



May 27, 2017

ב סיון תשע"ז

Parashat Bamidbar – Numbers 1:1-4:20 - במדבר

Stone – p 726 Hertz – p 568 Etz Hayim – p 769

Haftarah – Hosea 2:1-22 - הושע ב

Stone – p 1180 Hertz – p 582 Etz Hayim – p 787

Kiddush luncheon is sponsored by Ken & Cyndee Levy in honor of the baby naming of their granddaughter, Rebecca Monroe Levy

No *Talmud* class; *Minchah* – 7:45 PM; *Seudah Sh'lishit*; *Shabbat* Ends – 8:57 PM

SHAVUOT

Tikkun Leyl Shavuot, Tuesday, May 30

Minchah/Arvit 8:00 PM; 9:10 PM Nosh;

9:30 PM – "Israeli Democracy" with Guest Speaker Dr. Shany Mor

10:45 PM – "Sinai and Me" with Dr. Steven Puro

SHAVUOT 1st Day – May 31

Exodus 19:1-20:23 - p 1146; Stone p 400; Hertz p 290; Etz Hayim p 436

Maftir: Numbers 28:26-31 - p 1149; Stone p 892; Hertz p 696; Etz Hayim p 932

Haftarah: Ezekiel 1:1-28, 3:12 - p 1149; Stone p 1228; Hertz p 1027; Etz Hayim p 1321

***Kiddush* luncheon following services with Guest Speaker Dr. Shany Mor:**

"Lessons of the 2005 Disengagement for Israeli Policy in the West Bank"

SHAVUOT 2nd Day – June 1

Megillat Ruth - Stone p 1269

Deuteronomy 15:19-16:17 - p 1144; Stone p 1018; Hertz p 814; Etz Hayim p 1080

Maftir: Numbers 28:26-31 - p 1149; Stone p 892; Hertz p 696; Etz Hayim p 932

Haftarah: Habakuk - 2:20-3:19 - p 1151; Stone p 1229; Hertz p 1032; Etz Hayim 1326

Yizkor

TRADITIONAL CONGREGATION

Rabbi Seth D Gordon – Rabbi.Gordon@yahoo.com
Rabbi Ephraim Zimand, Emeritus – ravzim@yahoo.com
Marian S. Gordon, Executive Director – tradcong@sbcglobal.net

DAILY SERVICE TIMES—week of 5/27

Shabbat—9:00 AM & 7:45 PM
Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday—9:00 AM; Tuesday—7:00 AM
Monday 6:45 PM; Tuesday—Thursday 8:00 PM
Friday—7:00 AM

Board of Directors:

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Traditional Congregation welcomes new members. If someone you know would like to receive membership information, please contact Membership VP Elaine Farkas at 954-558-1159.

On This Week's Torah Portion—Bamidbar

Sometimes I wish I could just copy R. Steinsaltz' entire piece on a *parashah* – this is one of them. Of course, I can't, and there are laws against plagiarism, so allow me to summarize briefly what he says.

Part of our *parashah* details the duties of the Levitical family of Kehath – this is the family from which Moshe and Aharon come, and indeed, they are singled out for the most honored portion of the work of the *Mishkan*, namely carrying the Ark, the Incense Altar, the Menorah and Table with the show-bread. However, the Torah warns the *kohanim* to be very careful to cover these articles before the Levites take them. The Levites are not permitted even to see the articles being covered, "lest they die."

The *Mishkan* was meant to be dismantled and reconstructed at every stage of the Israelites' journey through the wilderness. R. Steinsaltz asks us to consider what this entails – a space which was the Holy of Holies, where only the *Kohen Gadol* was allowed to enter, has now, with its curtains removed, and the Ark covered, become just another spot in the desert, where anyone can walk, where animals can tread. With the dismantling of the *Mishkan*, it appears that holiness itself is dismantled, yet it is rebuilt in another place, which then becomes holy.

R. Steinsaltz remarks that this dismantling of holiness takes place all the time in Jewish life. We study Scripture and we think we understand it. Then we read Talmud or Midrash, and we find that we didn't understand anything about Scripture. In the same way, we study a page of Talmud with Rashi and we understand it, until we read the commentaries and find out that our understanding was woefully incomplete. We need to dismantle everything we know and build it up again.

This is not a process for the faint of heart. When we dismantle everything we know, or we think we know, there is always the possibility that we will not be able to put it back together. Thus, only the Kohanim are allowed to do the actual dismantling and covering of the objects in the sanctuary, before the Levites are allowed to carry them. In the same way, some scholars are allowed to pursue certain questions, while others, perhaps less steeped in Torah or of not quite the same intellectual stature, are steered away from them, "lest they die."

I might point out that there is support for this thesis in both Scripture and Rabbinic literature – the famous story of "The Four Who Entered Paradise" tells of four great Sages who engaged in Kabbalistic practices that allowed them to have visions of the celestial realms. One died, one became insane, the third became an apostate, and only Rabbi Akiva "entered in peace and returned in peace." King David asks Gd to be merciful to him because "I did not pursue matters too great and too wondrous for me" (*Ps* 131).

I think most people know instinctively that there are areas where they dare not trespass. Most people adopt a set of beliefs early, generally from their parents and/or community, and they are extremely reluctant to part with any piece of this set of beliefs, even if contradicted by facts, and even if the set of beliefs is internally inconsistent.

The reason for this reluctance is that it is extremely difficult to take apart our constructs and examine them objectively, and then put them together again into a consistent framework. Apparently it is easier to live with the cognitive dissonance of an inconsistent set of beliefs than it is to do the hard work of stepping outside our narrow boundaries of thought and examining our belief system in the cold light of reality. After all, we might have to admit we were wrong, and change the way we are living.

I'd like to consider this procedure of breaking down and rebuilding a little further. It seems to me that we are dealing with two opposite faculties of humanity in this process. The process of breaking down belongs to the intellect. The intellect is that faculty that makes distinctions. The Hebrew word for intellect is *binah*, which comes from the root *bein*, between. It is what is supposed to allow us to distinguish between truth and falsehood. It is what allows us to take two things that are very similar and tell them apart. It is what allows us to see the different parts of a system and their relationships. It is what can tell us if two propositions are consistent with one another or not. Intellect is a function of the mind.

The other side of our procedure is rebuilding what we have taken apart. This is essentially an integrative process. While we think we are rebuilding something piece by piece, in truth, in order to build anything, we don't work on the level of the parts – we must have a vision of the whole. This holistic vision then guides us in emplacing the pieces – as the vision that Moshe Rabbeinu was shown on Mt. Sinai guided the construction of the *Mishkan*. This holistic vision is a function of the heart. Love is that which unifies opposites, love is that which makes peace between contending forces, love is that which integrates pieces into a whole which is more than the sum of the parts.

Moshe Rabbeinu was the paragon of the intellect – it was he who brought the Torah from heaven and interpreted it for us. Moshe was a Levite. His brother, Aharon the Kohen Gadol, was the lover of peace, the pursuer of peace. "Peace" in Hebrew is *Shalom*, which has as its root wholeness. Aharon made peace between quarreling neighbors, between husband and wife, between Israel and Gd. It was Aharon and his sons who could take the Tabernacle apart and put it back together again, because their hearts, full and suffused with love, could see the vision of the whole in the myriad parts. If we are to be a kingdom of priests, we must expand both our hearts and our minds, so that we can both tear down and build up, always striving for a higher expression of ultimate truth.

Shabbat Shalom!
Rafi Rabinoff

SHAVUOT May 30—June 1

Tuesday, May 30—Tikkun Levi Shavuot

Candlelighting: 8:00 PM *Minchah* 8:00 PM *Arvit* 8:50 PM

9:10—9:30 PM Welcome and Dairy Nosh

9:30—10:30 PM Learning Session I: Israeli Democracy with guest speaker
Dr. Shany Mor



"Sixty-eight years after its first general election, Israel today can be counted as one of the world's oldest continuous democracies. It is also one of the world's most problematic and criticized democracies, facing nearly every imaginable challenge a democracy can face. Amidst the global trends of populist revolt, surprising referendum results, and an apparent retrenchment of liberal democracy worldwide, what can Israeli democracy teach the world? And what should Israeli democracy learn from others?"

10:30—10:45 PM Break and refreshments

10:45—11:45 PM Session II: Shavuoth - Perspectives and Emotions

a. Elements and perspectives of Shavuot

b. Sinai and Me, with discussion facilitator Dr. Steven Puro. *What would be your feelings or emotions if you were at Sinai for the receiving of the Torah?*

Wednesday, May 31

Shacharit: 9:00 AM Kiddush lunch following services, approximately 11:30am

12:00—1:00 PM: Lessons of the 2005 Disengagement for Israeli Policy in the West Bank with guest speaker Dr. Shany Mor:

"The aftermath of Israel's 2005 Disengagement gives us something close to laboratory conditions for assessing three different models of dealing with the problem of the occupied territories in the absence of peace: Gaza (where there was a complete withdrawal), northern West Bank (where four settlements were evacuated in 2005), and the rest of the West Bank (where nothing changed). I examine each of these models to learn the appropriate lessons, and assess what were the conditions that made the 2005 initiative possible. I then draw conclusions for Israel's future policies with regards to the Palestinians, the US, and the Arab states."

Minchah 8:00 PM *Arvit* 8:51 PM Candlelighting 9:01 PM

Thursday, June 1

Shacharit 9:00 AM with chanting of *Megillat Ruth* and *Yizkor*.

Minchah 8:00 PM *Arvit* 8:51 PM



Dr. Shany Mor is a postdoctoral research fellow at Brown University's Political Theory Project. He has a PhD from Oxford. Before writing his PhD, Dr. Mor served as a Director for Foreign Policy on the Israeli National Security Policy.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Through June 13 Rabbi & Marian Gordon will be out of the office. Angela will be here most mornings from 9:15 AM—12:00 PM.

Shabbat, May 27 **Baby naming of Rebecca Monroe Levy.** Kiddush is sponsored by Rebecca's grandparents, Ken & Cyndee Levy.

Beginning Monday, May 29 **Minchah/Arvit services will begin at 6:45 PM through the end of July.** As always, we need your support to ensure a minyan.

Shavuot—Tuesday, May 30—Thursday, June 1

See full program details on page 5

Shabbat, June 10 **Kiddush sponsored by Mel & Bettina Weinberg** in honor of Mel's upcoming 75th birthday

Thursday, June 15 **Annual Congregational Meeting, 7:30 PM**

Get your tickets now!

Tuesday, August 22 TradCong goes to the ballgame! Cards vs. Padres, 7:15 PM. Enjoy the game from your seat in a luxury suite, plus dinner from Kohn's! This is a \$155 value—yours for just \$60/person! Tickets are going fast, first-come, first-serve, don't wait to order!! Send your check for \$60/person to TradCong, 12437 Ladue Rd, 63141; or order online at www.traditional-congregation.org.

You can help underwrite Traditional night at Busch Stadium!

Managers	\$5,000 and up	(includes 10 tickets)
Pitchers	\$1,000-4,999	(includes 4 tickets)
Catchers	\$750-999	(includes 2 tickets)
First Base	\$500-749	(includes 2 tickets)
Second Base	\$200-499	(includes 1 ticket)
Third Base	\$100-199	



To join the team, please contact Jerry Chervitz, 314-574-0456. Thank you for your support!

Visit our **NEW** website www.traditional-congregation.org



PRAYER

O God,

We all stood at the mountain's base

And swore ourselves to Your commands.

Though Moses stuttered horribly

We all listened with the utmost care to every
Torah word.

It was so good to be gone from Egypt!

And *Mitzvot* are slow to be done.

Be patient with our outward hesitation.

We have not forgotten the Agreement;

You are not alone.

Danny Siegel

THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE

In every conceivable manner, the family is the link to our past,
and the bridge to our future.

Alex Haley