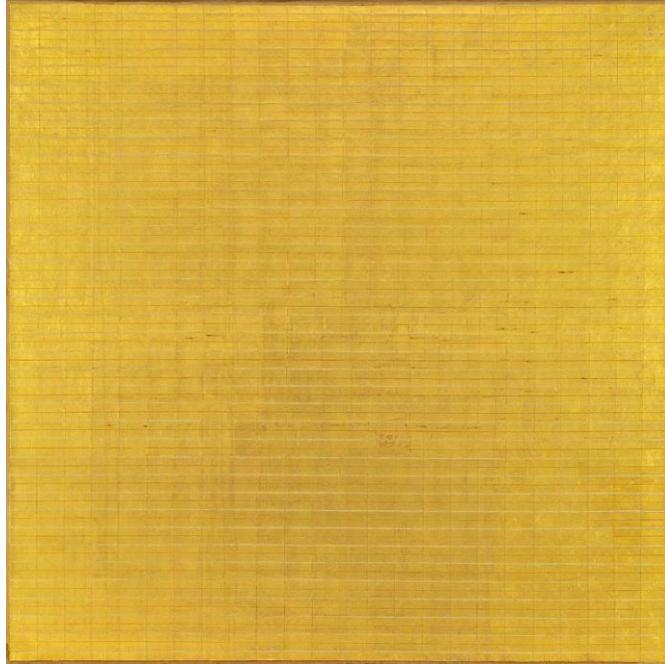


PARSHAT SHOFTIM
DEUTERONOMY 16:18-21:9
HAFTARAH ISAIAH 51:12-52:12
30 AV 5783/17 AUGUST 2023



Friendship

Gold leaf and oil on canvass by Agnes Martin

THE EXPANDING POWER OF RESTRAINT

1. A human being is a tree of the field... (Deuteronomy 20:19)
2. No tree can grow to Heaven unless its roots reach down to Hell. (Carl Jung)
3. A single witness may not validate against a person any guilt... (Deuteronomy 19:15)

A king may not keep many horses; he must keep a copy of this Torah before him; he may not elevate himself above other... (Deuteronomy 17:18)

The blood avenger, pursuing the slayer in hot anger, may overtake and kill him; that is why I command you to set aside three cities... (Deuteronomy 19:16-7)

4. Justice, justice shall you pursue that you may thrive and take possession of the land that Adonai your God is giving you. (Deuteronomy 16:20)

The main thing is to seek the truth. The verse says “pursue” because we can never really come to truth in the fullest sense of the word. We have to keep pursuing justice, knowing that we have not yet attained it. (Sefat Emet)

5. God withdrew the plenitude of God’s being to make space for the world. A similar space must exist between human beings in order to imitate God and create viable worlds. Such a vacated space must also exist within us if we are to create viable selves. (Rabbi Nachman)
6. One of the fundamental tools in making art is restraint. Restraint implies restriction and...restrictions inherent in every creative process are ultimately one’s ally. Most successful artists understand the importance of restraint applied in moments of great excitement....From Roy Oribson k. d. lang learned “physical containment and emotional expansion.” (Anne Bogart)
7. Space reaches out from us and translates the world;
To know a tree, in its true element,
Throw inner space around it, from that pure
Abundance in you. Surround it with restraint.
It has no limits. Not till it is held
In your renouncing is it truly there.
(Rainer Maria Rilke)