



February 9, 2019

ד אדר א' תשע"ט

**Parashat Terumah** - תרומה Exodus 25:1 - 27:19

Stone – p 444

Hertz – p 326

Etz Hayim – p 485

**Hafarah** – מלכים א 1 Kings 5:26 - 6:13

Stone – p 1157

Hertz – p 336

Etz Hayim – p 500

*Kiddush* is sponsored by Sisterhood

**Talmud Class** - 3:45 PM

**Minchah** – 5:00 PM

**Seudah Sh'lishit**

**Shabbat Ends** – 6:12 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 & 5:00 PM                      Sunday—8:30 AM

Monday—Thursday—7:00 AM & 6:30 PM

Friday 7:00 AM & 5:45 PM

### **Board of Directors:**

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Steve Bell

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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  
Marian Gordon at 314-576-5230*

## On This Week's Torah Portion – Terumah

The parsha of Terumah describes the construction of the Tabernacle, the first collective house of worship in the history of Israel. The first but not the last; it was eventually succeeded by the Temple in Jerusalem. I want to focus on one moment in Jewish history which represents Jewish spirituality at its lowest ebb and highest flight: the moment the Temple was destroyed.

It is hard to understand the depth of the crisis into which the destruction of the First Temple plunged the Jewish people. Their very existence was predicated on a relationship with God symbolised by the worship that took place daily in Jerusalem. With the Babylonian conquest in 586 BCE, Jews lost not only their land and sovereignty. In losing the Temple, it was as if they had lost hope itself. For their hope lay in God, and how could they turn to God if the very place where they served Him was in ruins? One document has left a vivid record of the mood of Jews at that time, one of the most famous of the psalms: By the waters of Babylon we sat and wept as we remembered Zion...How can we sing the songs of the Lord in a strange land? (**Psalm 137**)

It was then that an answer began to take shape. The Temple no longer stood, but its memory remained, and this memory was strong enough to bring Jews together in collective worship. In exile, in Babylon, Jews began to gather to expound Torah, articulate a collective hope of return, and recall the Temple and its service.

The prophet Ezekiel was one of those who shaped a vision of return and restoration, and it is to him we owe the first oblique reference to a radically new institution that eventually became known as the Beit Knesset, the synagogue: “*This is what the sovereign Lord says: although I sent them far away among the nations and scattered them among the countries, yet I have become to them a small Sanctuary [Mikdash me’at] in the countries where they have gone*” (**Ezekiel 11:16**). The central Sanctuary had been destroyed, but a small echo, a miniature, remained.

The synagogue is one of the most remarkable examples of an *itaruta de’letata*, “an awakening from below.” It came into being not through words spoken by God to Israel, but by words spoken by Israel to God. There is no synagogue in Tanach, no command to build local houses of prayer. On the contrary, insofar as the Torah speaks of a “house of God” it refers to a central Sanctuary, a collective focus for the worship of the people as a whole.

We tend to forget how profound the concept of a synagogue was. Professor M. Stern has written that “in establishing the synagogue, Judaism created one of the greatest revolutions in the history of religion and society, for the synagogue was an entirely new environment for divine service, of a type unknown anywhere before.” It became, according to Salo Baron, the institution through which the exilic community “completely shifted the emphasis from the place of worship, the Sanctuary, to the gathering of worshippers, the congregation, assembled at any time and any place in God’s wide world.” The synagogue became Jerusalem in exile, the home of the Jewish heart. It is the ultimate expression of monotheism – that wherever we gather to turn our hearts towards heaven, there the Divine Presence can be found, for God is everywhere.

Where did it come from, this world-changing idea? It did not come from the Temple, but rather from the much earlier institution described in this week’s parsha: the Tabernacle. Its essence was that it was portable, made up of beams and hangings that could be dismantled and carried by the Levites as the Israelites journeyed through the wilderness. The Tabernacle, a temporary structure, turned out to have permanent influence, whereas the Temple, intended to be permanent, proved to be temporary – until, as we pray daily, it is rebuilt.

More significant than the physical structure of the Tabernacle was its metaphysical structure. The very idea that one can build a home for God seems absurd. It was all too easy to understand the concept of sacred space in a polytheistic worldview. The gods were half-human. They had places where they could be encountered. Monotheism tore this idea up at its roots, nowhere more eloquently than in **Psalm 139**:

Where can I go from Your Spirit? Where can I flee from Your presence? If I go up to the heavens, You are there; If I make my bed in the depths, You are there.

Hence the question asked by Israel’s wisest King, Solomon: “*But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain You. How much less this temple I have built!*” (**I Kings 8:27**).

The same question is posed in the name of God by one of Israel’s greatest prophets, Isaiah:

Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. Where is the house you will build for Me? Where will My resting place be? (**Isaiah 66:1**)

The very concept of making a home in finite space for an infinite presence seems a contradiction in terms. The answer, still astonishing in its profundity, is contained at the beginning of this week’s parsha: “They shall make a Sanctuary for Me, and I will dwell in them [*betokham*]” (**Exodus 25:8**). The Jewish mystics pointed out the linguistic strangeness of this sentence. It should have said, “I will dwell in it,” not “I will dwell in them.” The answer is that the Divine Presence lives not in a building but in its builders; not in a physical place but in the human heart. The Sanctuary was not a place in which the objective existence of God was somehow more concentrated than elsewhere. Rather, it was a place whose holiness had the effect of opening hearts to the One worshipped there. God exists everywhere, but not everywhere do we feel the presence of God in the same way. The essence of “the holy” is that it is a place where we set aside all human devices and desires and enter a domain wholly set aside for God.

If the concept of the Mishkan, the Tabernacle, is that God lives in the human heart whenever it opens itself unreservedly to heaven, then its physical location is irrelevant. Thus the way was open, seven centuries later, to the synagogue: the supreme statement of the idea that if God is everywhere, He can be reached anywhere. I find it moving that the frail structure described in this week’s parsha became the inspiration of an institution that, more than any other, kept the Jewish people alive through almost two thousand years of dispersion – the longest of all journeys through the wilderness.

**Shabbat Shalom,  
Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks**



# A Taste of Soup

**Sunday, February 17, 2019**  
**5:30—7:00 PM**

**Warm up and fill up!**  
**All-you-can-eat soup buffet (meat and vegetarian),**  
**bread for dunking & dessert!**  
**\$12/person in advance (*\$14 walk-ins*)**  
**\$48 household max (*\$60 walk-ins*)**  
**Kids under 5 are free!**  
**\$3 additional per carry-out container**

**Reserve your spots now! Send in the form below with payment to:**  
Traditional Congregation, 12437 Ladue Road, St. Louis, MO 63141  
Or register online at <https://www.traditional-congregation.org>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Number Attending: Over age 5 \_\_\_\_\_ Children Under 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**RSVP with payment **due now****

Please make checks payable to: Traditional Congregation Sisterhood  
and note [A Taste Of Soup](#) in the memo.

**REDEDICATION SHABBAT 5779**

**FEBRUARY 23, 2019**

**HONORING**

**JUSTIN ZEID**

**FOR HIS DEDICATED SERVICE  
TO OUR CONGREGATION**



**SERVICES BEGIN AT 9:00 AM  
AND WILL BE FOLLOWED BY A  
KIDDUSH LUNCHEON  
IN HONOR OF JUSTIN**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, February 17      **A Taste of Soup!** All you can eat soup buffet (meat and vegetarian), bread for dunking and dessert! 5:30—7:00 PM. \$12/person in advance (\$14 walk-ins), \$48/household family max (\$60 walk-ins), kids under 5 are free! Paid RSVP's due now; online at <https://www.traditional-congregation.org>

Wednesday, February 20      **Schmooze, Games & Rap with Rabbi**, 7:00 PM in the Heritage Center. Get your (board) game on! Join us for a relaxing evening of cards, board games, etc. Bring your favorite games and crafts projects, or just hang out with friends. Rabbi Gordon will be on hand to answer your burning questions or just to chat. No charge, light refreshments provided. For info contact Dina: [dinarinder@icloud.com](mailto:dinarinder@icloud.com)

Thursday, February 21      Jewish Women's Philanthropy "Pieces of Our Community" Event, 7:00 PM, Hilton Frontenac Hotel. An inspiring evening at which 29 local Jewish women's organizations (including Traditional) will be featured and celebrated! Enjoy food from all of the local kosher caterers and be inspired by Ruchi Koval, who will speak on "Finding Your Niche" and how we all have our unique piece in the fabric of our Jewish community. \$36 includes valet parking. RSVP Katie Sheldon at 314-442-3751 or <https://www.ifedstl.org/events/community/> (*PS from Marian—I'm on the event committee—hope you'll join me for a fun, casual evening!*)

*Shabbat*, February 23      **Rededication Shabbat honoring Justin Zeid.** Join us as we pay tribute to Justin for many years of dedicated service to Traditional. Services begin at 9:00 AM and will be followed by a lovely kiddush luncheon.

Sunday, February 24      Shaving Israel movie/presentation: "Beneath the Helmet, from High School to the Home Front." Followed by Q&A with former Israeli paratrooper. 3:00 PM, Nusach Hari. No charge, donations to help IDF soldiers are welcome. <https://www.shavingisrael.org/>

***If you've not yet made a Capital Campaign donation—it's not too late.***  
*Please communicate your donation or send your payment to the office. Thank you for your support!*

***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!

[www.traditional-congregation.org](http://www.traditional-congregation.org)

## **PRAYER**

Source of all goodness, as we join in *Shabbat* worship,  
We ask Your blessings.

*Grant us health enough to perform our daily tasks,  
Wealth enough to answer our needs,  
Compassion enough to feel the needs of others.*

Give us strength enough to recognize our faults,  
Wisdom enough to understand Your laws,  
Loyalty enough to discharge our duties.

*Give us courage enough to be true to the best within us,  
Charity enough to see the best in others.*

Give us patience enough not to become discouraged,  
Hope enough to overcome all fears for the future,

*And faith enough to feel Your presence.*

*Unknown*

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

Wherever you find God's greatness, there you find his humility.

*Rabbi Yohanan,  
Megilla 31a*