

APRIL 2021 ANSHE EMETH E-NEWSLETTER

**ZOOM IN on FRIDAY, APRIL 16 for our SHABBAT SERVICE
7:30 pm (7:15 pm for schmoozing). Zoom link below.**

APRIL YAHRZEITS: Harry Max Asher, Lil Feinstein, Jackson Hogenkamp, Florence Kastner, Lillian Katz, Rusty Litchfield, Hortense Louis, Joseph Shuchat

And we mourn the most recent passing of, **Harry Schutz.**

MI SHEBERACH Prayers for healing to **Shelley Roberts and Lora Kaufman.** And to those who have lost loved ones recently, **Joanne Hilellson, Barbara Freed Bollenbacher and Sandy & Mark Schaffer** and families.

MESSAGE FROM TZVIA RUBENS, OUR RABBINIC INTERN:

Shalom Anshe Emeth,

This week's Torah portion is Parsha M'tzora Tzara-at. M'tzora means afflicted and Tzara-at means leprosy. In Leviticus chapter 14, we read how we as a community are supposed to respond to somebody who has contracted leprosy. We learn that someone who has contracted this affliction must be removed from the community: "being unclean, he shall dwell apart; his dwelling shall be outside the camp," (Lev. 13:36).

This Parsha tells us that those who have leprosy are required to quarantine outside of the city walls. They are to remain separated from their community for the sake of the safety of the community. This feels almost too on the nose for what many of us are experiencing today. I know that I have developed some agoraphobic tendencies during this past year, not feeling safe to leave my house due to the Pandemic. Additionally, it has become so easy to dwell on the situation and the uncertainty of what each day will bring. The fear that COVID has brought to many of us is real and tangible. We have been living in a flight or fight situation for over a year. We have been cut off from our communities and forced into an ever-present fear.

In Andrea London's article Healing is More than Skin Deep, she writes,

"Affliction with tzara-at [leprosy] was surely a heavy burden to endure -- the fear and shame associated with the unsightly skin afflictions, and the loneliness of separation from the community. By placing blood

on the right ear, right thumb, and right big toe, the priests recognized the totality of the suffering and the need for a r'fuah sh'leimah -- the healing of body, mind, and soul.

Even though I am pretty sure that many of you are not racing to get blood to place on various parts of your body - this practice of placing the blood on your right ear, your right thumb, and your right toe can be connected to Kabbalah. In the Kabbalistic school of thought, the body is divided into three different parts. The head symbolizes intellect, the torso and the arms represent your emotions, and the lower half of your body is indicative of behavior. By placing the blood on three sections of the body, the priests were ensuring that the healing would be all-encompassing.

This is the same ritual that the priest underwent upon ordination. Though, I promise you that they are *not* coming anywhere near me with blood on the day of my ordination. That being said, this ritual was not a marking of degradation or shame, but instead of honor and respect. These are the traits that lead to healing.

Healing takes time, and it is not something that is rushed. We need to take it day by day. We will, with the help of vaccines and God's guidance, emerge from this isolation. When this happens, it becomes our responsibility to decide how we are going to reintegrate into society. When this is all over, we as humanity will forever be changed. Still, it becomes our obligation to let these changes be noticed and accepted not just by ourselves but by our community as a whole. To this, Ted Falcon, writer of [The Return to Healing and Wholeness](#) comments, "When we are reintegrated into our community, the deeper healing can take place."

May we go into this new phase of this pandemic with a renewed sense of hope. With God's help, vaccines have become more available, and soon we will be able to reintegrate back into our communities. Then, we will finally be able to heal (spiritually and emotionally) and feel whole once more.

Questions to consider for our next service:

1. What stigmas have emerged because of the Pandemic? How has it affected the way we interact with others?
2. God has many professions, healer being one of them. How can we turn to God to heal the wounds of this past year?

WITH GRATEFUL THANKS:

Josh Brown, Anonymous

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

SHAVUOT celebration with other small Ohio congregations. See attached flyer.

HOW DO I ACCESS OUR ZOOM SERVICE?

The link is below or on some computers you can just go to Zoom and put in meeting ID: 9376231234 and passcode: 0092.

Join Zoom Meeting LINK

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9376231234>

Meeting ID: 937 623 1234

Passcode: 0092

or DIAL FROM ANY PHONE (please be aware of background noise)

929 205 6099

Meeting ID: 937 623 1234 #

Passcode: 0092 #