

April 10, 2008

SHABBAT SHALOM!

With this week's Torah reading including a section on "leprosy" on houses (imagine what you will, but it involves replastering!), even a passage such as this has an important lesson to teach. Today, when we find something in our home that is in need of fixing, we call a qualified person to attend to the repair, or we repair it ourselves. Rhonda often tells me that "plumbers don't write sermons, so don't you do their job (not that I would ever try!)." I was, however, proud of myself for "installing" new wheel covers on my car as they seemed to be falling off as I passed over the not-so-smooth roads of this "after-winter" (read "spring") season.

We can do some repairs ourselves. There are others for which we need the assistance of an expert. Our heritage would claim that it is the same with our souls and our lives. We can do some repairs ourselves, finding ways to heal the hurts of the past and to take our broken spirit and make it whole again. There are other times when belonging to a community can provide the tools for renewal. Perhaps the "tool" is a prayer that we recite ourselves or with others, or a serious discussion with a friend about how to best face our immediate challenges, or attendance at a communal gathering (social, spiritual, serving others) that will engender in us a positive attitude. These approaches can help us turn despair into a determination to do whatever we can to take control of our lives and to understand how that assertiveness can move us forward along a productive path.

These tools are embedded into community – and, in this case, congregational – life if we allow ourselves to recognize their power. That power lies within in each of us and within our combined wisdom and strength. We pray to God as a "support to the falling" so that we will offer that support to people we know and to the human family. May all we do bring caring and healing to dark corners that need our light.

**-- L'shalom,
Rabbi Larry K.**