



Shabbat Vayakhel-P'kudei 5778
22 Adar / March 9, 2018

Dear Shir Tikvah:

An invitation this Shabbes:

The Midrash teaches that when the Creator of the Universe finished showing human beings the earth for the first time, She said, "See how beautiful My world is. I created it for your sake. Take care of My world and do not destroy it, for if you do, there will be no one else to repair it."

Our Talmudic sages understood the beauty in the world and they filled our liturgy with images of beauty: Roaring seas who whispered and majestic mountains that sang and rivers so resplendent with awe they enliven our hearts.

Our parsha this Shabbat speaks of the Mishkan's beauty, the Divine dwelling place in the desert: the cerulean blue and the crimson yarns and the golden hues to match the sunlight; the dolphin skins and acacia wood and the brilliant stones refracting light into a world where a motley band of former slaves only knew the ugliness of tyranny.

We are people for whom separating prayer from beauty is impossible. Appreciating the beauty of creation is an act of prayer.

So the invitation: This Shabbes, take time to observe what is beautiful. What do you see? Hear? Taste? Feel?

As I write this, I am awed as the sunlight hits the snow outside my window; how luminous is our world!

If you think of it, send me a note after Shabbes. I'd love to hear about the beauty you encounter.

Shabbat Shalom, Michael

Rabbi Michael Adam Latz