



November 11, 2017

כב חשוון תשע"ח

Parashat Chayei Sarah חיי שרה Genesis 23:1-25:18

Stone – p 106 Hertz – p 80 Etz Hayim - p 127

Haftarah – First Kings מלכים א 1:1-31

Stone – p 1136 Hertz – p 90 Etz Hayim - p 143

Kiddush is sponsored by Sisterhood
and prepared by A & B Catering

We welcome **Professor Chaim Gans**,
Professor Emeritus, Tel Aviv University
for a special presentation following *kiddush*:

"Jews, Palestinians and Israel:

Three Historiographies, Three Moralities and Three Roadmaps"

Talmud Class—3:00 PM

Minchah—4:15 PM

Seudah Sh'lishit is co-sponsored by

Bill & Nanci Gold in memory of Nanci's

father, Fred Sinay, and grandfather, Berthold Sinai;

and by Steve Puro in memory of his father, Alex Puro

Shabbat Ends—5:32 PM

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

Shabbat—9:00 AM & 5:30 PM

Sunday—**8:30 AM**

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday—7:00 AM & 6:30 PM

Wednesday, Friday—7:00 AM

Board of Directors:

Kenneth H. Bohm, President

Steve Bell, Executive Vice President

Ellis Frohman, Financial Vice President

Marty Levy, Ritual Vice President

Florence Schachter, Education Vice President

Elaine Farkas, Membership Vice President

(Open) Administrative Vice President

Steve Roufa, Building & Grounds Vice President

Chris Brown, Fundraising Vice President

Lori Tesser, Treasurer

Mimi Levy, Secretary

Christy Brick, Sisterhood Representative

Members at Large:

Sid Bennett

Shelah Feldman

Bill Gold

Ari Levy

Carol Max

Steven Puro

Dina Rinder

Iris Salsman

Jerry Tullman

Jeff Weisman

Justin Zeid

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—Chayei Sarah

On 11 August 2017, the world's oldest man passed away, just a month short of his 114th birthday – making him one of the ten longest-lived men since modern record-keeping began. If you knew nothing else about him than this, you would be justified in thinking that he had led a peaceful life, spared of fear, grief and danger.

The actual truth is the opposite. The man in question was Yisrael Kristal, Holocaust survivor. Born in Poland in 1903, he survived four years in the Lodz ghetto, and was then transported to Auschwitz. In the ghetto, his two children died. In Auschwitz, his wife was killed. When Auschwitz was liberated, he was a walking skeleton weighing a mere 37 kilos. He was the only member of his family to survive.

He was raised as a religious Jew and stayed so all his life. When the war was over and his entire world destroyed, he married again, this time to another Holocaust survivor. They had children. They made aliyah to Haifa. There he began again in the confectionery business, as he had done in Poland before the war. He made sweets and chocolate. He became an innovator. If you have ever had Israeli orange peel covered in chocolate, or liqueur chocolates shaped like little bottles and covered with silver foil, you are enjoying one of the products he originated. Those who knew him said he was a man with no bitterness in his soul. He wanted people to taste sweetness.

In 2016, at the age of 113, he finally celebrated his bar mitzvah. A hundred years earlier, this had proved impossible. By then, his mother was dead and his father was fighting in the First World War. With an almost poetic sense of fittingness, Yisrael died on erev Shabbat Ekev, the parsha that includes the second paragraph of the Shema with its commands to wear tefillin and teach Torah to your children, “so that you and your children may live long in the land that the Lord swore to your ancestors.”

Yisrael Kristal faithfully did both. On his bar mitzvah he joked that he was the world's oldest tefillin-wearer. He gathered his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren under his tallit and said, “Here's one person, and look how many people he brought to life. As we're all standing here under my tallit, I'm thinking: six million people. Imagine the world they could have built.” This was an extraordinary man.

His life sheds light on one of the most tantalising verses in the Torah. Describing the death of Abraham, our parsha says that he “breathed his last and died in good old age, old and satisfied” (Gen. 25:8). His is the most serene death in the Torah. Yet consider his life, fraught as it was with trial after trial.

To pursue the call of God, he had to say goodbye to his land, his birthplace and his father's house and travel to an unknown destination. Twice, famine forced him into exile, where his life was in danger. Promised countless children – as many as the dust of the earth and the stars of the sky – he remained childless until old age. Then God told him to send away his son by Sarah's handmaid Hagar. And if that trial were not heartbreaking enough, God then told him to sacrifice his only son with Sarah, Isaac, the one whom God had told him would be his spiritual heir and bearer of the covenant into the future.

Seven times promised a land, when Sarah died, he owned not a single square inch of territory in which to bury her, and had to entreat the Hittites to let him buy a field and burial cave. This was a life of disappointed hopes and delayed fulfillments. What kind of man was this that the Torah can say that he died “in good old age, old and satisfied”?

I learned the answer to this question through a series of life-changing encounters with Holocaust survivors. They were among the strongest, most life-affirming people I have ever met. For years I wondered how they were able to survive at all, having seen what they saw and known what they knew. They had lived through the deepest darkness ever to have descended on a civilisation.

Eventually I realised what they had done. Almost without exception, when the war was over, they focused with single-minded intensity on the future. Strangers in a strange land, they built homes and careers, married and had children and brought new life into the world.

Often they did not talk about their experiences during the Shoah, even to their spouses, their children and their closest friends. This silence lasted, in many cases, for as long as fifty years. Only then, when the future they had built was secure, did they allow themselves to look back and bear witness to what they had suffered and seen. Some of them wrote books. Many of them went around schools, telling their story so that the Holocaust could not be denied. [1] First they built a future. Only then did they allow themselves to remember the past.

That is what Abraham did in this week's parsha. He had received three promises from God: children, a land, and the assurance that he would be the father, not of one nation but of many nations (Gen. 17:4-5). At the age of 137, he had one unmarried son, no land, and had fathered no nations. He uttered not a single word of complaint. It seems that he realised that God wanted him to act, not to wait for God to do the work for him.

So, when Sarah died, he bought the first plot in what would become the Holy Land, the field and cave of Machpelah. Then he instructed his servant to find a wife for Isaac, his son, so that he might live to see the first Jewish grandchildren. Lastly, in his old age, he married again and had six sons, who would eventually become progenitors of many nations. He did not, except briefly, sit and mourn the past. Instead he took the first steps toward building the future.

That, in his own way, is what Yisrael Kristal did – and that is how a survivor of Auschwitz lived to become the world's oldest man. He too died “in good old age, old and satisfied.”

That is what the Jewish people did collectively when, a mere three years after standing eyeball-to-eyeball with the angel of death at Auschwitz, David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the Jewish State in our people's ancient homeland, the land of Israel. Had world Jewry sat passively and wept from then till now for the murdered generations of European Jewry, it would have been an understandable reaction. But it did not. It was as if the Jewish people had said collectively, in the words of King David, “I will not die but live” (Ps. 118:17), thereby giving testimony to the God of life. That is why the West's oldest nation is still young, a world leader in life-saving medicine, disaster relief, and life-enhancing technology.

This is a transformative idea. To survive tragedy and trauma, first build the future. Only then, remember the past.

Shabbat shalom, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

A special presentation:

CHAIM GANS

Professor Emeritus, Tel Aviv University

Jews, Palestinians and Israel:

**Three Historiographies,
Three Moralities and
Three Roadmaps**



SHABBAT,

NOVEMBER 11, 2017

12:45 PM following

Shabbat services and kiddush

Traditional Congregation

12437 Ladue Rd

St Louis MO 63141



Professor Gans' book, *A Political Theory for the Jewish People (2016)*, will be the focus of his presentation. In this work Gans examines the two dominant interpretations of Zionism, contrasts them with post-Zionist alternatives, and develops a third model. Along with exploring the historiographic, philosophical and moral foundations of each of these approaches, Gans considers their implications for the relationship between Jews and Arabs in Israel/Palestine as well as the relationship between Israeli and diasporic Jews.

CHAIM GANS is a political philosopher and Professor of Law at Tel Aviv University. His research and teaching interests include political and legal theory with emphasis on nationalism, multiculturalism, global justice and philosophical/moral analysis of more specific public affairs. Gans is currently the Joyce Z. Greenberg visiting professor of Jewish Studies at the University of Chicago.

Sponsored by the Center for Jewish Learning and the Jewish Federation of St. Louis.

Sh'ma: Listen! Speaker Series is generously funded by the Lubin-Green Foundation, a Supporting Foundation of the Jewish Federation of St. Louis.

**...and
Sunday**

**YOUR
WEEKEND
PLANS**

for Shabbat...



**JEWISH WAR VETERANS:
PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE**
A Knosh & Knowledge Program
with Dennis Cohen,
Commander of Jewish War Veterans
in St Louis



Sunday, November 12, 2017

Dennis Cohen and a group of veterans spanning World War II and the Korean and Vietnam Wars will share how they maintained a Jewish identity while in the military service.

Brunch begins at 9:45 AM
Program begins at 10:45 AM

Suggested donation: \$6/person at the door

Please RSVP to Marian, 314-576-5230 or
tradcong@sbcglobal.net



VODKA & Latkes

A Chanukah Celebration!!

Saturday night, 12/16 7:00 PM

Raise a glass, chap a latke!
There'll be other food to
enjoy and non-alcoholic
beverages as well.

Entertainment!

Bring your chanukiot so we can
light together

\$20/person

RSVP to :

tradcong@sbcglobal.net or 314-576-5230 or
online: www.traditional-congregation.org

*Did we mention
there'll be vodka??*



COLUMN A	COLUMN B
<p>2nd Annual CHINESE DINNER AND MOVIE!!</p>	<p>\$20/age 14 and up \$10/kids 6-14 years old No charge/kids under 6</p>
<p>Monday, December 25 5:00 PM Dinner (meat & veggie options) 7:15 PM Movie (title tba)</p>	<p>COLUMN C</p> <p>RSVP by 12/15: tradcong@sbcglobal.net 314-576-5230 Online: www.traditional- congregation.org</p>

Practice using your chopsticks and get the popcorn ready!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Shabbat, November 11 **"Jews, Palestinians and Israel: Three Histories, Three Moralities and Three Roadmaps,"** a special presentation with Chaim Gans, Professor Emeritus, Tel Aviv University. He will discuss implications for the relationship between Jews and Arabs in Israel as well as the relationship between Israeli and diasporic Jews. 12:45 PM following Shabbat services and kiddush, no charge, all are welcome.

Sunday, November 12 **"Jewish War Veterans: Past, Present, and Future," a Knosh & Knowledge Program.** Dennis Cohen, Commander of Jewish War Veterans St. Louis, will facilitate an engaging discussion on the history and current role of JWV. Meet other veterans spanning World War II and the Korean and Vietnam Wars. They will share how they maintained a Jewish identity while in the military service. Join us for a delicious kosher brunch at 9:45 AM (suggested donation \$6.00 per person) followed by the talk at 10:45. To register contact Marian, 314-576-5230 or tradcong@sbcglobal.net or visit <http://www.traditional-congregation.org/>

Sunday, November 12 Trivia Night at Epstein Hebrew Academy. Doors open at 6:00 PM, first round at 6:30 PM. Pizza for sale, free snacks. Fundraiser for 8th Grade graduation trip. \$25/person before 11/6, \$35 after or at the door. PTA@EHA for more info or to register.

Shabbat, November 25 **Kiddush sponsored by Marty & Linda Bell** in honor of the birthdays of their children, Adam & Jenny Bell.

Sunday, Dec. 3 JSU Annual Gala and completion of the *Torah of Unity*. 5:00 PM, JCC Staenberg Complex. For more info or to register: gala@jsustl.org or jsustl.org.

Friday, December 8 **First Friday**—enjoy Kabbalat Shabbat and a delicious full-course Shabbat dinner with your Traditional family. Bring your friends! \$18/person; no charge for first-time visitors to TradCong and kids under 6. RSVP by 12/2, 314-576-5230 or tradcong@sbcglobal.net.

Hanukkah Hugs—JF&CS is helping families in need of financial assistance to provide Hanukkah gifts for their children. TradCong is a drop-off location—please bring NEW, UNwrapped toys, books, gifts or gift cards for kids newborn to age 18 and place them in the collection bin in our lobby. Thank you!



Visit our website www.traditional-congregation.org

PRAYER

Lord let me live:

I do not know how long I'll live

But while I live Lord let me give,

Some comfort to someone in need

By a smile or a kind word or deed,

And let me do whatever I can

To ease things for a fellow man,

I want naught but to do my part

To lift a tired or weary heart,

To change folks' frowns to smiles again

Then I will not have lived in vain

Clara Andres

THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE

When you like someone, you like them in spite of their faults. When you love someone, you love them *with* their faults.

Elizabeth Cameron