

PRAYER

We thank you for this place in which we dwell.

For the love that unites us; for the peace accorded us this day.

For the hope with which we expect the morrow;
For the health, the work, the food and the bright skies
that make our lives delightful.

*For our friends in all parts of the earth,
And for our friendly helpers in this foreign isle.*

Give us courage and gaiety and the quiet mind.

Spare to us our friends, soften to us our enemies.

Bless us, if it may be, in all our innocent endeavors.

*If it may not, give us the strength to encounter that
which is to come, that we be brave in peril, constant in
tribulation, temperate in wrath, and in all changes of fortune
and down to the gates of death, loyal and loving to one another.*

Robert Louis Stevenson
(Adapted)

THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE

If you are successful, remember that somewhere,
sometimes, someone gave you a lift or an idea that
started you in the right direction. Remember, also,
that you are indebted to life until you help some less
fortunate person just as you were helped.

Napoleon Hill



September 10, 2011

יא אלול תשע"א

Parashat Ki Tetze - Deuteronomy 21:10-25:19 (כי תצא)

Hertz – p 840

Stone – p 1046

Haftarah – Isaiah 54:1-10 (ישעיהו)

Hertz – p 857

Stone – p 1201

Kiddush Sponsored by the Congregation

in appreciation of

Michael & Noémi Neidorff

as we dedicate our newly renovated

Lobby and Art Gallery

Rabbi Gordon's Talmud Class – 5:00 PM

Seudah Sh'lishit sponsored by
Fred & Lili Chait in memory of
Lili's mother, Gohor Raoufian

Minchah – 6:15 PM

Shabbat Ends – 8:01 PM

On This Week's Torah Portion - כי תצא

Our Parashah is virtually a list of *mitzvot*, the connections between which are sometimes hard to discern. Indeed a great number of Ba'al HaTurim's comments to this Parashah are of the nature of "this *mitzvah* is juxtaposed to that *mitzvah* to teach that" It is also instructive to see if we can find some threads that run through the disparate verses and tie them together. I think one such concept is the idea of boundaries. We have *mitzvot* regarding natural boundaries, such as *kila'im* (mixing of seeds in a single field, or working disparate kinds of animals together), *mitzvot* regarding sexual boundaries (cross-dressing) and marriage (*yibum*, Levirate marriage), commercial boundaries (weights and measures) and even safety boundaries (making parapets for one's roof).

When we consider that the basis of all existence is infinite and unbounded, perhaps boundaries are looked upon only as restrictions and limitations, and that is of course one aspect of the nature of boundaries. There is another aspect however, and one which is perhaps more highlighted in our esoteric tradition. That is, boundaries provide the channels for the infinite to express itself; without boundaries there would only be the infinite, without any Self-expression or Self-knowledge. This dual nature of boundaries is sometimes expressed by our Sages using the metaphor of a garment. A garment's obvious function is to hide – to cloak. But in cloaking, the garment also gives definition to and, in a way, reveals that which it is covering up (especially a tight garment).

We find a similar concept in the *sefirot*, or emanations of the Divine. There are 10 *sefirot*, divided into 3 "upper" ones (which are more or less beyond human understanding) and 7 "lower" ones (which we can better grasp in terms of more ordinary experience). Of the "lower" *sefirot*, the first two are *chesed* (kindness) and *gevurah* (strength), which are associated with masculine and feminine respectively. *Chesed* is associated with our forefather Avraham, who was the paragon of giving. It is associated with the flow of Divine blessing. *Gevurah* is associated with Yitzchak, who concretized and consolidated his father's teachings – he gave them form, a form which would blossom into Israel, a community in which and through which the infinite, wholly abstract Divine underpinning of creation would be concretized in individual and communal life.

Another interesting angle on this concept comes from Physics, specifically from Thermodynamics. A closed system that has no boundaries in it will simply move towards thermodynamic equilibrium – a state in which no one part is distinguishable from any other part. It is completely flat and inert – and it is incapable of change or of any positive interaction with its environment. Once boundaries are introduced into the system, there is the possibility of separating pieces of the system, making one part hot and another part cold for example. Once there are differences, there can be flow of energy and material from one place to another, and, if this flow is strong enough, the system can evolve to states of greater organization and complexity. Again we find boundaries providing a channel for flow and expression and growth. Without the boundaries we would only have inertia and death.

The problem with boundaries, and the reason boundaries get such a bad name, is that if boundaries are too rigid they can inhibit growth. If our arteries get hard, we have trouble in our circulatory system. If our thinking gets ossified, we lose out on opportunities to grow and expand. If a species cannot adapt to changed environmental conditions, it goes extinct. In Kabbalistic terms, these ossified boundaries are called *kelippot*, shells, hard coverings that prevent the Divine light from penetrating all the way to the most expressed value of creation.

What Torah asks of us is that we take a balanced approach to boundaries. Boundaries are fundamental to the process of creation and expression, yet they can also block creativity and expression if they become too rigid. Treading the delicate line between too permeable and too rigid is beyond human intellect. Fortunately, Gd has given us a blueprint to find and to stay on this line. We only need follow it as best we can.

*Shabbat shalom,
Rafi Rabinoff*

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, Sept. 11 **Knosh & Knowledge.** Take "A Trip Down Memory Lane" with Florence Schachter, MSW. Explore our life's journey, and how it has been shaped by our Jewish identity. A delicious brunch begins at 9:45 AM, Florence's presentation follows at 10:45.

Thursday, Sept. 15 **Special Congregational Meeting** at 7:30 PM to discuss women reading Haftarah at Traditional. If you wish to speak at the meeting, please contact Pres. Boaz Roth *by noon on 9/15*.

Shabbat, Sept. 17 **Bar Mitzvah of Leo Holden**, son of David & Liz Holden. All are invited to *kiddush* luncheon following services.

Tuesday, Sept. 20 PJ Storytime at Brodsky Library, ages 3-9. Stories, puppets, treats. Kids can come in pj's. No charge, but please bring canned goods for Jewish Food Pantry. 6:45 PM. RSVP required, 314-442-3720.

Shabbat, Sept. 24 *Kiddush* luncheon co-sponsored by Stuart Kaufman in honor of his wife, Judy's, birthday, and by the family of Maurice Goffstein in honor of his birthday.

Sunday, Sept. 25 **Volunteers needed to set up our Sanctuary for the High Holydays**, please help out at 10:00 AM.

Sunday, Sept. 25 Medical Equipment Donation Drive @B'nai Amoona, 9 AM-2 PM. Donations of new or used medical devices will be cleaned, refurbished and loaned to those in need at no cost.

Schedule your family photo session for our Membership Directory: go on-line to www.tradcong.org, click on the Lifetouch button, and select your appointment—don't delay, slots are filling quickly!

Volunteers needed to help with our 2012 photographic Membership Directory: We need many people to help with mailings, make phone calls, and coordinate Directory advertisements. Also need hosts/hostesses for photo sessions on Sept 18, 19 & 20. Please lend a hand! Contact Elaine Farkas, 314-439-9747 or 954-558-1159.

There are two boxes of *tallitot* and *tallit* bags in the Coatroom that were removed from the shelves prior to the renovations; **if your personal item is there, please claim it.** All unclaimed items will be put into general usage or given away.

As Rosh Hashanah approaches, please consider a gift to the **Irv & Kay Diamant Meat Fund**; checks may be made payable "Barbara Mendelson Tomchei Shabbos Fund," note "DMF" in memo, mail to 4 Millstone Campus Drive, St Louis 63146.

Refuah Sh'leimah to...Marsha Puro

DAILY SERVICE TIMES

Sunday morning – 9:00 AM

Monday - Friday morning – 7:00 AM

Monday - Friday evening – 6:30 PM