

The hardest part of life, for me, is the uncertainty. It's the questions that seem to have no answer.

- What happens after we die?
- Why did my loved one get sick?
- What did I do to deserve this?

The simplest, and perhaps most emotionless, response is:

- Why should we *expect* our lives to be perfect?
- Who are *we* to tell God how to run the universe?
- How can we expect to *understand* everything?

Unfortunately, this way of thinking does not help us when we are in pain. There's nothing comforting about not understanding. As humans, we search for meaning and at times like these, meaning can be so hard to find.

But, there is something within our reach. There is a way for us to find comfort and even emotional and spiritual healing. It is in the embrace of another, a gentle word or soft touch. Even just being in the presence of someone you love can be healing. As humans, we are created in the divine image, and as such, we can offer each other a measure of divine healing.

Through our relationships, we can find the comfort, healing, and strength that we so desperately need. By connecting with others, we can experience a connection to God - a connection that can be so hard to find during difficult times. We are God's representatives on earth.

When God tells Abraham to go forth, "Lech Lecha," to be his messenger and advocate on earth, God also tells Abraham, "I will bless you ... and you will be a blessing." (Gen. 12:2)

The Rabbis wonder about this repetition. They explain that if these phrases "I will bless you" and "you will be a blessing" meant the same thing, only one of them would have been necessary. So, since there is nothing extraneous in the Torah, they conclude that *being* a blessing means that the power to bless each other is now in our own hands.

Even later in the Torah, we are also called a "nation of priests." It means that it is within our power to offer prayers and blessing for each other. We are God's partners and we are responsible for doing God's work on earth.

And this is what we will do today. Please take a moment for yourself to think about the blessings that you need right now.

- What is difficult in your life at this time?
- What is causing you pain?
- How do you need to be healed?

In a moment, we will turn to our neighbors and offer each other the very blessings that we need at this time. Feel free to share your thoughts and to have the confidence to bestow a blessing on each other. Perhaps, you'll even want to share a warm embrace.