



October 12-14, 2017

כב-כד תשרי תשע"ה

Shmini Atzeret

Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17 – p 1143; Stone p 1012; Hertz p 810; Etz Hayim p 1074
Maftir: Numbers 29:35-30:1 - p 1160; Stone p 896; Hertz p 698; Etz Hayim p 936
Haftarah: I Kings 8:54-66 – p 1160; Stone p 1245; Hertz p 982; Etz Hayim p 1263

Simchat Torah

Deuteronomy 33:1-26 – p 1161; Stone p 1112; Hertz p 909; Etz Hayim p 1202

Chattan Torah:

Deuteronomy 33:27-34:12 - p 1163; Stone p 1120; Hertz p 914; Etz Hayim p 1209

Chattan Bereishit:

Genesis 1:1-2:3 – p 1164; Stone p 2; Hertz p 2; Etz Hayim p 3
Maftir: Numbers 29:35-30:1 - p 1160; Stone p 896; Hertz p 698; Etz Hayim p 936
Haftarah: Joshua 1:1-18 – p 1166; Stone p 1246; Hertz p 984; Etz Hayim 1267

Shabbat

Parashat Bereishit (בראשית) Genesis 1:1-6:8

Stone – p 2 Hertz – p 2 Etz Hayim – p 3

Haftarah – Isaiah (ישעיה) 42:5-43:10

Stone – p 1130 Hertz – p 21 Etz Hayim – p 36

Kiddushim are sponsored by Sisterhood

Talmud Class—4:30 PM

Minchah—5:45 PM

Seudah Sh'lishit

Shabbat Ends—7:08 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 & 5:45 PM

Sunday—9:00 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

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Chris Brown, Fundraising Vice President

Lori Tesser, Treasurer

Mimi Levy, Secretary

Christy Brick, Sisterhood Representative

Members at Large:

Sid Bennett

Shelah Feldman

Bill Gold

Tobie Hupert

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—

And Gd regretted that He had made mankind on earth, and He was angry with the heart of mankind. (6:6)

This statement is troubling for two reasons. First, does Gd have emotions like His creatures? Does He get angry, or regretful, or disappointed? Second, how can Gd regret any of His actions? Did He do something wrong? Did He change His mind?

In general when we describe Gd in anthropomorphic terms, we say we are describing Gd's interaction with creation, but that Gd's essence is essentially unknowable. Thus, if a monster storm dumps 50" of rain on a major city then it certainly *seems* as if Gd is angry. Now we can locate many "natural" causes for the damage and destruction in Houston (I am writing this right after Harvey devastated the city), but it took a particular combination of events' coming together to produce the unprecedented event. If we ascribe to the notion that nothing happens unless Gd wills it to happen (at least outside the realm of human free will) then Gd caused Harvey and its effects, and, were Gd a person, that would signal that He was *very* angry.

What about regret? Torah tells us that Gd does not change His mind (*Bamidbar* 23:19). We do find, however, that the prophet Yonah was concerned that Gd accepted repentance, and if he went to Nineveh and prophesied its destruction, and the people repented, Gd would accept their repentance and make a liar out of Yonah. Now we can get out of this problem by saying that Gd's "promises" of retribution are always conditional – if the people repent, the retribution is averted. In fact, the Talmud states that this is always the case with prophecy – a negative prophecy can be averted by repentance, whereas a positive prophecy will always take place. In this case, there is no "regret" or changing of mind on Gd's part – the outcome was structured into the prophecy from the outset.

Before I quote Abarbanel, I want to note that, like Ramchal, the very large body of Abarbanel's original work (125 pages on the creation story of Chapter I alone!) was whittled down, translated and paraphrased by the editor of our volume (i.e. R. Kasnett). So citations from Abarbanel must be understood in this light.

An individual whose wickedness goes no further than his actions can hope that his behavior can be corrected. However, when a person is truly evil, his desires, motivations and thoughts are also rooted in evil. In this case there is no hope for correction. ...

The result is that Gd "regretted" that He had made mankind on earth. The question that immediately arises is, What is the meaning of the words "on earth"? ... Curiously, the Name of Gd that appears in this section is the four-letter Name that connoted the Gd of mercy.

The verse is telling us that mankind's wickedness was due to the gross materialistic nature of the earth itself. Gd saw that the pure rational soul that He had imparted to mankind could no longer be connected to the polluted physical body that characterized mankind at this point. As a result, Gd decided to destroy these physical bodies, not out of hatred for their material dimension, but rather out of His love and concern for the needs of the rational soul. Hence the consistent use of the Name that connotes a "Gd of mercy," even though Gd's decision to destroy mankind appears anything but merciful.

There are several noteworthy points here. First, in Gd's eyes the soul is the primary component of the human being, and the body is distinctly secondary. This should not be surprising – the material world is like the thin crust of solid earth that overlies a vast, dynamic ocean of spiritual existence. The soul is eternal, and was put in this body for two reasons – to perfect the material world, and in so doing become more perfect and expanded. When the soul is not doing its job properly, it becomes as it were polluted, attached to the body and to the material world. This is actually very painful for the soul – nowadays we call it mental illness. Thus Gd, in His great mercy, allowed all these souls to be freed from their bondage to a physical body. It *seems* cruel, because were a human being to kill off so many people, he would be considered a monster, like Hitler or Stalin or Mao. That is because we have a limited view of things; if our awareness were expanded to the point that we could see the world at least somewhat as Gd sees it, some of the apparent contradictions would disappear.

The second point has to do with Gd's *regret*. If Gd is omniscient, surely He knew that mankind would become corrupted on earth and would have to be wiped out. Why then did He *regret* having made man as a combination of Divine, eternal soul and transient, ephemeral, earthly body? Abarbanel gives the example of a gardener who plants a tree, knowing full well that in a few years he will have to prune some of the branches. Does he regret having planted the tree? Does he regret needing to remove the branches? Perhaps from an outsider's perspective, but from the gardener's perspective, which encompasses the whole life cycle of the tree, certainly not!

The beautiful liturgical poem *Anim Z'mirot* has a line, *They allegorized You, but not according to Your reality, and they portrayed You according to Your deeds*. We are finite, human creatures. Even though our consciousness can comprehend the transcendent wholeness of life, we do so through a human nervous system. Our Sages tell us that there are 50 Gates of Wisdom, and that Moshe Rabbeinu passed through 49 of them. We are charged to do the same, or to come as close as we can, but we must humbly recognize that "a human being cannot see My Face and live." We will always have an outsider's perspective vis-à-vis Gd.

Shabbat Shalom! Rafi Rabinoff

Join us for Schmooze and Games!

When
Wednesday, October 25, 2017
7:15 PM

Where
Traditional Congregation
Social Hall

Open to all those looking to schmooze or play some board games, bridge, or mah jong, or work on needlecrafts.

Please bring cards and games, or your knitting/crocheting/needlework projects.

Light refreshments will be provided.

**There is no charge,
just come and bring your friends!**



St Louis Community Israel Bonds Program

hosted by Traditional Congregation

Sunday, October 29, 2017 11:00 AM*

Clayton Plaza Hotel 7750 Carondelet Avenue

Guests of Honor

Rabbi Mike & Selina Rovinsky



Guest Speaker

Ari Zoldan

CEO, Quantum Networks

Sumptuous VAAD-supervised Hot & Cold Buffet
Couvert \$55/person (not tax-deductible)

Register online at www.traditional-congregation.org
or send payment of \$55/person by 10/16 to
Traditional Congregation
12437 Ladue Rd, St Louis MO 63141
314-576-5230

*Registration opens at 10:15 AM

The purchase of an Israel Bond is encouraged
This is the *only* Israel Bonds program in Missouri -
thank you for your support!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Celebrate Simchat Torah!

Wednesday, Oct 11: *Shacharit* **6:30 AM**; *Minchah/Arvit* 6:05 PM;

Candle lighting 6:11 PM

Thursday, Oct. 12: *Shacharit* 9:00 AM; *Yizkor*; *Minchah* 6:00 PM;

Arvit & Hakafot 7:00 PM; Candle lighting after 7:11 PM

Friday, Oct. 13: *Shacharit* 9:00 AM; *Minchah/Arvit* 5:45 PM;

Candle lighting 6:08 PM

Beginning Monday, October 16 Evening *minyanim* will be *Arvit* only at 6:30 PM.

Wednesday, October 25 **Schmooze & Games**, 7:15 PM. Board games, cards, mah jongg, refreshments and schmoozing with friends—join us! No charge, just bring your games and come for fun!

Thursday, October 26 **General Board Meeting**, 7:30 PM.

Shabbat, October 28 **Kiddush luncheon sponsored by the family of Maurice Goffstein** in honor of his 97th birthday.

Sunday, October 29 **Israel Bonds Program at the Clayton Plaza Hotel.** Join us to support Israel and honor our guests, Rabbi Mike & Selina Epstein Rovinsky. Featured speaker is media & tech expert Ari Zoldan. Just \$55/person, includes a lavish hot & cold brunch. **Paid RSVP's due by 10/16.** Doors open at 10:15 AM for registration, program begins at 11:00 AM.

Friday, November 3 **First Friday is back!!!** Join us for Kabbalat Shabbat services at 5:45 PM, followed by a delicious Shabbat dinner at 6:30 PM. \$18/person, no charge for kids 5 & under. Paid RSVP's by check to 12437 Ladue Rd, 63141 or register online at www.traditional-congregation.org by 10/30.

Reminder for the ladies—opportunities are available for women to chant *haftarah*. If you are interested in becoming one of our *haftarah* readers, please contact Dina Rinder, dinarinder@icloud.com



Visit our website www.traditional-congregation.org

PRAYER

How wonderful, O Lord, are the works of Your hands!

The heavens declare Your glory, the arch of the sky displays Your handiwork.

The heavens declare the glory of God.

*In Your love You have given us the power to behold
the beauty of Your world, robed in all its splendor.*

The sun and the stars, the valleys and hills, the rivers and lakes –
all disclose Your presence.

The earth reveals God's eternal presence.

The roaring breakers of the sea tell of Your awesome might;

The beasts of the field and the birds of the air bespeak Your wondrous will.

Life comes forth by God's creative will.

In Your goodness You have made us able to hear the music of the world.

The raging of the winds, the whisperings of trees in the wood,
and the precious voices of loved ones reveal to us
that You are in our midst.

A divine voice sings through all creation.

Unknown

THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE

In prosperity our friends know us; in adversity we know our friends.

John Churton Collins