



May 15-16, 2026

כ"ט אייר תשפ"ו

Candle Lighting 7:48 PM

*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

**Kiddush** following services is sponsored by the congregation

**Shabbat** ends 8:49 PM

## **TRADITIONAL CONGREGATION**

Rabbi Seth D Gordon - Rabbi.Gordon@yahoo.com  
Marian S. Gordon, Executive Director - traditionalcong@gmail.com

### **SERVICE TIMES:**

Tuesday - 6:30 PM

*Shabbat* - 9:30 AM

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*We welcome new members!*

If you or someone you know would like to receive membership information,  
please contact our office at 314-576-5230  
or traditionalcong@gmail.com

## On This Week's Torah Portion - Bamidbar

How many Jews are there in the world? 13 million? Perhaps 14 million, if you're generous. How many Jews were there before World War II? Apparently the number was around the 19 million mark. So if we deduct the six million wiped out in the Holocaust, we are down to 13 million—which is exactly where we are today. So the colossal question is this: Where are all the missing Jews? Or, specifically, why in the last 60 years have we not made up our losses?

The truth is that we all know the reasons. Success, affluence and lifestyles that encourage sophisticated selfishness—why spend money on kids when we can enjoy it ourselves?—have all encouraged overzealous adherence to zero population growth. In fact, at 1.8 children per Jewish family, we aren't even replacing ourselves.

Then, of course, there are the ravages of assimilation. If every other young American Jew is marrying out, what chance do we have at increasing our numbers?

Now it is true that, traditionally, Jews were never into playing the numbers game. G-d Himself said so in the Bible when he told us, "Not because of your great numbers have I chosen you, for you are the smallest of the nations." That does not mean, though, that we should be complacent about disappearing Jews. We read in the Book of Numbers how G-d orders the census of our people. And it doesn't matter what the size of our beard is or what type of yarmulke we wear or don't wear; at the end of the day, G-d counts what is precious to him. So if the Almighty values every single Jew, how can we allow that Jew to write himself out?

Some years ago, when I was hosting South Africa's only Jewish radio show, I interviewed a prominent leader of the World Jewish Congress. We got to talking on this subject. I asked him if he was not perturbed by the dire predictions being made then about the shrinking Jewish population. His answer was that we would probably have a smaller Jewish community, but that it would be a stronger one. Those who resisted assimilation would be proud, committed Jews.

I couldn't argue the point, but what disturbed me deeply was a seemingly nonchalant attitude and an almost matter-of-fact tone in his voice. It was almost as if to say, "So what? We will be smaller but stronger."

"So what"?! The Torah says every Jew is important enough to be counted. The mystics teach that every one of us has a soul which is a veritable part of G-d. We lost six million in the Holocaust, and a Jewish leader says, in effect, "so what?"

*(Continued next page)*

Only now are people beginning to realize what a visionary the Rebbe was. Back in the 1950s, at the start of his leadership, he initiated the concept of Jewish outreach. He sent young rabbis and rebbetzins to places that were far away, geographically and spiritually. Even in the '60s and '70s, other Jewish movements laughed and scoffed at the idea. They ridiculed the notion of sending young religious couples to somewhere like UCLA in California. "They'll eat them for breakfast." "He has no chance of changing anything." "They won't even be able to remain religious themselves."

Today, thank G-d, there are over 100 Chabad centers in the state of California alone. And today, thank G-d, those same movements who initially thought the Rebbe's ideas ludicrous are themselves in the business of Jewish outreach. Indeed, it is gratifying to see his trailblazing efforts being followed by so many, including those who were very cynical in the early days.

Just over a year ago, my daughter and son-in-law established the first Jewish center in Table View, Cape Town. It is an area which has attracted many young Jewish families, but there was absolutely no Jewish infrastructure or communal presence in the area. Assimilation was a serious reality. In her first visit to the local public school, she was able to meet with the Jewish children. When she asked a boy of twelve about plans for his bar mitzvah, she was told, "My parents said I don't need to have one."

Needless to say, his was the first *bar mitzvah* celebrated at the synagogue of Table View. But you don't have to be a professional at outreach to bring a fellow Jew closer. Bring a friend to synagogue. Just get him or her there, and let the rabbis know, so they can welcome them and make them feel comfortable. You don't have to be a rebbetzin, the rabbi's wife, to invite an uninvolved Jewish family to your Friday night Shabbat table. If you know the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, alef, teach the letter *alef* to someone who doesn't. If you know bet, it's guaranteed there is someone out there who does not. You can be a teacher and an inspiration even if you are not a rabbi. In fact, many uninitiated Jews are intimidated by rabbis, and need a friend for moral support and a smooth entrée to Jewish life.

Please G-d, we will all fulfill the responsibility and privilege to help rebuild the lost generation and the vanished communities of Eastern Europe. Please G-d, our nation will be strong and will grow in numbers, until every lost Jew will find their place and stand up and be counted among our people.

***Shabbat shalom,***

**Rabbi Yossy Goldman**

*Rabbi Goldman is Life Rabbi Emeritus of the Sydenham Shul and  
president of the South African Rabbinical Association*



Traditional Congregation and Congregation B'nai Amoona  
invite you to join us for

# “Bites & Bite-Size Learning”

Thursday, May 21, 2026

7:00 PM

at Traditional, 12437 Ladue Rd, STL

Join us for Shavuot Services,  
Learning with our Rabbis,  
and Delicious Dairy Treats  
(yes, there will be cheesecake!)

Please register at:  
<https://bit.ly/3QBK5uB>




*We look forward to seeing you!*

Questions or need help registering?  
Contact Marian 314-576-5230 or  
Liessa 314-576-9990 ext 116



Join us for a  
**SHAVUOT DAIRY LUNCH**  
at the home of  
**Rabbi Seth & Marian Gordon**  
Friday, May 22, 2026  
following Shavuot services  
Please RSVP to Marian:  
[traditionalcong@gmail.com](mailto:traditionalcong@gmail.com)  
or  
314-576-5230



Join us to celebrate  
*the Aufruf of*  
*Jack Ross & Noga Melnick*

**Shabbat, May 23, 2026**

TRADITIONAL CONGREGATION  
12437 Ladue Road, St Louis MO 63141

***Kiddush* luncheon following services  
is sponsored by  
Ophira & Jeffrey Melnick**

RSVP TO  
[TRADITIONALCONG@GMAIL.COM](mailto:TRADITIONALCONG@GMAIL.COM)

*We can't wait to celebrate with you!*

## PRAYER

The late afternoon sun casts its glint over the stones of Jerusalem.

*The City of Peace has become golden once more,  
The cry of the muezzin echoes in the distance. Church bells peal softly.*

At the Kotel, voices in prayer transcend time and history. Jerusalem! Sacred to three faiths,  
but utterly unique to us, the Jewish people.

*Here, three thousand years ago, David, King of Israel, established his capitol.*

Here, Solomon built a temple.

*Here, Isaiah declared: "The Torah will come forth from Zion and the  
word of God from Jerusalem."*

Here, Babylonians, Greeks, Romans, Persians, Byzantines, Moslems, Crusaders,  
Ottomans and British all triumphed.

*But only the Jewish people remained in Jerusalem, always keeping it in mind and soul.*

Wherever we went, Jerusalem followed us. Our synagogues faced Jerusalem.  
Under the wedding canopy, we remembered Jerusalem.

*At the end of the Seder and at the end of Yom Hakippurim, we hoped" "Next year in Jerusalem."*

In June, 1967, on the 28th day of Iyar, 5727, divided Jerusalem became one again. As the barbed  
wire and barriers disappeared, wholeness returned to Jerusalem.

*How can we ever forget that image of hardened soldiers weeping unrestrained at the Kotel?*

This year, as we mark Yom Yerushalayim, we celebrate the ongoing renewal  
and vitality of Jerusalem.

*We welcome all those from the four corners of the globe who are finding in Jerusalem  
a refuge from oppression and hate.*

As friends of Jerusalem, we recommit ourselves to work for its progress and well being.

*Now, more than ever, may Jerusalem, the City of Peace,  
become the model for living in mutual harmony and respect.*

At the Kotel, it is getting darker, the shadows lengthen, and the colors deepen.  
Our tradition put it well: "There is no beauty like the beauty of Jerusalem."

*On Yom Yerushalayim and always, let ours be the privilege of rejoicing with Jerusalem at peace.*

**Unknown**

## THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE

Trouble is a sieve through which we sift our acquaintances. Those too big to pass through are our  
friends.

**Arlene Frances**