



H A R **הר שלום** S H A L O M

Congregation Har Shalom

Dear Friends,

In his book *Smiling Each Day*, Rabbi Avraham Twerski, quoting Rabbi Yerucham Levovitz, writes the following:

The seismograph has taught us that a tremor in any part of the world can be felt by a sufficiently sensitive instrument everywhere in the world. The same is true of a person's deeds. One should not think that his actions do not affect others. Everything one does in some way affects everyone else in the world.

On January 12, 2010, at 5 p.m. Haiti (and its neighbor, the Dominican Republic) was hit by a 7.0 magnitude earthquake, the most powerful to strike the Caribbean in 200 years. The quake's epicenter was only 10 miles from Port-au-Prince, the country's capital with a population of about 1 million. Aftershocks as powerful as 5.9 continued to shake the city throughout the night and into Wednesday.

As the poorest and most disease-afflicted country in the Western hemisphere, Haiti is ill-equipped to deal with disasters of this magnitude. Reports on casualties were slow to get out of the country due to communication problems but thousands are feared dead and many more injured. It is known that the quake inflicted large-scale structural damage to Haiti's infrastructure. Hospitals and health facilities were destroyed, and the capital was thrust into darkness as electricity went out across the city. The presidential palace, numerous government buildings (including those of the UN and the World Bank) were leveled, as were thousands of shanty homes on the hillside of Port-au-Prince

This small country needs our help; there is no need to quote a Rabbinic text to prove to you how as concerned global citizens and as Jews, it is our moral obligation to respond to humanitarian crises. Turn on the television; it will be clear to you that the need to act is immediate.

Our tradition believes that every good act, every healing gesture, lights a candle of hope in a dark world. This is an opportunity for us, paraphrasing Robert Kennedy, to send forth a tiny ripple of hope. United Synagogue has a Disaster Relief Fund set up for those who wish to help earthquake victims. The URL for on-line donations is: www.uscj.org/donate/relief. Please go online and make a contribution.

Regards,

Neil

Rabbi Neil Zuckerman