



August 8, 2020

יח אב תש"פ

Parashat Ekev - Deuteronomy 7:12-11:25 עקב

Stone – p 980 Hertz – p 780 Etz Hayim – p 1037

Haftarah – Isaiah 49:14-51:3 ישיעיהו

Second Week of Consolation

Stone – p 1197 Hertz – p 794 Etz Hayim – p 1056

Talmud Class—cancelled

Minchah – cancelled

Seudah Sh'lishit—cancelled

Shabbat Ends – 8:47 PM

DAILY SERVICE TIMES—until further notice

Sunday—8:30 AM

Tuesday—6:30 PM

Thursday—7:00 AM

Shabbat—9:30 AM

TRADITIONAL CONGREGATION

Rabbi Seth D Gordon – Rabbi.Gordon@yahoo.com

Rabbi Ephraim Zimand z"l, Emeritus

Marian S. Gordon, Executive Director – tradcong@sbcglobal.net

DAILY SERVICE TIMES—until further notice

Sunday—8:30 AM

Tuesday—6:30 PM

Thursday—7:00 AM

Shabbat—9:30 AM

Board of Directors:

Elaine Farkas, President

Paul Tesser, Executive Vice President

Ellis Frohman, Financial Vice President

Marty Levy, Ritual Vice President

Florence Schachter, Education Vice President

Chris Brown, Membership Vice President

Steven Puro, Administration Vice President

Steve Roufa, Building & Grounds Vice President

Dina Rinder, Youth Vice President

Lori Tesser, Treasurer

Mimi Levy, Secretary

Past Presidents

Jerry Chervitz, Alan Rosenberg, Phil Brick, Boaz Roth, Cyndee Levy, Kenneth Bohm

Members at Large:

Steve Bell

Stanley Estrin

Shelah Feldman

Bill Gold

Gary Golden

Ari Levy

Carol Max

Justin Zeid

*Traditional Congregation welcomes new members. If someone you know
would like to receive membership information, please contact
Chris Brown, Membership VP, at 636-288-5356*

On This Week's Torah Portion – Ekev

Not because of your righteousness and the uprightness of your heart are you coming to possess their Land, but because of the wickedness of these nations does Hashem, your Gd, drive them away from before you, and in order to fulfill the word that Hashem swore to your forefathers, to Avraham, to Yitzchak and to Ya'akov. (9:5)

Lest we think that the generation that was about to enter the Land was not a righteous generation, Or haChaim disabuses us of this notion: The generation did not have enough merit to inherit the Land on its own. It needed additional merit, passed down from the wholly righteous Patriarchs, and from the promise Gd made to them on the basis of that complete righteousness. On the other hand, this "merit of the Patriarchs" (*zechut avot*) by itself is also not enough to guarantee entry into the Land, as the previous generation, which had, by this time, all died in the desert, shows. They had the same "merit of the Patriarchs" on their side, but in the incident of the Spies they blew it big time and lost their chance to lay eyes on the "Land flowing with milk and honey."

Or haChaim quotes Raavad (Provence, 1125-1198) on a Mishnah in *Eduyot*: *The time set before Hashem is according to the number of generations, as it says (Yeshayah 41:4), 'He proclaims the generations from the beginning' (end of Mishnah).* Raavad writes: *because He sees that a [certain] generation will be worthy, He bears with [the interim generations] until that [worthy] generation, such as the generation of Yehoshua.* (Incidentally, Raavad uses the word *mitgalgel* / "bears with" which literally means "rolls with" – as if Gd has to roll with the punches until the right generation comes along. Or perhaps He rolls his eyes at their actions.)

To answer the question, if the merit of the Patriarchs is the determining factor in the Jews being given the Land, why did the first generation coming out of Egypt not inherit it, despite its failings? He states that while the merit the Jews had was insufficient on its own to allow them to enter the Land, their *lack* of merit could well be enough to *prevent* them from entering the Land, and this is what happened with the generation of the Exodus.

I'd like to explore the relation between our righteousness and the merit of the Patriarchs (the Matriarchs are included in this by the way). This time I'm not going to make an analogy from physics, but from genetics. The winter of 1944-45 in Nazi-occupied Netherlands was one of almost entirely man-made famine (the [Hongerwinter](#) or "hunger winter"). Children born during this period were, as expected, of low birth weight. However, unexpectedly, the children of those children were also of low birth rate, suggesting that environmental conditions had altered the genetic information in the first generation of children, such that the second generation was able to inherit those changes. Although apparently the original results could not be replicated, other examples have been found. The study of such changes is called [epigenetics](#).

Epigenetics takes place on the level of the physical body. In general, physical matter is not so very malleable, as anybody who has tried to pound a square peg into a round hole can attest. The spiritual realm, the realm of consciousness, is easier to work with. We are all aware of the uplifting effect a calm, peaceful home life can have on a child, and vice versa. Children tend to take after their parents, not only genetically, but socially, culturally and vocationally as well. There is an interplay between inheritance and socialization that makes each of us unique.

I think we have a similar thing occurring with the Jewish people. The Patriarchs progressively purified themselves, reaching a pinnacle in Ya'akov. Or haChaim describes the purification process in his comments to Genesis. Briefly, the impurities in Avraham were drawn out and appear in Yishmael. Whatever impurities were left in Yitzchak went to Eisav, leaving no impurity in Ya'akov. Since all of Ya'akov's sons were righteous men and became part of the people of Israel, we see that there were no impurities left in that line. Our Sages tell us that Ya'akov was one of only 4 people who could have survived a world governed solely by the Attribute of Strict Justice (*midat hadin*). The process of self-improvement the Patriarchs went through was apparently passed down to their offspring. But then the family went down to Egypt.

Now the socialization aspect took hold. The Jews became "gripped" by Egypt, assimilating to the point that when Gd allowed the Jews to cross the Sea and drowned the Egyptians, the angels pointed out the injustice, since both were idolaters. Gd answered that the Egyptians' idolatry was genetic, while the Jews' was only epigenetic. Nothing that 40 years wandering in the desert couldn't cure.

So as the nation stood at the doorway of the Land of Israel, they had in their spiritual DNA the "merit of the Patriarchs," the changes that the Patriarchs wrought upon themselves and were able to pass down to their descendants. They also had their own hard-won state of consciousness, purified by the trials of the desert, and ready to actualize their destiny. In our generation we, as a people, have merited to come back to the Land, physically. Our mission is to deserve it spiritually as well.

Shabbat Shalom!
Rafi Rabinoff

REMINDER:

Please send in your forms for:

Rosh HaShanah Greetings Card
Lulav & Etrog Orders
Yizkor Memorial Book listings

Thank you for your support!!



We have resumed in-person services on a limited basis!

Sundays, 8:30 AM

Tuesdays, 6:30 PM

Thursdays, 7:00 AM

Shabbat morning, 9:30 AM

Please be sure to send in your signed waiver.


**Pre-registration is required for Shabbat—
info will be sent out the Monday prior.**


AFFORDABLE MEALS FOR AGE 60+





Are You Enrolled in the Weekday Aging Ahead Affordable Meal Program?

Seniors 60 and above, minimize your COVID-19 risk by eating Aging Ahead meals at home!

 Delicious, nutritious and freshly-prepared meals from Championship Catering; see menu at MirowitzCenter.org/news-and-resources/

 Kosher meals available from Kohn's Kosher Deli

 Contactless curbside pick-up

 Suggested \$5 donation per meal, no income requirement

For further information or to enroll in Aging Ahead, call 314-292-7693 or contact Rachel Lindsay: rlindsay@covenantplacestl.org.

Located on the Jewish Community Millstone Campus
#8 Millstone Campus Drive

Join Rabbi Gordon on Zoom!
Something for everyone!



Mondays, 9:00 - 10:00 AM

The history of the Jewish people. Newcomers are welcome to join us!

[Register here](#)

Wednesdays, 7:00 - 8:00 PM

A look at the weekly Parashah from both traditional rabbinic and midrashic points of view as well as modern historians.

Although we would love you to join us for all classes, you can join the lesson for that week's reading. Recommended: the New JPS translation, but feel free to use any translation.

[Register here](#)



The 613 Mitzvot

Thursdays, 12 - 1:00 PM. Bring your lunch!

More than a "good deed," mitzvah in a deeper and truer sense means, literally, command.

Teachings from Sefer ha-Chinuch will be provided; this work numbers the mitzvot as they appear in the Torah, adding rabbinic teachings and the author's own insights. Recommended:

Have a translation of the Torah with you.

[Register here](#)

Fridays, 6:30 - 7:00 PM.

Abbreviated services (including L'cha Dodi; though not Shabbat evening services) and the singing of Zemirot. Benefits include spiritual ones as we enter Shabbat, congregational togetherness before Shabbat, and learning about what we are singing.

[Register here](#)



**VIRTUAL LEARNING
WITH
RABBI GORDON**



PRAYER

Your Almighty God brought you into a good land;
A land of brooks and fountains
That spring out of valleys and hills.

*Beware lest you forget your Almighty God
And forsake His commandments*

When you have eaten and are satisfied,
And have built houses, and dwelled in them,

*Beware, lest your heart be lifted up,
And you forget your Almighty God*

And you say in your hearts:
'My power and the might of my hand has gotten me this wealth.'

*You shall remember your Almighty God,
For it is He that has given you the power to succeed.*

Your God is the greatness and the power,
And the glory and the victory and the majesty;

*Both riches and honor come from You, God,
And you rule over all;*

In your hands are strength and might;

And in Your hand is the power to prosper all.

Unknown

THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE

It is what we think we know already that often prevents us from learning.

Claude Bernard