



January 25, 2020

כח טבת תש"פ

Parashat Va'era וארא Exodus 6:2 - 9:35

Stone – p 318 Hertz – p 232 Etz Hayim – p 351

Haftarah Ezekiel יהזקאל 28:25 – 29:21

Stone – p 1149 Hertz – p 244 Etz Hayim – p 370

Kiddush is sponsored by
Anita & Zvi Feigenbaum
in memory of Anita's father,
Morris Mandel, Yaakov Moshe ben Yitzchak

Talmud Class—3:15 PM

Minchah – 4:30 PM

Seudah Sh'lishit is sponsored by

Gail & Jerry Tullman

in memory of Jerry's father, Manuel Tullman

Shabbat Ends – 5:55 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

Shabbat—9:00 AM & 4:30 PM

Sunday—8:30 AM

Monday—Thursday—7:00 AM & 6:30 PM

Friday—7:00 AM & 5:45 PM

Board of Directors:

Elaine Farkas, President

Paul Tesser, Executive Vice President

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Marty Levy, Ritual Vice President

Florence Schachter, Education Vice President

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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 – Vaera

Moshe returned to Hashem and said, 'My Lord, why have you done ill to this people, and why have you sent me now?' (5:22)

Gd spoke to Moshe and He said to him, I am Hashem. (6:2)

The commentators criticize Moshe's lack of faith in Gd, or his questioning of Gd's ways. This criticism is muted to some extent because Moshe's complaint was not motivated by any personal agenda, but rather out of the pain of the Jewish people, which Moshe felt so acutely. Our verse starts out with Gd *speaking* to Moshe (using the word *vay'daber*, which connotes harsh speech), implying a rebuke for Moshe's improper speech. In addition, it uses the Name *Elokim*, which represents the Divine Attribute of Strict Justice. What Gd, in His nature as Judge, speaks to Moshe is not recorded, perhaps out of concern for Moshe's honor. The second clause has Gd *saying* to Moshe (using the word *vayomer*, which connotes softer speech), that Gd is *Hashem*, which represents the Divine Attribute of Mercy. Gd is thus identifying His essence, as it were, with the Attribute of Mercy.

Or haChaim indicates that Hashem took Moshe Rabbeinu to task for implying that evil could emanate from Gd at all: *How can you attribute a deficient character trait to [Hashem], Heaven spare us, by saying to Me: Why have You harmed this people? Am I not "Hashem" [Divine Name that expresses Mercy] and My primary Attribute is the Attribute of Kindness and Mercy, and I am good to all?!*

[Artsroll interjects: Although bad things happen in the world, and people can come to harm, Or HaChaim explains that these events cannot be described a direct actions of Hashem. Rather, the immediate cause of these events is the sins that brought them about. ... Or HaChaim begins his discussion by explaining the meaning of the verse (Eichah/Lam 3:38): From the decree of the Most High evils and good do not emanate.]

This is just as the Prophet Yirmiyah stated [Eichah 3:38]: From the decree of the Most High evils ... do not emanate, but only good events do.

This that it also states, and good, this refers to one specific aspect of good, that is, a person's development as a righteous person. This is the one thing that Hashem does not decree; rather, it is in the hands of each person to choose good. Thus, the verse refers to this particular good when it states that it is not a direct decree from Hashem.

The idea that evil does not emanate from Hashem is well-founded, for you will find that every time that Hashem mentions in Tanach the idea of repaying evil to those who do evil, He is precise in saying that it is actually the sin that causes the evil, such as ... (Iyov 8:4): He delivered them into the hands of their own transgressions, meaning that it is the transgressions themselves, as it were, that had the power over them to bring harm to them; Hashem merely allowed this to happen.

Or haChaim appears to be echoing here the famous teaching on the verse, *And Gd saw everything that He had made and behold! it was very good (Gen 1:30) – what is very good? It is the evil inclination!* What is so good about the evil inclination?! It is the existence of the evil inclination that gives human beings free choice, without which there would be no moral agency in the world; everything would run autonomously, like a piece of clockwork. This is, apparently, not what Gd wants. Automaton simply are, they don't have consciousness or spirituality in any meaningful sense, because there is no possibility for an automaton to make a choice. It is our ability to make moral choices that separates us, puts us into opposition, as it were, to the automatic workings of nature.

It is clear that we have to make some kind of argument like this, specifically in order to avoid ascribing any negativity to an all-good Gd. Gd does only good, including the greatest good of giving humans free will. The purpose of this gift is that human beings train themselves to align their will with Gd's Will, which is all good. If we were all able to do this, then on the outside it would look like we were automata, following strictly Gd's laws for us. Nevertheless, we would still be free beings, just so averse to sin that it would be virtually impossible to commit one, in the same way that it is virtually impossible for us to put out hand in a fire.

I'd like to consider the whole problem from another angle. We have been assuming that we are separate from Gd, and are able to judge the difference between "good" and "bad." Modern physics, on the other hand, has demonstrated that there is one, unified basis to all of physical reality, the Unified Field. All particles and their interactions are nothing other than patterns of vibration of the underlying Unified Field. There is nothing "outside" the Unified Field, and the Unified Field does not act, nor is it acted upon. It is completely detached from action, transcendental to the field of action, because it alone exists.

Similarly, although on a much higher level, Gd alone exists, transcendental to the entire field of activity. From our level of consciousness, Gd is the creator, the worker of miracles. We exist on the basis of Gd's act of creation. From Gd's perspective, all action is nothing other than Gd, expressing Himself, to Himself, within Himself. Our mission is to establish perception of this reality within our own consciousness, not as a mood but as a lived reality. When we do that, we too are detached from the field of action. Our individuality acts, anchored in Gd's ultimate reality and always in accord with Gd's Will.

Shabbat Shalom!
Rafi Rabinoff

**This
Sunday!**



**SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 2020
5:30 - 7:00 PM**

A TASTE OF SOUP

**ALL YOU CAN EAT
SOUP BUFFET!
MEAT &
VEGETARIAN
BREAD FOR
DUNKING
& DESSERT**

**\$12/person in advance (\$14/walk-ins)
Kids under 5 are free!
\$48/household max (\$60/walk-ins)
\$3 additional per carry-out container**

**Register by Jan. 15 at:
<https://www.traditional-congregation.org/events>
or send payment with names attending to:
Traditional Congregation
12437 Ladue Rd St Louis MO 63141
314-576-5230 tradcong@sbcglobal.net**



Jewish Community Winter Outreach Needs:

Underwear, socks, boots, coats, hats,
gloves, blankets, pillows, towels,
washcloths, toiletries

Drop Off Locations

Central Reform Congregation 5020 Waterman Boulevard St. Louis, MO 63108	Congregation B'nai Amoona 324 South Mason Creve Coeur, MO 63141	JCRC 12 Millstone Campus Dr St. Louis, MO 63146	Mirowitz Jewish Community School 348 S Mason Rd St. Louis, MO 63141
Shaare Emeth 11645 Ladue Road St. Louis, MO 63141	Temple Israel 1 Rabbi Alvin D Rubin Dr St. Louis, MO 63141	Traditional Congregation 12437 Ladue Rd Creve Coeur, MO 63141	United Hebrew Congregation 13788 Conway Road St. Louis, MO 63141

For More Information or to volunteer please contact Jack Seigel - jseigel@jrcrstl.org

Please complete the form below to help support Ethiopian Jewish Israeli Students



Traditional has entered its 29th year as participants in the Adopt-A-Student program sponsored by NACOEJ (North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry). This program supports promising Ethiopian Israeli Jews who need financial help to continue their studies.

While tuition is covered by the Israeli government, students must pay for living expenses. Due to their own financial difficulties, the students' parents are not able to help. In many cases, the financial burden causes Ethiopian students to drop out of school. The support we provide our adopted students helps them stay in school and earn a degree. Ultimately, this education provides them a profession and helps them break the cycle of poverty.

Two of our students recently graduated, and we will soon adopt two new students in their place:

Ysayas Amana (Physical Therapy, University of Haifa)

Thank you to the entire community for the donation and investment. I hope I am able to do the same in the future for someone else.

Shoshana Pacado (Nursing, Tel Aviv University)

Thank you for your support throughout the year. You allowed me to devote my time to my studies.

Two of our students are continuing their studies at Hebrew University of Jerusalem:

Shira Yasu (Occupational Therapy)

I wanted to thank you for the scholarship, which has helped me study and train as best as possible and with peace-of-mind. I thank you from the depths of my heart.

Bezuayehu Mengistu (Law)

It's important for me to thank you for your financial support. I don't take it for granted, and it really helps me make ends meet. I hope that someday I'll be a position to be able to provide for others.



Help Traditional continue this worthwhile project!

Please send your contribution to: **Traditional Congregation Chesed Committee**

and mark it for "*Adopt-A-Student*"

Name _____

Thank You!!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, January 26 **A Taste of Soup!** Everyone's favorite annual dinner! Meat soups, veggie soups, bread for dunking and dessert—come warm up with us! \$12pp, under 5 are free, \$48 household max. Walk-ins \$14pp. Last chance to register, contact Marian or register online at <https://www.traditional-congregation.org/events>

Sunday, February 2 **Stitch 'N Schmooze.** Join the club and knit or crochet kids' scarves and hats to be donated to NCJW Back to School! Store. Held the 1st Sunday of the month at the home of Nanci Gold, 10:00 AM—12 noon. Please contact Nanci to let her know you plan to attend. Experienced knitters and beginners are welcome.

Wednesday, February 5 **Last day to submit orders for *Mishloach Manot***—we make it easy for you to give gifts of *mishloach manot*—please support our fundraiser!

February 5-11 Office hours 9:15 AM—12:00 noon. Closed on Friday.

February 21-23, 2020—**Scholar in Residence with Rabbanit Bonita Sussman, Rabbi Jerry Sussman and Rabbi Capers Funnye** of Kulanu will present their work supporting isolated, emerging and returning Jewish communities around the globe. Watch your mailbox for the schedule of weekend events and information on sponsorship opportunities!

Save the Date—**Rededication Shabbat** on March 7, 2020. This year's honorees are our adult women members who have read *Haftarot* and *Megillot* for our congregation. We want to make sure that all eligible women are included, so if you are 21 or older and have read *haftarah* or *megilla* for us, please let Marian know. Thank you!

Winter Clothing Drive for the Homeless Please help those in need by donating warm clothing, socks, underwear, coats/hats/gloves, blankets/pillows/linens, personal care items. There is a donation bin in our lobby. For more info, contact Jack Seigel, jseigel@jrcrstl.org

We're looking for...YOU—to sponsor a Kiddush! Call Marian, 314-576-5230 to reserve your date. Not ready to sponsor but would like to help offset our Kiddush costs? It's easy —mail your donation to Traditional (note: Kiddush Fund in memo) or donate online at <https://www.traditional-congregation.org/donate> and select Kiddush Fund Donation. Thank you!

<https://www.traditional-congregation.org>

PRAYER

We need one another when we mourn and would be comforted.

We need one another when we are in trouble and crave help.

We need one another when we are in the deep waters of temptation and a strong hand might pull us out.

We need one another when we would accomplish some great purpose and cannot do this alone.

We need one another in our defeats, when
with encouragement we might strive again:
and in the hour of success,
when we look for someone to share our bliss.

*And we need one another when we come to die,
and would have gentle hands prepare us for the journey.*

All our lives we are in need, and others are in need of us.

*We best live when we bring to one another
our understanding and our solace.*

Unknown

THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE

To succeed it is necessary to accept the world as it is and rise above it.

Michael Korda