

## PRAYER

Israel survives because it is comprised  
of inveterate optimists.

*We shall swallow the bitterness of life and pursue the sweet.*

We survive above all, knowing that life needs direction, norms, discipline.

*We place ourselves under the discipline of Torah and rejoice that we have mitzvot.*

We survive above all, because the prophetic voices that break out amongst us from time to time.

*We are blessed with visionaries who never make peace with the foibles of the people or the whims of the leaders.*

We are not allowed to sink into the sweet lassitude of dissipation and degeneracy which lead to death.

*We are shaken by the challenging words "...Cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, support the orphan, plead for the widow."*

We survive because of Moses who smashed the popular golden calf;

*Because of Nathan who pointed a finger at his king, "You are the guilty man."*

Because of Elijah who thundered at his king, "Have you killed and also taken possession?"

*Because of Amos who demanded, "Let justice well up as the waters and integrity as a mighty stream."*

Though we cannot all be Moses, Isaiahs, Elijahs,

*We dare not forget that we are the inheritors of their tradition.*

*Unknown  
(Adapted)*

## THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE

War without consideration for humanity is barbaric, and peace at any cost is the passive consent to unacceptable actions by others.

*Jim Chandler*



September 3, 2011

ד אלול תשע"א

**Parashat Shoftim** - Deuteronomy 16:18-21:9 (שפטים)  
Hertz – p 820                      Stone – p 1024

**Haftarah** – Isaiah 51:12-52:12 (ישעיהו)  
Hertz – p 835                      Stone – p 1199

*Kiddush* co-sponsored by:  
Mel & Louise Saltzman in honor of  
Sarah's Birthday  
and by  
Marty & Marilyn Levison in honor of  
Barbara Mirowitz's Special Birthday

Special cakes provided by  
Frank & Ilse Altman  
and Jerry & Gail Tullman  
in honor of their anniversaries

Rabbi Gordon's Talmud Class, 5:15 PM  
**Minchah** – 6:30 PM                      **Shabbat Ends** – 8:12 PM

## On This Week's Torah Portion

### שפטים

In Deuteronomy, Moses' last speech urges the Jewish people to be clear about what needs to be done when they enter the land of Israel. He describes specific behavior which they need to engage. An underlying element of this speech is to create a spiritual discipline for living. As the Jewish people enter this new environment, we can ask what does the world around them look like?; and what are their expectations of the world brought from their past? An important part of Moses' message is for the Jewish people to be obedient to the Almighty they must separate themselves from their past world(s). What important links can be drawn to Moses' message of specific behavior for people in the nation of Israel? It could be argued that those who observe commandments demonstrate behavior that defines them as part of the Jewish community. A strong choice is given in Re'eh, last week's parsha, Moses warns the Israelites "If you follow G-d's laws, you will be blessed more than all the peoples of the earth. However, if you worship false idols and ignore the other commandments, then you shall be cursed and perish"

Shoftim begins with an emphasis on judges, public officials, judicial administration and justice. An oft-cited phrase is:

Justice, justice shalt thou follow, that  
thou mayest live and inherit the Land  
thy G-d giveth thee. (Dt 16:20)

The statement looks to the future, however, what does it tell us about the role of judges and public officers involved in the administration of justice? The *Sefer Ha-hinukh* explains: "The value and function of judges and officers is that they compel people to observe the precepts of the Torah, turning back those who deviate from the true path..." Many of those precepts are found in the book of **Leviticus**. The repetition of the word justice is curious. The Torah must be seeking additional ideas. What new elements should be considered by this repetition? Nachmanides says the repetition of justice is designed to instruct both the judge and the litigant about behavior that should be followed. For example both judges and litigants should be righteous, impartial, not take bribes, and hear both rich and poor on an equal footing.

The framework for the judiciary, i.e., *bet din* (court of law), begins at the local and tribal level. These decisions can gain support from the local and newly formed population, reduce the level of conflict, and diminish possibilities for national rulings. Judges were appointed for each city and, as Rashi comments, for each tribe separately. This structure allowed retention and support of tribal practices as the people adjusted to the Land of Israel. Judicial decisions involved both criminal and civil, i.e. property, matters. In difficult cases, decisions were rendered by the priests, the Levites, serving as a supreme court in Jerusalem. The people of Israel visited there mainly during the three pilgrimage festivals, and probably during this time many legal cases were brought for later decisions that would establish Torah precepts.

*Shabbat Shalom, Steve Puro*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, Sept. 5 Office closed/ *Shacharit* 9:00 AM

*Shabbat*, Sept. 10 **Rededication of our Lobby and Art Gallery.** Join us at 9:00 AM for *Shabbat* services, see our beautiful new lobby and gallery, and enjoy a lovely *kiddush*.

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 and girls 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.

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

Are you receiving the *Jewish Light*? You don't want to miss an issue (especially as **Traditional is running a special advertising campaign**). Don't be in the dark, get all the local, national and international Jewish news you need. Call 314-743-3600 or go to [www.stljewishlight.com](http://www.stljewishlight.com) to start your subscription.

**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.

**Schedule your family photo session for our Membership Directory:** go on-line to [www.tradcong.org](http://www.tradcong.org), click on the Lifetouch button, and select your appointment.

**Refuah Sh'leimah to...**Alan Rosenberg; Nanci Gold  
**Mazal Tov to...**Rabbi Ephraim & Esther on the *Bar Mitzvah* of their grandson, Asher, son of Meir & Rachel Zimand

### DAILY SERVICE TIMES

Sunday & Monday morning – 9:00 AM  
Tuesday - Friday morning – 7:00 AM  
Monday - Friday evening – 6:30 PM