



May 23, 2020

כט אייר תש"פ

Shabbat Erev Rosh Chodesh (Machar Chodesh)

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

Stone – p 726

Hertz – p 568

Etz Hayim – p 769

Haftarah – I Samuel 20:18-42

Stone – p 1207

Hertz – p 948

Etz Hayim – p 1216

Talmud Class—cancelled

Minchah – cancelled

Seudah Sh'lishit—cancelled

Shabbat Ends – 8:54 PM

Erev Shavuot—Thursday, May 28—candlelighting 7:58 PM

1st Day Shavuot, Friday, May 29—candlelighting 7:59 PM

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

2nd Day Shavuot (Shabbat)

Megillat Ruth – Stone p 1269

Deuteronomy 14:22-15:19 - p 1143; Stone p 1012; Hertz p 810; Etz Hayim p 1074

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 p 1326

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—all cancelled until further notice

Shabbat—9:00 AM & 7:00 PM

Sunday—8:30 AM

Monday—Thursday—7:00 AM & 6:30 PM

Friday—7:00 AM & 6:30 PM

Board of Directors:

Elaine Farkas, President

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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 – *Bamidbar*

They [Moshe and Aharon] gathered the whole assembly on the first day of the second month, and they established their lineages by families, according to their patrilineal descent, according to the number of their names, from twenty years of age and up, according to their head-count. (1:18)

We see, then, that Hashem is particular about lineage, and that anyone who does not have a "book of lineage" is considered of lower stature. Therefore, when it came time for Hashem to command Moshe to count the Jewish people, He first said "lift up" (se'u) – a word that denotes being lifted up and exalted – each person (first) had to find his "book of lineage." (Or haChaim to verse 3)

The verse (18) informs us that the Jews gathered for this matter on the very day (that they were told about the count). This tells us that everyone had in their possession (documentary evidence of) their lineage, and on that very day all the "books of lineage" were verified and accepted.

Why is lineage so important? And lest you think this is a relic of some olden times when they had quaint notions about marriage and family, a glance around the Orthodox Jewish press will convince you otherwise, such is the wailing and crying about boys who can't find wives because they didn't go to the very best yeshiva, or girls who can't find husbands because their fathers aren't great scholars. To a certain extent it enforces a kind of caste system where the elites shut out the rest of the community from their inner circle. It's not based entirely on birth, as a very brilliant scholar, even of humble birth, can break into the elite ranks, but *yichus* (lineage) is an important factor nonetheless.

But to repeat the main question, why is lineage so important? I think the answer has to do with the concept of a *tafkid* – the specific task that we are appointed to do on earth. *Tafkid* has many levels – we have our tasks as individuals of course, tasks for which we have been given the tools, material and spiritual, to carry out. But there is *tafkid* on the level of family, community, nation and world as well. Just as the collective consciousness of a family, for example, is made up of the individual consciousness of the members and the interactions between them, so the *tafkid* of the family is made up of the individual contributions of the members of the family, and the synergy that gets created as they work together. And it is similar on all levels. Each level of collective consciousness has its own level of *tafkid* to which the lower levels all contribute. And the whole is always more than the sum of the parts, due to the synergistic interaction between the parts.

Now lineage has to do with two things. The first is DNA, the physical aspect that is passed down from parents to children, and which is shared, to greater or lesser degree, by all blood relatives, depending on their degree of consanguinity. The other thing that is passed down is family traditions – culture, ways of speaking, thinking and acting. This is a non-physical, or spiritual legacy that is passed down from parents to children. There is actually a third thing that is passed down, and that is the material assets of the family, which are passed, according to Torah law, from father to sons, or if there are no sons, to daughters, or if there are no children to father's brothers, etc. These assets are the tools and resources necessary to carry on the family's *tafkid*, hence, they are inherited by those best placed to carry on that *tafkid*.

Now we can see what a wonderful effect lineage can have – just as the *tafkid* of a particular family remains with that family, so the resources to carry out that *tafkid* are passed on from generation to generation. If the son of a carpenter becomes a carpenter, he as if inherits the skills and the art of carpentry from his father, his grandfather, back through the generations, and passes it on to future generations. He is suited to it by the knowledge he gains from watching his father, learning from his father, from the DNA he gets from his father, even the tools and workshop that he will inherit from his father. He can ply the trade of a carpenter easily, comfortably, without strain, like speaking his native language. If, for whatever reason, he decides to go off and become a lawyer, he may well succeed, but he will not have the same fluency and comfort, and his life will naturally be more of a strain (leaving aside the stress that is inherent in much legal work).

Naturally, the tapestry of *tafkid* is much richer and more variegated than what I have laid out. A man may have more than one son, and they may not all go into the same business. When a man and a woman marry, there are two families involved (one never marries a person, one marries into a family – as Meghan Markle apparently discovered), and the two *tafkids* get intertwined. There is a constant raveling and weaving of individual threads of *tafkid*, linking families into communities and communities into nations. This weaving cannot be haphazard, and this is why traditional societies favor arranged marriages, not leaving the process of joining families to the vagaries of circumstance and chemistry. As Tevye and Golda found out, real love and bonding can grow in an environment where people are working together, and serving and supporting one another through a lifetime. What often passes for love in our society is simply infatuation, and the result is a soaring divorce rate.

So yes, lineage is important. If one's lineage is blemished, say by being the offspring of a forbidden relationship, there is a spiritual disability that is inherited, just as abnormal DNA leads to inherited physical disorders. Even if perfectly fine, but incompatible lineages join, the incompatibility can create strain and dysfunction. It behooves us all to refine our sensitivity to our *tafkid* and to how it meshes with the *tafkid* of others, so everyone will be able to function optimally, and we can all live in ideally functioning families, communities, nations and a world free from problems and conflicts.

Shabbat Shalom!
Rafi Rabinoff

BORED GAMES???

Join us for a **Zoom Schmooze** Tuesday, June 2, 7:30 PM

Go to www.Zoom.com and use Meeting ID: 878 5365 5681 Password: 447305

In the meantime, here are some other games to play with, courtesy of israel21c.org:

Still stuck at home? Play these Israeli board games
From Rummikub and Mastermind to TAKI and Ring-O Flamingo, we've got you covered with fun and fabulous ideas to keep everyone entertained.

By Naama Barak

May 20, 2020

israel21c.org

During the coronavirus crisis, humanity rediscovered how fun a great night in can be. With no restaurants, cafes or theaters to go to, we all got back to basics. You know, basics that include Thai takeout and family board games.

And while the restrictions that were imposed during the crisis are slowly being lifted in Israel and elsewhere, it looks as if staying is something that's going to last a while. So whether you are still isolating at home or have just acquired a taste for armchair entertainment, check out these Israeli games for your next adventurous evening.



The ultimate family game, Rummikub was invented back in the 1940s by Ephraim Hertzano. In the following decades, the game gained immense popularity, even becoming a best-seller in the United States.

The point of the game is to use up the colorful tiles stored on the players' racks in sets. As wholesome as that sounds, things can get pretty competitive and re-runs are inevitable, so make sure to set yourself aside a good couple of hours to play.

Another fabulous Israeli export, Guess Who is actually more famous abroad than it is in Israel. Created by husband-and-wife team Ora and Theo Coster of Theora Design in the 1970s, the game became a staple in households all around the world when it was marketed by game giant Hasbro.

The game involves two players asking one another yes and no questions to determine which of the 24 people manifested on playing cards your opponent selected. Young kids love it, and it gives them a great opportunity to work on their detective skills.



While the rest of the world has Uno, Israel has TAKI. Played by schoolchildren during recess and by recently discharged Israeli soldiers traveling the remotest spots on the globe alike, the game is suitable for about six years of age and up.

Each round takes about 20 minutes and involves getting rid of all your colorful cards as quickly as possible by matching their colors, numbers and figures with the ones already in the pile and pulling out all stops with special ones.

TAKI can be played by two to 10 players, making it an excellent choice for both a couple's night in and a wider family affair.

Aimed at young kids but sure to delight their parents as well, Fruit Punch is a card game that comes with its very own squeaky banana.

Invented by Haim Shafir, the man behind TAKI and other Israeli classics, the game's rules are pretty simple: players flip over cards until five of the same fruit are shown, at which point everyone tries to grab the banana and collect the cards. Eventually, the player with the most cards wins. Simple yet outrageously fun.





Hands down the box game with the best name ever, Ring-O Flamingo is also the brainchild of Haim Shafir.

The goal of the game is to use sling-like contraptions to fling lifesavers around the flamingoes stationed on the board while trying to avoid the neighboring alligators. This is way more difficult than it sounds and is sure to thrill young kids. Suitable for ages six and up, it can be played by two to four players. Hand it over to the children and go enjoy a cup of coffee.

Perhaps the hardest game on this list, Mastermind is all about strategy. Invented by Mordecai Meirowitz in 1970, it's a code-breaking game for two where players must guess the color of the pegs hidden on the board using logic. It takes about half an hour to play, so ready yourself for some drawn-out battles with your otherwise loved ones.



Mighty Mice is a little game that packs a big punch, enabling players to choose one of two modes of play.

In the competitive mode, contestants vie against each other to place as many mice as they can on top of an elephant tower without them falling. The first person to get rid of all their mice wins. The second option is more cooperative and involves all the players trying together to place the mice on top of the elephant structure. When all the mice are placed on the elephants, everyone wins.

Suitable from age four and up, this lovable game is sure to get your at-home party going.

A fun little game, Last Mouse Lost is a great option for occupying the kids for a few minutes while you focus on that Thai takeaway.

To play, players need to press down any number of mice they like in a single row, and the person left to press down the last mouse loses. The yellow rubber board is very easy to use, and the fact that no other props are needed is sure to spare arguments and agony. Suitable from the age of six and up.



Taking its cue from regular bingo, Zingo is a matching game that's perfect for early readers.

Suitable for two or more players, the game involves a zinger machine that dispenses tiles for players to match with their cards. The first person to have a full card then shouts out "Zingo!"

Good fun is guaranteed, as well as a bit of educational reading and the feeling of being all grown up.

You really can't go wrong with onomatopoeic games. CLACK! Is a magnetic stacking game where players race around to collect magnetic discs and stack them up as high as they can. Suitable for children age 5 and up, it accommodates up to six players at a time, making it a great option for full family fun.



Join our St. Louis Jewish community for learning experiences prior to and on the festival of Shavuot, when we celebrate the giving of the Torah!



This year, the St. Louis Jewish community will be offering two community-wide learning opportunities:

- Three Days to Sinai - A series of learning events May 26 and 27, featuring rabbis from throughout the St. Louis Jewish community. (Join Rabbi Gordon on Tues, May 26 @ 1:00 PM for "From Torah Verse to Action: The Mitzvah")
- Tikkun Leil Shavuot: All-Night Learning - A community Zoom event on Thursday night, May 28, at 7:30 pm. Join the community for stories and singing, which will conclude with candle-lighting.

Go to JFedSTL.org/Shavuot to learn more and register for the events, order kosher cheesecakes for Shavuot, and find recipes for new holiday tastes and treats!

Registration in advance is required for all events.



Jewish History

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](#)



KABBALAT SHABBAT



**VIRTUAL LEARNING
WITH
RABBI GORDON**



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