



May 20, 2017

כד אייר תשע"ז

***Parashat Behar-Bechukotai*** (בהר-בחוקותי)

Leviticus 25:1-27:34

Stone – p 696      Hertz – p 531      Etz Hayim—p 738

חזק חזק ונתחזק!

*Chazak chazak v-nit'cha'zek!*

May we be strong and strengthen each other!

***Haftarah*** – Jeremiah 16:19-17:14 (ירמיה)

Stone – p 1179      Hertz – p 551      Etz Hayim—p 763

*Mazal Tov* to our Graduates!

Kiddush luncheon is sponsored by  
the families of our graduates

***Talmud Class***—6:30 PM

***Minchah*** – 7:45 PM

***Seudah Sh'lishit***

***Shabbat Ends*** – 8:51 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 & 7:45 PM

Sunday—9:00 AM

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

Wednesday—7:00 AM

### **Board of Directors:**

Kenneth H. Bohm, President

Steve Bell, Executive Vice President

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### **Members at Large:**

Sid Bennett

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Ari Levy

Carol Max

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Dina Rinder

Iris Salsman

Jerry Tullman

Mark Weinstein

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—Behar-Bechukotai

I wrote the following (edited) observation four years ago, for the week of Elana's college graduation. Raffi was already a part of our lives, so it is wonderful to repeat it years later, on the occasion of their "St. Louis *aufzug*," an event requested by Elana because she wants to celebrate with the people here who have known both her and Benjamin since before they were born.

The portion *Behar* both begins and ends with the commandment to observe *Shemittah*, and includes the wonderful concept of the Jubilee, in which both humans and lands were released to their original "owner." The only remnant of that observance is the ram's horn blowing on *Yom Kippur*, which I suppose we can look at as the termination of our prior year's sins "owning" us.

These laws command us not only what to do, but to do the right thing **in the right way**. Just as it is possible to do something that is legally allowable but which is still "wrong," it is possible to observe a commandment for the wrong reasons, or in an unholy manner. Anticipating these lapses in normal human behavior, the Torah reminds us not to embarrass or otherwise hurt each other (v. 17), and not to take advantage of someone's financial vulnerability (vs. 37-43).

Some of these laws seem to bring up troubling questions, including the implication to treat Jews differently from non-Jews, for which I've learned an alternative perspective: the seemingly "nationalist" or isolationist directives were actually intended to open the Israelites up to expand their concerns for their entire people, rather than just for their own tribe or local community. Further, the fact that these words can be alienating or disappointing indicates that we have progressed since Biblical times toward a "moral universalism" with this concept – again, intended to expand rather than diminish human concern – being "the Biblical cornerstone of internationalism" (Robert Wright, [The Evolution of God](#)).

Questions inspired by Leviticus can be answered through faith and study. Faith, that G-d will fulfill promises to provide for us (vs. 18-21) if we follow these laws of decency. And study: rather than ignore seemingly archaic scenarios, we can learn more about the beginnings of our people and their world, so that we comprehend the reasons for seeming disconnects with modernity. Through study and faith we reach beyond the intellectually satisfying answers to our questions, and we begin to understand not only what G-d expects of us, but what we may expect of ourselves.

*Shabbat shalom,  
Pamela Singer*

## SHAVUOT May 30—June 1

### Tuesday, May 30—Tikkun Levi Shavuot

Candlelighting: 8:00 PM *Minchah* 8:00 PM *Arvit* 8:50 PM

9:10—9:30 PM Welcome and Dairy Nosh

9:30—10:30 PM Learning Session I: Israeli Democracy with guest speaker Dr. Shany Mor



"Sixty-eight years after its first general election, Israel today can be counted as one of the world's oldest continuous democracies. It is also one of the world's most problematic and criticized democracies, facing nearly every imaginable challenge a democracy can face. Amidst the global trends of populist revolt, surprising referendum results, and an apparent retrenchment of liberal democracy worldwide, what can Israeli democracy teach the world? And what should Israeli democracy learn from others?"

10:30—10:45 PM Break and refreshments

10:45—11:45 PM Session II: Shavuoth - Perspectives and Emotions

- a. Elements and perspectives of Shavuot
- b. Sinai and Me, with discussion facilitator Dr. Steven Puro. *What would be your feelings or emotions if you were at Sinai for the receiving of the Torah?*

### Wednesday, May 31

*Shacharit*: 9:00 AM Kiddush lunch following services, approximately 11:30am

12:00—1:00 PM: Lessons of the 2005 Disengagement for Israeli Policy in the West Bank with guest speaker Dr. Shany Mor:

"The aftermath of Israel's 2005 Disengagement gives us something close to laboratory conditions for assessing three different models of dealing with the problem of the occupied territories in the absence of peace: Gaza (where there was a complete withdrawal), northern West Bank (where four settlements were evacuated in 2005), and the rest of the West Bank (where nothing changed). I examine each of these models to learn the appropriate lessons, and assess what were the conditions that made the 2005 initiative possible. I then draw conclusions for Israel's future policies with regards to the Palestinians, the US, and the Arab states."

*Minchah* 8:00 PM *Arvit* 8:51 PM Candlelighting 9:01 PM

### Thursday, June 1

*Shacharit* 9:00 AM with chanting of *Megillat Ruth* and *Yizkor*.

*Minchah* 8:00 PM *Arvit* 8:51 PM



*Dr. Shany Mor is a postdoctoral research fellow at Brown University's Political Theory Project. He has a PhD from Oxford. Before writing his PhD, Dr. Mor served as a Director for Foreign Policy on the Israeli National Security Policy.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, May 21 Stone dedication for Zendra Ashkanazi, mother of Shelah Feldman. 10:15 AM, Chesed Shel Emeth Cemetery on White Road.

Sunday, May 21 TradCong vs Shaare Emeth softball game, 10:20 AM, JCCA field #2. Come out and support our team!

May 24—June 13 Rabbi & Marian Gordon will be out of the office. If you need to meet with or speak with us, please be sure to do so before May 24. Thank you.

*Shabbat*, May 27 **Baby naming of Rebecca Monroe Levy.** Kiddush is sponsored by Rebecca's grandparents, Ken & Cyndee Levy.

**Shavuot—Tuesday, May 30—Thursday, June 1**

See full program details on page 5

Beginning Monday, June 5 **Evening services in June and July will be *Arvit* only beginning at 6:45 PM.** As always, we need your support to ensure a minyan.

Thursday, June 15 **Annual Congregational Meeting, 7:30 PM**

### ***Get your tickets now!***

Tuesday, August 22 TradCong goes to the ballgame! Cards vs. Padres, 7:15 PM. Enjoy the game from your seat in a luxury suite, plus dinner from Kohn's! This is a \$155 value—yours for just \$60/person! Tickets are going fast, only 40 tickets are now available, first-come, first-serve, don't wait to order!! Send your check for \$60/person to TradCong, 12437 Ladue Rd, 63141; or order online at [www.traditional-congregation.org](http://www.traditional-congregation.org).



### ***You can help underwrite Traditional night at Busch Stadium!***

Managers	\$5,000 and up	(includes 10 tickets)
Pitchers	\$1,000-4,999	(includes 4 tickets)
Catchers	\$750-999	(includes 2 tickets)
First Base	\$500-749	(includes 2 tickets)
Second Base	\$200-499	(includes 1 ticket)
Third Base	\$100-199	

To join the team, please contact Jerry Chervitz, 314-574-0456. Thank you for your support!



Visit our **NEW** website [www.traditional-congregation.org](http://www.traditional-congregation.org)

## **PRAYER**

### **“Between”**

More than meditation  
More than insight  
More than feeling  
Between us are claims,  
Obligations, commandments  
To act, to do, to behave our beliefs.

*I seek God not as if God were  
Alone, an isolated person,  
He or She, a process, a power,  
A being a thing.  
I seek God not as if I were alone  
A thinker, a meditator, a  
Discrete entity.*

I see God in connection in the  
Nexus of community  
I pray and celebrate the  
Betweenness  
Which binds and holds us  
Together.

*Rabbi Harold Schulweis  
(abridged)*

## **THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE**

I avoid looking forward or backward,  
and try to keep looking upward.

*Charlotte Bronte*