the Israelites depart from his land.
- ג** וְאֲנִי אֶקְשֶׁה אֶת־לֵב פַּרְעֹה וְהִרְבִּיתִי
אֶת־אֹתוֹתַי וְאֶת־מוֹפְתֵי בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם׃
- 3 But I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, that I may multiply My signs and marvels in the land of Egypt.
- ד** וְלֹא־יִשְׁמַע אֲלֵכֶם פַּרְעֹה וְנִתְּתִי אֶת־יָדֵי
בְּמִצְרַיִם וְהוֹצֵאתִי אֶת־צְבָאוֹתַי אֶת־עַמִּי
בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּשִׁפְטִים גְּדֹלִים׃
- 4 When Pharaoh does not heed you, I will lay My hand upon Egypt and deliver My ranks, My people the Israelites, from the land of Egypt with extraordinary chastisements.
- ה** וַיִּדְעוּ מִצְרַיִם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה בְּנִטְתִּי אֶת־יָדֵי
עַל־מִצְרַיִם וְהוֹצֵאתִי אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִתּוֹכָם׃
- 5 And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Eternal, when I stretch out My hand over Egypt and bring out the Israelites from their midst.”

- ו וַיַּעַשׂ מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֹתָם כִּן
 עָשׂוּ: 6 This Moses and Aaron did; as the Eternal
 commanded them, so they did.
- ז וּמֹשֶׁה בְּרִשְׁמֵנָיִם שָׁנָה וְאַהֲרֹן בְּרִשְׁלֹשׁ
 וּשְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה בְּדַבְּרָם אֶל־פְּרָעֹה: 7 Moses was eighty years old and Aaron
 eighty-three, when they made their demand
 on Pharaoh.
- ח וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאַל־אַהֲרֹן לֵאמֹר:
 ט כִּי יִדְבֹר אֲלֵיכֶם פְּרָעֹה לֵאמֹר תִּנּוּ לָכֶם מוֹפֵת
 וְאָמַרְתָּ אֶל־אַהֲרֹן קַח אֶת־מִטְּעֶךָ וְהִשְׁלֵךְ
 לִפְנֵי־פְרָעֹה יְהִי לְתַנּוּן: 8 The Eternal One said to Moses and Aaron,
 9 “When Pharaoh speaks to you and says,
 ‘Produce your marvel,’ you shall say to
 Aaron, ‘Take your rod and cast it down
 before Pharaoh.’ It shall turn into a serpent.”
- י וַיָּבֹאוּ מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן אֶל־פְּרָעֹה וַיַּעֲשׂוּ כִּן כְּאֲשֶׁר
 צִוָּה יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁלֹךְ אַהֲרֹן אֶת־מִטְּעָהּ לִפְנֵי פְרָעֹה
 וּלְפָנָיו עָבְדָיו וַיְהִי לְתַנּוּן: 10 So Moses and Aaron came before
 Pharaoh and did just as the Eternal had
 commanded: Aaron cast down his rod in the
 presence of Pharaoh and his courtiers, and it
 turned into a serpent.
- יא וַיִּקְרָא גַם־פְּרָעֹה לַחֲכָמִים וְלַמְכַשְׁפִּים
 וַיַּעֲשׂוּ גַם־הֵם חֲרֻטִּימֵי מִצְרַיִם בְּלַהֲטִיהֶם כִּן:
 יב וַיִּשְׁלִיכוּ אִישׁ מִטְּעָהּ וַיְהִיו לְתַנּוּנִים וַיִּבְלַע
 מִטְּעָה־אַהֲרֹן אֶת־מִטְּעָתָם: 11 Then Pharaoh, for his part, summoned
 the sages and the sorcerers; and the Egyptian
 magician-priests, in turn, did the same with
 their spells:
 12 each cast down his rod, and they turned
 into serpents. But Aaron’s rod swallowed
 their rods.
- יג וַיִּחְזַק לֵב פְּרָעֹה וְלֹא שָׁמַע אֲלֵהֶם כְּאֲשֶׁר
 דִּבֶּר יְהוָה: 13 Yet Pharaoh’s heart stiffened and he did
 not heed them, as the Eternal had said.

Haftarah for Va'eira: Job 38: 1-7

In parashat Va'era, Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh and ask that he free the Israelites. Pharaoh says no, and we read in the Torah multiple times that God hardens Pharaoh's heart. To the modern reader, this may be confusing: why would God participate in the story in such a way that will bring harm not only to Pharaoh but to so many Egyptians? Of course, many adult Egyptians participate actively in oppressing the Israelites. But the harm brought upon them by the plagues affects them all, including innocent children. How do we understand God's role in this story?

The Biblical text Job offers one answer. Job, despite commitment to worshiping God and to performing mitzvot, falls ill, loses his children, and loses many of his animals. He demands a day in court with God, convinced that he has done nothing wrong. In chapter 38, God finally responds. To be clear, God is not sympathetic. Rather, this poetry invites us out of ourselves, and reminds us that the world is too vast and fearsome for us to comprehend. Perhaps our task is not to comprehend or make sense of it, but simply to marvel at the beauty and tragedy of it all.

Before the reading:

Blessed are you, Adonai our God, whose spirit inspired our prophets, and whose spirit inspires us to thoughtfully discern their words. Each generation that has come before has taught and made our prophets' words their own. Thank you for *binah*, understanding, and *deah*, knowledge: for the opportunity to choose the holy words that we pass on to the next generation.

- א וַיַּעַן יְהוָה אֶת־אִיּוֹב מִן הַסְּעָרָה וַיֹּאמֶר: 1 Then the Eternal replied to Job out of the tempest and said:
- ב מִי זֶה | מַחְשִׁיב עֵצָה בְּמַלְּוִן בְּלִי־דַעַת: 2 Who is this who darkens counsel, Speaking without knowledge?
- ג אֶזְרָנָא כְּגֹבֶר חֲלָצִיד וְאֶשְׁאַלְךָ וְהוֹדִיעַנִי: 3 Gird your loins like a man; I will ask and you will inform Me.
- ד אֵיפֹה הָיִיתָ בְּיַסְדֵי־אָרֶץ הַגָּד אִם־יָדַעְתָּ בִּינָה: 4 Where were you when I laid the Earth's foundations? Speak if you have understanding.
- ה מִי־שָׂם מְמָדֶיהָ כִּי תִדַּע אֹו מִי־נָטָה עָלֶיהָ אִם־קָו: 5 Do you know who fixed its dimensions Or measured it with a line?
- ו עַל־מָה אֲדַגְּנֶיהָ הִטְבַּעוּ אֹו מִי־יָרָה אֲבֹן פְּנִתָהּ: 6 Onto what were its bases sunk? Who set its cornerstone
- ז בְּרוֹן־יַחַד כְּוֹכְבֵי בֹקֶר וַיִּזְרְעוּ כָּל־בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים: 7 When the morning stars sang together And all the divine beings shouted for joy?

After the Reading:

Thank you, O God, whose spirit inspired the prophets of old, and whose spirit inspires us to live with intention. God, you call to us to be our best. You call us to justice and mercy and to care for the oppressed. Blessed are you, Adonai our God, who gives us the ability to discern, to live, to inspire and to do your work.

Siman Tov

Siman tov umazal tov umazal tov v'siman tov
Y'hei lanu, ul'chol Yisrael.

סִימָן טוֹב וּמָזָל טוֹב.
וּמָזָל טוֹב וְסִימָן טוֹב.
יְהִי לָנוּ. וְלְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל.

It is a good and lucky sign for us and all Israel!

Refuah Shleimah

Ronni Behar, Ira Berlin, Ellen Buckley, Judith Chisholm, Don Elisburg, Netanel Felber, Phil Feld, Marlene Garnett, Pat Goldman, Ken Goldstein, Jeffrey Goodman, Richard Greenfield, Skylar Haas, David Hahn, Zev Shmuel Kesselman, Lum Laurri, Mark Laurri, Stu Levine, Dan Lutenegger, Chris Mahle, Micah ben Nechama Evi, Mildred Marin, Stephanie Mendez, Sophie Meyers, Bryant Monroe, Jack Paul, Rachel bat Chava, Lois Rosen, Eric Rosenberg, Sarah Golde bat Shifrah, David Scheever, Jo Schonewolf, Charles Schussheim, Cynthia Seymour, Annette Shaw, Elsa Smith, Eve Sparberg, Irving Swatzburg, Alan Thal, Susan Turnbull, Brian J. Tunney, Betty Ustun, Mimi Wolf, Yael Yudis Malcah bas Gilah

We Remember a Few of Far Too Many Lives Lost to COVID-19

Gosaku Ota, 74, manga artist and animator, Gunma Prefecture, Japan
Allison Funk, 30, rescued all kinds of four-legged animals, Janesville, Wisconsin
Eric O'Rea, 72, loved watching and arguing about football with his family, Springfield, Virginia

We Remember Those Lost to Violence in Washington, DC

Renando Griffin, 34, SE DC; Raymond Johnson, 59, SE DC

Shiva

Robert Effros, companion of Sheila Platoff

Shloshim

Avrom Bendavid-Val, Chelo Fournier, Aubrey Garber, Ralph Goren, Robert J. Kaye, Alvin J. Schifrin

Yahrzeit

Celia Berman, Rick Billingsley, Todd Blumenfeld, Paul Booth, Ruth Friedman Booth, Johann Bornstein, Josephine Bruno, Moses Cooley, Olimpio De Leon Pasco, Etta Gordon DuBrow, Max Factor, Charnya Fisher, Eve Fleschler, Lillian Foncham, Jeanette Gilberg, Rae Goldsmith, Roberta Carole Goren, Donna L. Green, Pat Green, Meyer Greenberg, Myron Grusin, Sam Hanser, Myron Hauser, Chris Kirby, Sylvia Kirshstein, Albert Kurzman, Leah Lazere, Erwin Lehmann, Edna Levine, Eric Maier, Sharon Moskowitz, Richard Oppenheimer, Barry Rubens, Jerome B. Sewell, Lorraine Berner Sher, Walter Tritell, Semih Ustun, David H. White

Kaddish Yatom

Yitgadal v'yitkadash sh'mei raba.

B'alma di v'ra chirutei, v'yamlich malchuteih,
b'chayeichon uv'yomeichon uv'chayei d'chol beit
Yisrael, ba'agala uvizman kariv. V'imru: Amen.

Y'hei sh'mei raba m'varach l'alam ul'almei almaya.

Yitbarach v'yishtabach v'yitpaar v'yitromam
v'yitnasei, v'yit'hadar v'yit'aleh v'yit'halal sh'mei
d'kud'sha,

b'rich Hu.

L'eila min kol birchata v'shirata, tushb'chata
v'nechemata, daamiran b'alma. V'imru: Amen.

Y'hei sh'lama raba min sh'maya, v'chayim aleinu
v'al kol Yisrael. V'imru: Amen.

Oseh shalom bimromav, Hu yaaseh shalom
aleinu, v'al kol Yisrael, v'al kol yoshvei tevel.

V'imru: Amen.

Exalted and hallowed be God's great name. In the world which God created, according to plan. May God's majesty be revealed in the days of our lifetime. And the life of all Israel – speedily, imminently, to which we say Amen. Blessed be God's great name to all eternity. Blessed, praised, honored, exalted, extolled, glorified, adored, and lauded be the name of the Holy Blessed One, beyond all earthly words and songs of blessing, praise, and comfort, to which we say Amen. May there be abundant peace from heaven, and life, for us and all Israel, to which we say Amen. May the One who creates harmony on high, bring peace to us and to all Israel, and to all who dwell on earth. To which we say Amen.

Kiddush is hosted by the Muthiah Kieffer family.

Temple Micah acknowledges our synagogue stands on the traditional territory of the Piscataway and Nacotchtank (Anacostan) peoples. We pay respect to their elders past and present and recognize their stewardship of this land and the vital contribution of indigenous peoples to this nation we share.

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא.
בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְרָא כְרַעוּתֵיהּ וְיִמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתֵיהּ בְּחַיֵּינוּ
וּבְיוֹמֵינוּ וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֵגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב,
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.
יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר
וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְדִקְדִּישָׁא.
בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

לְעֵלְא מִן כָּל בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא וְתַשְׁבְּחָתָא וְנַחֲמָתָא
דְאִמְרִין בְּעֵלְמָא. וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.
יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל
יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל. וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.