

PARSHAT TAZRIA
LEVITICUS 12:1-13:59
HAFTARAH II KINGS 4:42-5:19
03 NISAN 5784/11 APRIL 2024



Hope II

Oil, gold and platinum on canvass by Gustav Klimt

THE MYSTERY OF IT ALL

1. When a woman תִּזְרִיעַ and bears a male, she shall be *tamei* seven days...she shall not touch any consecrated thing nor enter the sanctuary until her period of purification is completed. (Leviticus 12:2-4)

זָרַע – to sow, scatter seed; produce seed;

“The earth brought forth vegetation: seed-bearing plants (מִזְרִיעַ זָרַע) of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it (זָרַעוֹ-בֹן). And God saw that this was good. (Genesis 1:12)

2. As for one who is צָרוּעַ his clothes shall be rent...and he shall call out “*tamei, tamei!*”he shall dwell apart; his dwelling shall be outside the camp. (Leviticus 13:45-46)

צָרַע – throw down, prostrate

צָרְעָה – hornets

3. According to [Mary] Douglas, Leviticus designates as sources of impurity not things that are morally sullied but things that by their very nature are unbounded and cannot be hemmed in....Leviticus prohibits in order to protect. The new mother is barred from entry to the Temple because the boundary-breaking experience of childbirth cannot translate neatly into a covenantal Temple framework...Childbirth is a process in which pleasure and pain, life and death, purity and impurity, are intermingled and become inextricable from each other. (Sarah Rindner, *Mosaic Magazine* 04/27/2017)
4. Mystery is not that which is unknowable but that which is endlessly knowable. Living inside such endless knowability is finally a comfort, a foundation of ultimate support, security, unrestricted love, and eternal care. (Richard Rohr)
5. Art evokes the mystery without which the world would not exist. (René Magritte)
6. Here birth, death, and the sensuality of the living exist side by side, suspended in equilibrium. (*MoMA Highlights*, 2019)