

Social Action Showcase 2009

October 23, 2009

By Rabbi Stuart Gershon

Copyright © 2009, Temple Sinai, Summit, New Jersey

Just after Adam and Eve eat the apple from the Tree of all Knowledge, God goes looking for them and asks, Ayekah? "Where are you?" Of course, God knew where Adam and Eve were geographically, literally. God was asking a different question, a metaphoric question. Yes, God was asking, "Where are you, Adam and Eve, when I need you to perfect the work of creation? What are you doing, Adam and Eve, to make the Garden of Eden better than the way you found it? God asks the very same question of you and me each and every day. Ayekah? Where are you?" What are you doing to make a difference in the world? How are you helping God to make a better world?

Temple Sinai is committed to making a better world. Our Temple Sinai Social Action Committee presents tonight the first of two Social Action Showcases. In just a few moments, you will hear the inspiring stories of two Temple Sinai families – the Helfman family and the Stein family – and how they are actively engaged in *tikkun olam*, making a better world.

It is my pleasure to introduce Dan Rindner, the chair of Temple Sinai's Social Action Committee, to say a few words about the projects of the committee and to introduce our speakers.

On behalf of the congregation, I want to thank Joan Helfman and Andy Stein for your incredibly inspiring presentations tonight. Keep up your passion for the magnificent work you are doing. You make this Temple Sinai very proud! I also want to thank Dan Rindner for putting this Social Action Showcase together and for leading the Social Action Committee so well.

I would like to conclude by telling you about one of the most important passages in all the Torah, perhaps the most important verse in the entire Torah.

Just after Adam and Eve eat the apple from the Tree of all Knowledge, God goes looking for them and asks, *Ayekah?* "Where are you?"

Of course, God knew where Adam and Eve were geographically, literally. God was asking a different question, a metaphorical question. What was God really asking?

Yes, God was asking: where are you, Adam and Eve, when I need you to perfect the work of creation? What are you doing, Adam and Eve, to make the Garden of Eden better than the way you found it?

God asks the very same question of you and me each and every day. *Ayekah?* Where are you? What are you doing to make a difference in the world? How are you helping God to make a better world?

As we have learned tonight, the Stein family and the Helfman family have solid answers for God's question. *Ayekah?* Where are you? What would be your answer? Let us all find a way to make a real difference in this world!