

KOIL MEVASSER

KAHAL JOSEPH CONGREGATION • 10505 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD, LOS ANGELES, CA 90025 • 310.474.0559 • WWW.KAHALJOSEPH.ORG

PURIM

Gladness and Joy: Thoughts for Purim

By Rabbi Marc D. Angel

With the victory of the Jews over their enemies, the Megillah informs us that "the Jews had light and gladness (simha) and joy (sasson) and honor." What is the difference between simha and sasson, and how does this impact on our understanding of this verse's message?

Simha: This refers to physical contentment. When the Torah commands us to have simha on the Festivals, the Talmud interprets this to mean that we should eat meat and drink wine. Simha is enjoyed when we have a good meal. The 7 wedding blessings refer to how God provided gladness (simha) to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. This, too, can be understood to refer to physical contentment and wellbeing. Adam and Eve were provided with the wonderful climate and foods of paradise.

Sasson: This refers to emotional, spiritual joy. The prophet Isaiah likens God's joy in Israel to the joy of a bride and

groom. The joy (mesos/sasson) of bride and groom entails a profound sense of feeling complete, of having found a beloved partner with whom to face the adventure of life.

Whereas simha is "me-oriented", sasson is "other oriented." Whereas simha is a feeling of contentment, sasson is a feeling that life has meaning.

So the verse in the Megillah might be understood as follows. Upon winning their freedom from oppression, the Jews felt "light"; the darkness and gloom was removed from their lives. Then they felt gladness, simha. They were pleased that they were physically safe. Then they felt joy, sasson. They attained a higher spiritual satisfaction; they understood that their salvation had divine meaning, that their lives had greater purpose. Once they attained that level of understanding, then they experienced "honor"-- honor in the form of self-respect as well as honor from others who recognized the transformation which had occurred to the Jews.

A recent edition of ABC National News had a piece on happiness in



Prayer Schedule

SHABBAT

PARASHAT ZAKHOR

Friday, March 18th

Minhah & Arbit 6:30 pm

Candle Lighting 6:44 pm

Saturday, March 19th

Shaharit 8:30 am

Tehillim *before Minhah*

Minhah & Arbit 5:00 pm

Motzei Shabbat 7:49 pm

PURIM

Saturday, March 19th

Megillat Esther Reading
with Costumes & More 8:00 pm

Sunday, March 20th

Shaharit 7:30 am

PURIM CELEBRATION

Live Music, Bar, Magician
RSVP Required 5:30 pm

WEEKDAYS

Monday-Friday, March 21-25

Shaharit 6:30 am

TALMUD TORAH CLASSES

Tuesday & Thursday 4:00 pm

EREV SHABBAT

PARASHAT PARAH

Friday, March 25th

Minhah & Arbit 6:40 pm

Candle Lighting 6:50 pm

Save the Date—Sat., March 26th

Hakarat HaTov Luncheon
Honoring Moussa Shaaya
& the Board of Directors

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

America. Drawing on the results of Gallup Polls, the report described various factors which Americans described as conducive to happiness. The polls found that the ethnic groups that are the "happiest" are Jews and Asian-Americans! I won't offer explanations relating to Asian-Americans, but I will venture a suggestion about why Jews consider themselves so happy.

On the simha level, Jews are among the most educated, hardest working, and most affluent groups of Americans. While this might explain contentment, it doesn't explain real happiness. For the sasson factor, the Jews have an important asset: the cultural tradition of striving, of trying to change the world for the better, of social justice and responsibility. Sasson--real joy--comes by being concerned with the lives of others. American Jews--whether religiously observant or not--share this tradition of helping others, giving charity, volunteering for social causes etc. I think this is a major factor in the American Jews' happiness. It is a combination of simha and sasson. Once we have attained both of these aspects, we then move on to "honor", where we can take pride in our achievements, and where we

can be recognized by others for the important values we represent.

The Megillah tells us that the Purim holiday was established as a celebration for Jews of all generations. Mordecai and Esther called on Jews to give each other gifts of food, and to give charity to the needy. What an impressive way to establish a holiday of victory! It wasn't just about eating and drinking and having a good celebratory party. Rather, Jews were instructed to share with others, to support the poor--to remember that true happiness involves concern and involvement in the lives of others.

Kahal Joseph Congregation Purim Celebration & Seudah

Sunday, March 20th
at 5:30 PM

NEW TIME!

**DINNER! BAR DRINKS!
LIVE MUSIC & BAND!
MAGICIAN! ENTERTAINMENT!
CHILDREN'S PROGRAM!**

TICKETS

\$40 / ADULT dinner, entertainment, & 2 drinks
\$20 / CHILD dinner & children's program
RSVP 310.474.0559

Seudat Purim Celebration



Read the Haftarah

Wouldn't you like to chant from the concluding section of the Torah read on every Shabbat--the Haftarah? Reserve a haftarah portion at 310.474. 0559. Then, schedule time with Saeed & learn your haftarah with authentic Baghdadi ta'amim, our Iraqi melodies for Torah reading.

The message of Purim, then, may be seen as a progressive development in our perspective on life. First, we need to clear the darkness of hatred and violence from our midst; then we need to care for the material well-being of our families and communities; then we need to recognize the true spiritual joy that comes with a sense of purpose and meaning in life; then we achieve the level of self-respect, and respect in the eyes of others for the values and traditions we represent.

Happy Purim. May this Purim be a beginning to an ever higher level of light, gladness, joy & honor.

Torah Readings
Parasha Tzav pp.TBA
Parasha Zakhor TBA
Haftara pp. TBA

In Memoriam Community News

It is customary to light a memorial candle in the evening and to donate tzedakah. Family members are encouraged to attend prayer services in honor of loved ones.

Shabbat / 13 Adar II

Koadad ben Yair

Thursday / 18 Adar II

Nazeh bat Nisan

Friday / 19 Adar II

Saleh ben Ezra Yehezkel

Shabbat / 20 Adar II

Yona ben Shlomo

To update, please call the office at 310.474.0559.

Refuah Shlemah

Yonatan ben Alizah • Mazal Tov bat Sulha Mitana • Matilda Louisa • Yaheskel ben Regina • Ayala bat Naomi • Khayah Noa bat Sara • Haim ben Mordechai • Pnina bat Esther • Yosi ben Esther • Victor ben Latif • Ramah Regina bat Farha • Aziza bat Sara Judith bat Malka • Ofek ben Yochai • Efrayim Zev ben Fayga • Sulha Matana bat Mozelle • Gershon ben David • Farangis Miriam bat Touran • David ben Leah • Avraham Haim ben Miryam • Yaakov ben Freda • Rachel bat Mazal Tov

To Publish

Life Event Notices

Members with information about life events such as births, bar/bat mitzvahs, graduations, weddings, anniversaries or passings, call the synagogue office at 310.474.0559 to ensure information reaches our editor. Please note, notices must be received by noon Wednesday for inclusion in the week's issue of as space allows. If space is limited notices will be published as soon as possible. *We appreciate your donation in honor of family events included in notices.*

THANK YOU

To everyone who volunteered to bake & prepare KJ's Purim Baskets

SPECIAL THANKS GO TO
YVETTE DABBY WHO ORGANIZED &
SUPERVISED THE ENTIRE EFFORT

FAYE AHARONOV
RACHEL BAKHASH
SARAH BOUCHOUCHA
KAREN DABBY
NADINE DABBY for taking pictures
HILDA DALLAL
ARLETTE DARWISH
DAVID ELIAS
LOUISE ELIAS
DAFNA EZRAN
KATIE FISCHMAN
JASMIN HAI
RITA HANIN
MELISSA IRONI
FLOSSIE JACOB
MARCELLE JOSEPH
YVONNE KOOBY
PENINA MEGHNAGI SOLOMON
DORIS MOSHI
RENEE REIZ
MELANIE ROSENBERG
DIANA SABIN
AVIVA SAGI
SOPHIE SALEM
EVELYN SALEM
ODETTE SARRAF
WIDAD SHIRI
SHAHNAZ TERMEIE
AMY YESHURUN

Many thanks go to our teens who crafted handmade cards for the baskets & baked

MIRANDA EINY
INES EMQUIES
BRITTANY MATHALON
SARA SABIN
ARIEL YOUNG

For those who have helped but whose names may not appear on this list we send an extra special thank you for your effort and contributions!

SHABBAT KIDDUSH

is sponsored by
David Radfar and Family

in memory of
Nazi Soleimani Radfar, z"l
and
Yona Soleimani Radfar, z"l

Women of Kahal

Join us each month for Tehillim and a Rosh Hodesh Celebration.

Rosh Hodesh is a special time for women—learn more about how to take care of yourself and grow spiritually during these special days.

For more information, or if you would like to host the next Rosh Hodesh for the Jewish month of Nisan, contact Orly Batzri at orlybatzri@gmail.com.

SHABBAT MITZVOT

We offer for donation the following Mitzvot.

- 1. Petichat Hechal** opening of the ark;
- 2. Carrying of the Sefer Torah & Sefer Haftara;**
- 3. Hakamat Sefer** lifting of the Torah;
- 4. Mashlim*** The seventh aliya to the Torah who recites Kaddish;
- 5. Maftir*** The last aliya to the Torah which includes the Haftara (read by the clergy unless member reading is preapproved). We suggest a minimum donation of \$126 or multiples of \$18 or \$26. You will receive confirmation before Shabbat to confirm if you will receive the aliya. Members may reserve in advance by calling the office. Non-members reserving aliyot should contact the office for availability at 310.474.0559. We appreciate your support.



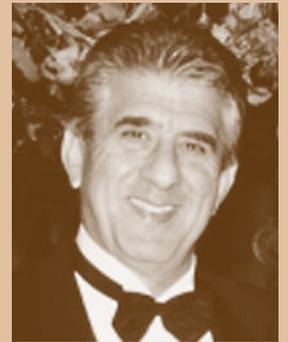
**Special Shabbat
Service & Luncheon**
Saturday, March 26th

with
Rabbi Shlomo Seidenfeld
Special Shabbat
Guest Speaker

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in honor of President Moussa Shaaya



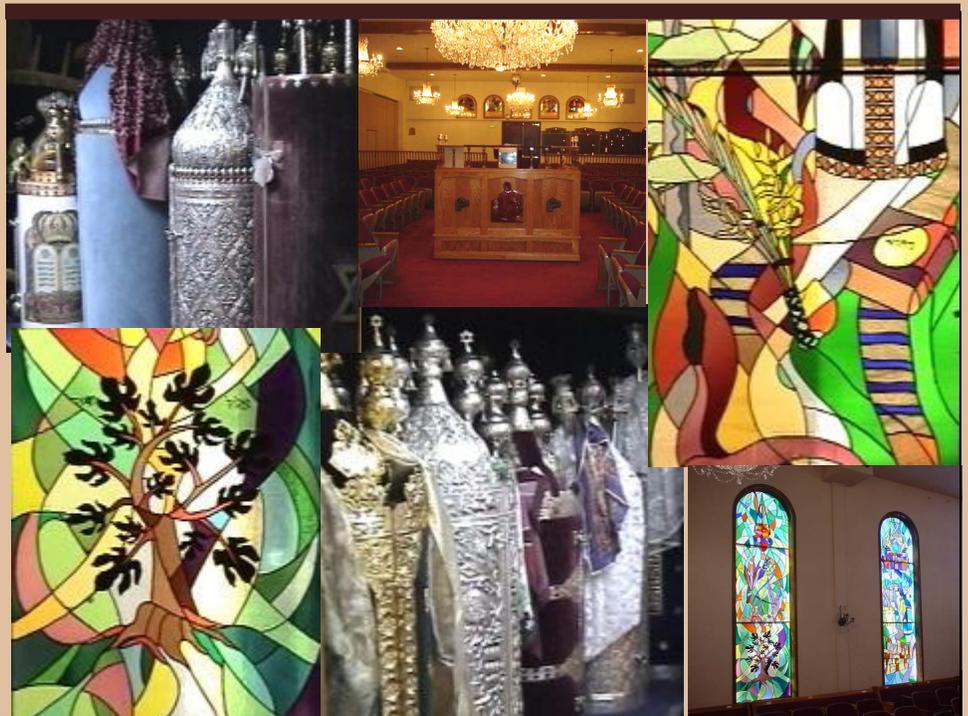
& the Board of Directors

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are required.** Call Sarah in
our office to reserve at
310.474.0559

\$26 Adults &
\$18 Child

Members of Kahal's teen
program call for special rate.
Preference to KJ Members.

Kahal Joseph Congregation
10505 Santa Monica Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90025



**Write to US Government Representatives
to Protect Jews in North Africa and Middle East**

JIMENA is asking us to please pressure the US State Department to protect Jews and minorities in the Middle East and North Africa. There have been unsettling reports of vandalism and violence directed against Jewish and Christian communities in the region. We ask you to write to your Senator and Congressional Representative. The following letter is provided as a template.

Dear _____,

As my local public representative, I ask you to pressure the US State Department to help protect the vulnerable rights of religious and ethnic minority populations in the Middle East and North Africa.

During this time of transition, it is imperative that Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, publicly demand that the rights of religious and ethnic minorities in the Middle East and North Africa be safeguarded by transitional and permanent governments in the region.

Sincerely, [Your Name]

**SPONSOR A KIDDUSH
or SEUDAH SHLISHEET**

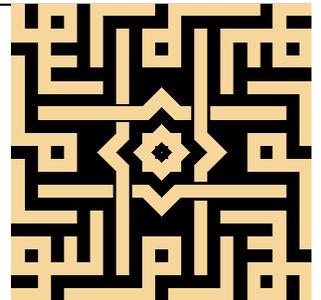
If you would like to sponsor a Shabbat Kiddush or an afternoon meal, also known as Seudah Shlisheet, in honor of a special occasion or in honor of a family member or friend, please contact our office at 310.474.0559. We ask that sponsors notify us one to two weeks in advance of the date so that we may coordinate, arrange and announce your generous tribute. Thank you!

**Norma & Sam Dabby
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KJ after school classes for
kids ages 5 to 13 are
ongoing for 2011.

Register now for next year!
Call 310.474.0559 or e-mail
molly@kahaljoseph.org

**Hacham
David
Mokhtar**



March 23, 2011

*Guest Speaker (in Farsi)
at Rabbi Batzri's Wednesday class
7 to 8 pm in the KJ Library*

Rabbi Batzri will host Hacham David Mokhtar at his class this coming Wednesday evening, March 23, 2011 from 7 to 8 pm.

Hacham Mokhtar will present a discussion in Farsi on the opening prayer known at "Petihat Eliyahu" and on the **Song of Songs**, or "Shir Hashirim" Join us for a fascinating evening of insights. **Please note, this class will be conducted in Farsi.**

My Personal Purim Miracle

Rabbi Daniel Bouskila, SEC Director

It was Purim, 1985. The surroundings seemed so strange to me. From childhood, Purim always meant Megillah reading, noise from noisemakers, loud music, lively dancing, people dressed up in different costumes, lots of good food, exchange of Mishloach Manot gift baskets, and a little "I'chaim" to top things off. That was exactly the Purim I had in 1984, 1983, 1982...all the way back to 1964, the year I was born.

This year, it just wasn't the same. There was no Megillah available to be read. There were some occasional loud noises, but they did not come from kids cranking noisemakers. There was no music to dance to, and nobody was really in the mood to dance. Not only were people not dressed up in costumes, but everyone was actually dressed exactly the same. The food was the same type of bland food we had eaten the day before, and the only exchanges were wishes of "Purim Sameach (Happy Purim)," with the sad and sarcastic response being "Yes, this is really Sameach (Happy), isn't it?" If we said I'chaim - to life -- it wasn't over a drink; it was a sincere hope that we will come out of this alive.

Purim 1985. Southern Lebanon. A lonely platoon of IDF soldiers, stuck in a small fortress. Not a very friendly place to be. The noise of gunfire, not the rhythm you would want to dance to. Young boys dressed up in khaki uniforms. Neighbors who were not interested in receiving Mishloach Manot. Strange, surreal. "During the month of Adar, we increase in joy" says the Talmud. Not here. Not in this place. No joy, nothing to celebrate. Just long shifts of guard duty, and patrols that really warranted the wishes of "I'chaim."

That night of Purim is one big blur to me. Same with the morning —a total blank. All I could remember is the same exact things I could remember from any other day in Lebanon. But I will never, ever forget the afternoon.

I was standing on guard duty with Moti, my sergeant who I had become very close to ever since basic training was over. We always did guard duty together, often talking about life, big dreams, and great hopes for the future. We would take turns looking through the binoculars, as there was this one long road we had to watch over. All sorts of traffic passed through this road. Lebanese delivery trucks, civilians driving from one town to the next, IDF convoys, ambulances. Due to the rise in suicide car bombs in Southern Lebanon, the IDF declared a rule that any vehicle that had only a driver and no passengers would immediately be suspected as a suicide bomber, and the IDF would open fire towards it. We had the dubious honor of watching over this road.

Moti was staring through the high - powered binoculars, and he told me that an IDF convoy was on its way. "I see some IDF vehicles approaching us," he said, "and there is some other non-IDF van with them, but I can't recognize what it is from here. Take a look." I looked through the binoculars, and the convoy of jeeps and armored personnel carriers, still quite a distance away, was indeed accompanying a white van, but I could not make out the writing on the van. I looked and looked and looked, until the writing on the van suddenly became clear to me.

"Oh my God, I can't believe my eyes," I said in English. "What, what is it?" asked Moti. My eyes stared in amazement through the binoculars at the writing on the van: Chabad. That's right, this IDF convoy was accompanying a Chabad van.

The convoy pulled up to our fortress, and my friends guarding the gate opened it up. In drove IDF jeeps, armored personnel carriers, and a van carrying Chabad rabbis and students. Like a mirage in the desert, the van stopped, and out came four Chabadniks. One of them held a Megillat Esther. Another had an accordion slung over his shoulders. Another had a bag filled with small megillot, Purim cards from kids, and blessing notes from the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Last but certainly not least, one of them brought out several bags of hamentashen, various other sweets, and, of course, a bottle and shot glasses for a true "I'chaim."

(Continued on page 7)



Megillat Esther & The Story of Purim

Listen to the BEST Reading at KJ!
Saturday, March 19th at 8 pm

Costumes!
Noisemakers!

(Continued from page 6)

Just like that, out of nowhere, in the middle of a war zone, this little IDF fortress suddenly came alive with the spirit of Purim. Now it was really surreal. From the bleak picture I described above, I could suddenly see somebody reading the Megillah from a parchment scroll, with people following in small paperback megillot (I have mine to this day). I now heard joyous accordion music, and I could see people dancing with big smiles in small circles. People were eating hamentashen, and l'chaim was not about a patrol, but instead was a good shot of vodka. We were all taking turns guarding the various posts, as everybody wanted to share in this sudden outburst of Purim joy. Purim was here, alive and well, in an IDF fortress in Southern Lebanon! Here we were - religious soldiers, secular soldiers, simple soldiers, officers, mechanics and cooks - together with these four Chabad angels, who brought us the purest sense of joy and the most sincere expressions of solidarity, support and unity I have ever experienced.

There is not one single mention of God's name in Megillat Esther. Rabbinic tradition interprets this as the Purim story being an example of the "hidden hand of God," where miracles happen behind the scenes.

I wasn't in Shushan 2,500 years ago, so I can only rely on what the Megillah tells us. But there is one thing I am sure of: on Purim Day, 1985, for my friends and I in an IDF fortress in Southern Lebanon, there were no "hidden miracles." God's name was in the air, and the miracle of Purim was out in the open - in the most unlikely of places -- for all to see and hear. Shabbat Shalom and Purim Sameach.

Teen Shabbat at KJ

Shabbat Day
Saturday, March 26, 2011
11 am to 2 pm

- > Teen Luncheon with Rabbi Seidenfeld & KJ following services
- > Reserve at 310.474.0559

with
Rabbi Shlomo Seidenfeld

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