



April 3, 2021

כא ניסן תשפ"א

7th Day Pesach (Shabbat)

Exodus 13:17-15:26 – p 1137; Stone p 366; Hertz p 265; Etz Hayim p 399

Maftir: Numbers 28:19-25 – p 1140; Stone p 892; Hertz p 695; Etz Hayim p 932

Haftarah: II Samuel 22:1-51 – p 1140; Stone p 1224; Hertz p 1017; Etz Hayim p 1311

Shir HaShirim is chanted

Candle lighting: after 8:08 PM

8th Day Pesach (Sunday)

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

Maftir: Numbers 28:19-25 – p 1140; Stone p 892; Hertz p 695; Etz Hayim p 932

Haftarah: Isaiah 10:32-12:6 – p 1145; Stone p 1226; Hertz p 1023; Etz Hayim p 1316

Yizkor

Yom Tov Ends – 8:09 PM

Chametz may be eaten after 8:30 PM

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 (9:30 AM on 4/4/2021)

Tuesday—6:30 PM

Thursday—7:00 AM

Shabbat—9:30 AM

Board of Directors:

Kenneth H. Bohm, President

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Marty Levy, Ritual Vice President

Florence Schachter, Education Vice President

Chris Brown, Membership Vice President

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Cyndee Levy, Elaine Farkas

Members at Large:

Steve Bell

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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 – Acharon shel Pesach

R. Goldin does not have chapters on the holidays, so I will use R. Jonathan Sacks' recent book, *Ceremony and Celebration*, although I will barely scratch the surface of what he has to say. Needless to say, don't blame anything on R. Sacks or R. Goldin!

Each of the “Five Megillot” is associated with a particular holy day – *Shir haShirim* (Song of Songs) with Pesach, *Ruth* with Shavuot, *Eichah* (Lamentations) with Tisha B'Av, *Kohelet* (Ecclesiastes) with Sukkot and *Esther* with Purim. *Shir haShirim* is a love story – it is, at times, so frankly erotic that it was almost excluded from the canon, until the great R. Akiva came and proclaimed that if the rest of *Tanach* was holy, *Shir haShirim* was the Holy of Holies. Rashi's commentary on it is wholly allegorical – he sees the entire book as a parable of Gd's love affair with the Jewish people, and their response to Gd. Why is it associated with Pesach?

R. Sacks explains:

Love creates. Love reveals. Love redeems. Love is the connection between Gd and us. That is the faith of Judaism, and if we do not understand this we will not understand it at all. We will, for example, fail to realize that the demands Gd makes of His people through the prophets are expressions of love, that what Einstein called Judaism's “almost fanatical love of justice” is about love no less than justice, that the Torah is Gd's marriage contract with the Jewish people, and the mitzvot are all invitations to love: I seek You with all my heart; do not let me stray from Your commands (Ps 119:10)

R. Sacks goes on to describe the prophecy of Hosea, and to connect it to the Exodus:

The story Hosea has to tell is extraordinary. Gd appears to him and tells him to marry a prostitute, a woman who will bear him children but will be unfaithful to him. Gd wants the prophet to know what it feels like to love and to be betrayed. The prophet, uncertain perhaps about whether the children are in fact his, is to call the “Unloved” and “Not my people.”

He will then discover the power and persistence of love. He will wait until his wife is abandoned by all her lovers, and he will take her back, despite her betrayal. He will love her children, whatever his doubts about their parentage. He will change their names to “My people” and “Beloved.” He will, in other words, know from his own experience what Gd feels about the Israelites. It is an astonishing and daring narrative, suggesting as it does that Gd cannot, will not, cease to love His people. He has been hurt by them, wounded by their faithlessness, but His love is inextinguishable. Hosea then hears Gd say this:

I will lead her into the desert and speak tenderly to her. There I will give her back her vineyards, and will make the Valley of Trouble a door of hope. There she will sing as in the days of her youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt. (Hos 2:16-17)

This is a retelling of the Exodus as a love story. In Hosea's vision, it has become something other and more than the liberation of a people from slavery. Israel left Egypt like a bride leaving the place where she has lived to accompany her new husband, Gd, on a journey to the new home they will build together.

Love is that which unites. It is Gd's love for Israel that keeps us bound to Him, in orbit around Gd no matter how elliptical that orbit might be. Our own love for Gd, like everything else that is *not* Gd, is imperfect. That imperfection is what keeps us in orbit around Gd, rather than spiraling in like a spent satellite, to have our individual existence burnt up in the fire of Gd's infinite Being. But, to restate the question we raised last week, why is there individuality to begin with? R. Sacks continues: Why would an infinite Gd create a finite universe? ... Gd transcends nature. Why then would He create nature? Why make a creature as troublesome as *Homo sapiens*, the one being capable of defying His Will?

The Torah does not give an explicit answer, but one is implicit. Gd loves. Love seeks otherness. Love is emotion turned outward. Love seeks to give, to share, to create. Rabbi Yaakov Tzvi Mecklenburg translated the repeated phrase in Genesis I not as “Gd saw that it was good” but as “Gd saw because He is good.” Goodness creates goodness. Love creates life. Gd sought to bestow the gift of being on beings other than Himself. We exist and the universe exists because Gd loves.

I love this explanation. It explains, from our perspective, how we even exist. And we must take this perspective, because if we don't exist, who is asking the question? But what about Gd's perspective, to the extent that we can grasp or know that perspective? A wise man once noted that “all love is directed to the self.” On the human level, we love something or someone because it expands us. From Gd's perspective, the statement is almost tautological – there is nothing but Gd; what “other” is there to which He can direct His love. But Gd, loving Himself, takes on the roles of Lover and Beloved – a the dance, the call and response, between the Lover and Beloved is then an internal dynamic *within* Gd. *Shir haShirim* is then the Holy of Holies because it is a model of the internal dynamics within Gd by which creation appears. Gd the Lover and Gd the Beloved are never apart, never separate from one another; Gd's love is never unrequited. The Exodus story of departure and return is just a projection of Gd's perfection on our imperfect plane.

Chag Kasher v'Sameach

Shabbat Shalom!
Rafi Rabinoff

END OF PESACH CANDLE LIGHTING & SERVICE TIMES

Friday, April 2 NO *Kabbalat Shabbat* - Pesach Day 6
Candle lighting 7:08 PM

Shabbat, April 3 Services 9:30 AM - Pesach Day 7
Shir HaShirim is chanted
Candle lighting - after 8:08 PM

Sunday, April 4 Services 9:30 AM - Pesach Day 8
YIZKOR
Chametz may be eaten after 8:30 PM



Links have been sent out to register for *Shabbat* and *Pesach* services
(see reminder email sent 4/1/2021)

Monday, April 5 Yizkor on Zoom - 7:00 PM (registration not required, use link below to join)
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87433557514?pwd=QzFacHk0LzhBN1pjVlpEZxVtUUxkdz09>
Meeting ID: 874 3355 7514 Passcode: 916452

יִזְכּוֹר Yizkor

Sunday, April 4

Pesach Service begins at 9:30 AM

Pre-registration is required:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/147144004679>

Monday, April 5:

7:00 PM on Zoom.com

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87433557514?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87433557514?pwd=QzFacHk0LzhBN1pjVlpEZxVtUUxkdz09)

[pwd=QzFacHk0LzhBN1pjVlpEZxVtUUxkdz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87433557514?pwd=QzFacHk0LzhBN1pjVlpEZxVtUUxkdz09)

Meeting ID: 874 3355 7514

Passcode: 916452

Pre-registration is not required



Traditional Congregation
314-576-5230

12437 Ladue Rd, St Louis MO 63141
www.traditional-congregation.org



Volunteers Needed to Assemble Mother's Day Gift Bags Sunday, April 25, 2021

This year, we are going to work in shifts of 6 volunteers per shift. Each shift is 1 hour, beginning at 10:00 AM, 11:00 AM, 12:00 PM and 1:00 PM. Please note that as we'll be working indoors and the activities are very hands-on, *all volunteers must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 in order to participate.*

You may volunteer for more than one shift—here's how to sign up:

1. Go to: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/mothers-day-gift-bag-assembly-tickets-149169739707> and you will be brought to the registration screen.
2. Under the green **Register** button, you will see a box that says "Select a different time." Click on the box and you will see the various shift starting times. Click on the shift you want to sign up for.
3. Click the green **Register** button.
4. You will be able to see how many spots remain open for that shift; if spots are available, click on the orange **Register** button.
5. Fill in your contact information and click the orange button to **Register**.
6. To sign up for another shift, repeat steps 1-5.

If you are unable to access the online registration or need help signing up, please contact Marian:
314-576-5230 or tradcong@sbcglobal.net.



FLORENCE GAPONOFF

Mothers Day Gift Bag Project

You can help us provide 350 gift bags for mothers in women's shelters! This is often the only gift they receive for Mother's Day, and they are so grateful!

There are **3 ways to participate** in this mitzvah:

- 1) Make a monetary donation (payable to the Chesed Fund) so that items can be purchased
- 2) Bring toiletries & personal care items (in bags) and leave them on the table outside of the Admin entrance
- 3) Help assemble bags on Sunday, April 25
(Covid protocols in place)

Questions? Contact Barbara Gaponoff Berson, 314-740-3043

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weekly ZOOM planner

Learn with Rabbi Gordon



MONDAYS
9:00 - 10:00 AM

Class is on hiatus. A new class will begin after Pesach - watch for details!



WEDNESDAYS
7:00 - 8:00 PM

Topic:
Parashat HaShavua

Activity:
A look at the weekly Parashah from both the traditional rabbinic and midrashic points of view as well as from modern historians. Recommended: the New JPS translation, but feel free to use any translation.

[Register Here](#)



פרשת השבוע

THURSDAYS
12:00 - 1:00 PM

Topic:
Mitzvah 613

Activity:
More than a "good deed," mitzvah means "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 insights.
Recommended: Have a translation of the Torah with you.

[Register Here](#)

The 613
Mitzvot
as listed
by the Rambam

FRIDAYS
TIME VARIES

Topic:
Kabbalat Shabbat

Activity:
Usher in Shabbat with abbreviated services (including L'cha Dodi; though not Shabbat evening services) and Zemirot. Benefits include spiritual ones as we enter Shabbat, congregational togetherness, and learning about what we will sing.

[Register Here](#)



**April 2, 2021:
NO Kabbalat
Shabbat**

PRAYER

You who are the breath of life, who created all humans alike in dignity,
Your power is manifest in the destiny of nations.

*You make nations great: You bring nations low; You give freedom
even to the beasts and winged fowl; You will it that all humankind be free.*

"I am your Almighty God Who brought you out of the land of Egypt,
out of the house of bondage."

*We who know the sweet delights of liberty, yet look upon ourselves in every age
as if we, too, had once been Pharaoh's slaves, can feel the bitterness of those oppressed.*

Ours, then the task to loose all fetters, break all bonds, and bring all out of slavery.
"Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."

*Would we bear the torch of freedom's light,
into a world where people are still in servitude?*

*Then we must first emancipate ourselves, from our own shackles, from fear,
from self contempt, from ignorance and blinding hate, and set our own souls free.*

"Only One who is devoted to the Torah, and observes its commandments, is truly free."

*All who suffer want, imperiled in their quest for daily bread,
who slave from break of day and dread tomorrow's grim uncertainty;
all those who toil even before they pass from childhood's years,
who live in squalor, pale and gaunt, a prey to every evil;*

All these are slaves to human greed and we must set them free.
Why then, with plenty everywhere, should people still lack their bread?

"Justice shall well up as waters and integrity as a mighty stream."

Unknown

THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE

Our children may learn about heroes of the past. Our task is to make ourselves architects of the future.

Jomo Mzee Kenyatta