



Partners in Creation

Pride, Pandemic, Black Lives: Making Art About What Matters

Led by Rabbi Debra Cantor and Melinda Wright

*Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam asher kid'shanu
b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu la'asok b'divrei Torah.*

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has made our lives holy with Your mitzvot, and commanded us to engage with the words of Torah.

A Story from the Talmud – Tractate Berachot 5b

Rabbi Yoḥanan's student, Rabbi Ḥiyya bar Abba, fell ill. Rabbi Yoḥanan entered to visit him, and said to him: Is your suffering dear to you? Do you desire to be ill and afflicted? Rabbi Ḥiyya said to him: I welcome neither this suffering nor its reward. Rabbi Yoḥanan said to him: Give me your hand. Rabbi Ḥiyya bar Abba gave him his hand, and Rabbi Yoḥanan stood him up and restored him to health.

Similarly, Rabbi Yoḥanan fell ill. Rabbi Ḥanina entered to visit him, and said to him: Is your suffering dear to you? Rabbi Yoḥanan said to him: I welcome neither this suffering nor its reward. Rabbi Ḥanina said to him: Give me your hand. He gave him his hand, and Rabbi Ḥanina stood him up and restored him to health.

The Talmud asks: Why did Rabbi Yoḥanan wait for Rabbi Ḥanina to restore him to health? If he was able to heal his student, let Rabbi Yoḥanan stand himself up.

The Gemara answers: They say: A prisoner cannot generally free himself from prison, but depends on others to release him from his shackles.

Who needs to be freed?

Who needs healing?