

September 20-21, 2024

יח אלול תשפ"ד

Candle Lighting 6:43 PM

Parashat Ki Tavo כי תבוא - Deuteronomy 26:1-29:8

Stone - p 1068

Hertz - p 859

Etz Hayim - p 1140

Haftarah - Isaiah 60:1-22 שייעהו

Sixth Week of Consolation

Stone - p 1201

Hertz - p 874

Etz Hayim - p 1161

Join us following services

for a

Kiddush Luncheon

sponsored by

Vilma & Alan Levi

Shabbat ends 7:43 PM

TRADITIONAL CONGREGATION

Rabbi Seth D Gordon - Rabbi.Gordon@yahoo.com
Marian S. Gordon, Executive Director - traditionalcong@gmail.com

WEEKDAY AND SHABBAT SERVICES

Sunday - 8:30 AM

Tuesday - 6:30 PM

Thursday - 7:00 AM

Shabbat - 9:30 AM

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Governance Committee:
Florence Schachter, Chair
Marty Levy, Vice-Chair
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We welcome new members!
If you or someone you know would like to receive membership information,
please contact Dina Rinder, Membership VP,
at 314-616-3305

On This Week's Torah Portion - Ki Tavo

Is having good character traits one of the 613 mitzvot of the Torah? If you read the Five Books of Moses you may struggle to find such a commandment, but Maimonides includes it in his count. He argues that when the Torah urges us to "walk in His ways," it means that we are obligated to emulate G-d's noble characteristics to the best of our ability.

Maimonides quotes the early Midrashic text, the Sifrei:

Just as G-d is called merciful, so too, you must be merciful. Just as G-d is called kind, so too, you must be kind. Just as G-d is called righteous, so too, you must be righteous. Just as G-d is called pious, so too, you must be pious.

There is a significant problem with this position, however. Maimonides makes it clear that a "general commandment" – an overarching rule that encompasses a multitude of smaller obligations – can never be counted among the 613 mitzvot. Living one's life ethically is surely the dictionary definition of a general commandment. Therefore, according to Maimonides' own rules, it should not be possible for "walking in His ways" to be counted as one of the 613.

This question was presented to Maimonides' own son, the illustrious Rabbi Abraham. He acknowledged that the verses that implore us to "walk in His ways" often employ the broadest of terms. But he insists that the sages already defined the obligation to walk in G-d's ways as a reference to cultivating virtuous character traits, and not to good behavior in the wider sense. As such, he argued, it is incorrect to call it a general commandment, since it only addresses ethical matters such as compassion and kindness. This makes it sufficiently narrow to be regarded as one of the 613 commandments.

But what about the well known Biblical exhortation to "love your fellow as yourself"? What does that commandment demand of us if not to act with kindness and compassion? Maimonides himself explicitly says so! "We are commanded to have mercy and compassion, to be charitable and kind, which is what is stated by the verse 'You shall love your fellow as yourself.'" But if compassion and kindness are already covered, what does the instruction to "walk in His ways" tell us that we don't already know?

To answer this question, the Rebbe introduces a foundational concept in Jewish theology: acting ethically is not sufficient; intention is vital. While the verse to love others covers the practical obligation to treat people with compassion and kindness, the commandment to walk in His ways obligates us to do so with the explicit intention of emulating G-d.

Some may act with compassion because it seems logical, but that is inadequate. Others may act kindly in compliance with the commandment to love others, but that too is unsatisfactory. According to Maimonides, the Rebbe explains, when the Torah obligates us to "walk in His ways" it means that our intention when being kind and compassionate must be specifically to emulate G-d's ways. Maimonides bases this ruling on the way the earlier sages interpreted the verse to "walk in His ways" to mean, "Just as G-d is called merciful, so too, you must be merciful. Just as G-d is called kind, so too, you must be kind..." The rabbis seem to be saying quite clearly that the idea is not just to be merciful and kind, but to do so in order to emulate our Creator.

But why, we may ask, should our intention matter? Don't our actions matter most?

It turns out that the motivation behind our behavior actually does make a huge difference.

In his code, Maimonides adds an additional aspect to the meaning of walking in G-d's ways. He sets out at length how a person should avoid extremes of any sort, opting instead to pursue a more moderate path. A person should not indulge, nor deny his basic needs. A person should avoid getting annoyed over trivialities, but also not gloss over important matters.

Maimonides concludes this point by saying: "We are commanded to walk in these intermediate paths – and they are good and straight paths – as it states: 'you shall walk in His ways.'"

One may ask: What is the connection between taking the moderate route and walking in G-d's footsteps?

In his Guide for the Perplexed, Maimonides explains why avoiding extremes is important. Extremes, he says, are profoundly illogical. Going too far towards one side of anything is proof that the person is motivated by his emotions, rather than by an understanding of what is right. G-d, Maimonides adds, is not subject to emotions and is simply the essence of truth. Thus, someone whose conduct is an imitation of G-d's perfect ways will always steer towards the truth and avoid wild extremes.

That is why it is important that one's intention and goal in acting with kindness and compassion is to walk in G-d's ways. This is how a person avoids making poor choices, driven by their emotions, and instead remains focused on the morally superior middle way.

And so it turns out that we have a revolutionary idea: Aside from the commandment to act with compassion and kindness, there is a commandment to do so with the appropriate motivation. The reason: the only way to ensure that one truly behaves ethically is to ensure one's goal in doing so is to model one's own conduct after the highest virtues attributed to the Almighty.

Having seen how a seemingly cultured nation could be driven to perpetrate the ghastliest crimes during the Nazi era, it is clear that we need morality to be inspired by Divine purpose. Without an explicit commitment and a sense of obligation to "walk in His ways," our own ethical sense is far too corruptible.

**Shabbat Shalom,
Rabbi Yossi Ives**


Yossi Ives is the rabbi of Cong. Ahavas Yisrael of Pomona, N.Y.



Please RSVP to the Punchbowl invitation that was sent out or to:

traditionalcong@gmail.com

We look forward to seeing you!



Register here for
High Holyday Services:

<https://bit.ly/3XbGJ1o>

Please be sure to register your family and your guests
so that you will be on our security list.

We look forward to seeing you!!



GREETERS
NEEDED

...for the
HIGH HOLYDAYS

Greeter shifts are available -
11 time slots still need coverage.
See email that was sent on 9/9/24
or contact Marian:
traditionalcong@gmail.com
314-576-5230

*Thank you for
volunteering!*



Selichot Program and Services

Motzi Shabbat, September 28, 2024

8:15 PM

8:15 – 8:30 PM – Grab a nosh for the movie

8:30 – 10:30 PM – “FOOTNOTE” film and discussion

10:30 PM – Selichot Service

“A father/son rival like no other...”

“A piercing satire, a poignant family drama and an investigation of the competing claims of honesty, loyalty, ambition and love.”

“Very creative and insightful story utilizing comedic elements to show the destructive forces of petty professional jealousy within a family.”





TRADITIONAL CONGREGATION

HIGH HOLYDAYS SCHEDULE 2024/5785



Selichot Program and Service:

Motzei Shabbat, September 28, 8:15 PM

We will view and discuss the award-winning film

"Footnote"

Noshes provided

Selichot service at 10:30 PM

ROSH HASHANAH

Wednesday, October 2

Minchah/Arvit	6:20 PM
Candle Lighting	6:25 PM

Thursday, October 3 and

Friday, October 4: 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Shacharit	8:30 AM
Torah Service	9:15 AM
Rabbi's Remark's	10:00 AM
Musaf and Shofar	10:30 AM
Service concludes	12:30 PM

Please join us for *kiddush* following services each day, sponsored by Dina & Morty Rinder.

Thursday, October 3

Minchah/Tashlich	6:15 PM
(Tashlich at Ladue Lake)	
Candle Lighting	After 7:23 PM

Friday, October 4

Minchah	6:15 PM
Candle Lighting	6:21 PM

SHABBAT SHUVAH

Shabbat, October 5

Shacharit	9:30 AM
Kiddush following musaf	
Shabbat Ends	7:20 PM

Sun, Oct 13:

All hands on deck to assemble our sukkah!
9:30 AM following Shacharit.
Please help out if you are available!

Kol Nidrei Food Drive

Please fill bags with food for the Harvey Kornblum Jewish Food Pantry and bring them when you come for Kol Nidrei. Non-perishable food items only, no glass jars, nothing expired. (If you are not attending in-person services, bags may be dropped off Mon-Thurs 8:30-4:30, Fri 8:30-12:00 by October 10).

YOM HAKIPPURIM

Friday, October 11

Candle Lighting no later than 6:11 PM
(Those who wish to light candles at home before the start of Yom HaKippurim and then ride to shul may do so. Lighting candles does not cause *Shabbat* or Holydays to begin; it is a pre-*Shabbat*, pre-Holyday act.)

Kol Nidrei

6:05 PM SHARP

To maintain the sanctity of the services and not disturb our congregants, no one will be permitted to enter the Sanctuary during the chanting of *KOL NIDREI*.

Shabbat, October 12: 9:00 AM - 1:30 PM

<i>Pesukei Dezimrah</i>	9:00 AM
Shacharit	9:30 AM
Torah Service	10:30 AM
Rabbi's Remark's	11:00 AM
Yizkor	11:30 AM
Musaf	12:00 PM

BREAK

Yom HaKippurim afternoon and Ne'ilah

Minchah	4:40 PM
Ne'ilah	5:50 PM
Arvit	7:05 PM
Havdalah & Teki'at Shofar	7:20 PM



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We look forward to seeing you!



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TRADITIONAL CONGREGATION

SUKKOT/SIMCHAT TORAH SCHEDULE 2024/5785



First Days

Wednesday, October 16

Candle Lighting 6:04 PM

Thursday, October 17

Shacharit 9:30 AM

Candle Lighting After 7:02 PM

Friday, October 18

Shacharit 9:30 AM

Candle Lighting 6:01 PM

Shabbat, October 19

Shacharit 9:30 AM

with reading of Kohelet

Shabbat ends 7:00 PM



Closing Days

Wednesday, October 23 - Hoshanah Rabbah

Shacharit 8:30 AM

Candle Lighting 5:54 PM

Thursday, October 24 - Shemini Atzeret

Shacharit 9:30 AM

YIZKOR

Minchah 5:50 PM

Arvit/Hakafot 6:20 PM

Candle Lighting After 6:53 PM

Friday, October 25 - Simchat Torah

Shacharit 9:30 AM

Candle Lighting 5:52 PM

Shabbat, October 26 - Parashat Bereshit

Shacharit 9:30 AM

Shabbat ends 6:50 PM



PRAYER

Have many among us brought to God our most treasured possessions, the first fruits of our labor?

Having brought them to God, have we acknowledged that we were once wanderers and slaves, and that only through His help have we come to a good land?

Having acknowledged that He brought us to this estate, do we remember that His constant care is like the rain that falls and the grain that grows?

Have we understood that the strength of God is His mercy, that His mighty hand is outstretched to us only when we reach toward Him?

We pray to learn anew these lessons of our teacher, Moses:
to bring to God the offering of first fruits,

To acknowledge in humility our dependence upon Him, to share our joy with the lonely and the depressed, with the stranger as well as the friend,

To rejoice in all the good which God has given us,
to come gladly to the house of God

*To give thanks for the wonders of His universe,
that sustain us every moment of our lives.*

Ruth Brin

THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE

Learn from the mistakes of others. You can't make them all yourself.

Eleanor Roosevelt