

Rav Ovadia Yosef: A Personal Eulogy

By Rabbi Daniel Bouskila

It was early Monday morning here in the Old City of Jerusalem. We had just finished our minyan in the Rabban Yohanan Ben Zakkai synagogue, the same synagogue where generations of Sephardic Chief Rabbis have been crowned as the Rishon L'Zion. I walked over to the bookcase, and my heart was drawn to a large volume titled "Yabia Omer." I sat over coffee studying, and when I turned on the radio, I heard that Rav Ovadia Yosef was in critical condition. I spent the morning immersed in "Yabia Omer," until the bitter news was announced: "Rav Ovadia Yosef has passed on to heaven." He was 93.

"Yabia Omer" is one of several halakhic books written by Rav Ovadia Yosef, arguably this generation's most knowledgeable rabbinic scholar. I have enjoyed a lifelong personal history with Rav Ovadia and his books, dating back to my childhood in Los Angeles. In his memory, I would like to share two personal experiences with Rav Ovadia that will always stay with me, and that were ever present in my mind as I walked with hundreds of thousands to lead him to his final resting place in Jerusalem.



In 1975, when Rav Ovadia first came to Los Angeles, I was 11 years old. Our entire school went to the airport to greet him with songs, and the few Sephardim amongst us approached him to kiss his hand, as is our custom. After speaking at our school, Rav Ovadia was scheduled to speak all over Los Angeles. A schedule of his appearances was distributed, and my father promised to take me to hear him every night. I was excited, because I thought his robe and turban were from another world, and he looked so cool in his dark sunglasses. (His eyes were very sensitive to light.) I was also amazed at how he stood in front of audiences without a single book or note cards, and quoted pages of Talmud by heart.

My father took me to hear him for three consecutive nights. One night, my father had to work late, and he asked my mother to take me. Of all nights to ask my mother, this was the one night where Rav Ovadia

KJ Schedule Parashat Lekh Lekha

Erev Shabbat

Friday, October 11th

Shaharit/Morning Prayer	6:30 am
Shir Hashirim	5:50 pm
Shabbat Candle Lighting	6:05 pm
Minhah/Arbith	6:05 pm

Shabbat / Parashat Lekh Lekha

Saturday, October 12th

Shaharit/Morning Prayer	8:30 am
Minha, Seudah Shlisheet, Arvit	5:20 pm
Motzei Shabbat / Havdallah	6:50 pm

Weekdays

Sunday, October 13th

Shaharit	7:30 am
KJ Kids Sunday School	10 am to 12 noon

Monday to Friday, October 14th to 18th

Shaharit/Morning Prayer	6:30 am
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Erev Shabbat

Friday, October 18th

Shaharit/Morning Prayer	6:30 am
Shir Hashirim	5:45 pm
Shabbat Candle Lighting	5:57 pm
Minhah/Arbith	5:57 pm

was speaking in a yeshiva, where no women would be in attendance. My mother took me, and upon arrival, she was, indeed, the only woman there. We stood outside contemplating what to do, when Rav Ovadia suddenly arrived. As he walked by us, he greeted my mother,

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and when I kissed his hand, he gave me a loving caress on my cheek. I guess by now he recognized me from the previous nights! He walked into the Beit Midrash, and my mother and I stayed outside. Apparently he noticed that we did not come inside, for, less than a minute later, he walked back outside and signaled to us to come in. As we walked in—a woman in pants with her 11-year-old son—to a room filled with men, Rav Ovadia respectfully asked the men in the first row to make room for me and my mother. He then got onto the stage to speak, and started by looking at my mother and saying, “Blessed are the parents who raise their children in the path of Torah.”

Many years later, with this warm memory of Rav Ovadia embedded deep in my heart, I found myself in New York in my third year of Yeshiva University’s rabbinical program. It was 1991, and Rav Ovadia was scheduled to visit us for a week. As one of the few Sephardic rabbinical students at YU, I was given a tremendous honor: To be his shamash (personal assistant) for the week. I spent morning, noon and night with him, getting to know him personally. I met the family man, studied with the scholar, and even got a glimpse of the powerful politician. Of the many experiences that I was privileged to be a part of that week, one stands out in my mind.

A group of us were walking with Rav Ovadia on Amsterdam Avenue, on the Washington

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Shabbat Kiddush

is sponsored
in honor of the wedding of
Dinah & Michael Irani
by
Mitra & Moshe Irani

Refuah Shlemah

Vera Levi

Joseph Sharaf / Yossef ben Jamila
Maurice Ovadia / Moshe ben Noosha
Tilda Levy / Tilda bat Miriam
Pnina Herzbrun / Pnina bat Esther
Yehudit Devorah bat Esther
Michul ben Malka

Please renew each name listing every two weeks. Names not renewed will be taken off the list. If you would like to add a member name to the list call 310-474-0559 or e-mail dafna@kahaljoseph.org

Errol Levi Social Hall & Ballroom

Did you know that Kahal Joseph has one of the most beautiful ballrooms on the Westside for your private event? Do you know that we have an amazing, kosher catering kitchen? And a modern playroom for younger visitors? Do you know someone looking for a beautiful location for their special event? Let them know Kahal Joseph is available! KJ is fabulous for parties up to 200 guests. Contact Sarah Bouchoucha at [310.474.0559](tel:310.474.0559).

In Memoriam

We remember these yearzeit anniversaries for October 12th to 19th, 2013. It is customary to light a memorial candle, donate tzedaka, and attend services the preceding Shabbat.

9 Heshvan / Sunday, October 13th

Ezekiel Ezra

Farha Joseph *Farha bat Haviva*

10 Heshvan / Monday, October 14th

Jacob Ezekiel Azoory *Yaacov Yehezkel*

Nissim Elie *Nissim Elie ben Dona*

Edward E. Sassoon *Yehezkel ben Aharon*

11 Heshvan / Tuesday, October 15th

Jacob Silas Mussry *Yaacov ben Saleh*

Naji Perry

12 Heshvan / Wednesday, October 16th

David Dallal *David ben Shlomo*

Flora Rahamim Pinhas

Joseph Jacob *Yoseph ben Yaacov*

Lulu Ezra Barukh

Yair ben Menashe

13 Heshvan / Thursday, October 17th

Isaac Ezer *Itzhak ben Shaul*

Akhtar Sarraf *Khanom Agha bat Kokab*

Yehuda Rafael ben Pinhas

14 Heshvan / Friday, October 18th

Haskel Kelly

Albert Simon *Albert Yeheskel Moshe*

15 Heshvan / Shabbat, October 19th

Eliyahu ben Yaacov

Books on Iraqi Jewish Literature

Written by UCLA Professor, Lev Hakak., these books offer analysis and refreshing insights into our heritage. For information or to purchase contact Sarah at 310.474.0559.

Shabbat Shalom ♥ A Peaceful Shabbat

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Heights campus of Yeshiva University. Dressed in his majestic robe and turban, Rav Ovadia was scheduled to give us a lecture explaining why – contra to all other rabbinic opinions – he had boldly recognized the Ethiopians as Jews, thus paving the way for their acceptance in Israel. As a Sephardic Jew who had suffered from discrimination in Israel, he was sensitive to their plight. As we approached the auditorium, a Latino-Catholic family was walking toward us, and they saw the rabbi dressed in his robe. They sensed he was a holy man, and as they approached us, they came before him and bowed in reverence. You had to see the look on all of the rabbi's faces when Rav Ovadia stopped and reverently bowed back to them.

I have studied Rav Ovadia's books my entire life, including this morning. But more than anything he's ever written, these two experiences taught me life lessons of Derech Eretz. They also taught me that underneath the at times harsh exterior of this larger than life public figure, there was a sweet, sensitive and kind-hearted man. *Shabbat Shalom*

KJ Children's Room Notice

We invite kids to the Kahal playroom this Shabbat. When they need a little space, our child-friendly, upstairs playroom is available. *Please note:* Kahal staff are facilitators only and are not responsible for children who may be hurt, injured, or need bathroom assistance. *Children are the responsibility of their parents while in the Kahal Joseph building, including the playroom, at all times.*

SEPHARDIC EDUCATIONAL CENTER

המרכז החינוכי הספרדי

SEPHARDIC EDUCATIONAL CENTER
CENTRO EDUCATIVO SEFARDI
CENTRE EDUCATIF SEPHARADE

Sephardic Educational Center

HAMSA Israel Teen Winter Break Trip
December 22, 2013 - January 5, 2014
\$1800 - You pay the airfare, we cover the rest!
To apply, see SEC Hamsa Israel on Facebook!

Fall Lecture Series with Rabbi Daniel Bouskila Sephardim Today: Bridging Tradition & Modernity

Tuesday, October 29th, 2013

Film screening of *The Visionary: The Life of Chief Rabbi Ben Zion Meir Hai Uziel*

Tuesday, November 12th, 2013

Are Sephardim Orthodox, Conservative or...??

Tuesday, December 10th, 2013

Contemporary Jewish Problems, Creative Sephardic Solutions

All Lectures begin at 7pm

RSVP (323) 272-4574 or sharon@secjerusalem.org

Please bring photo ID for security - Refreshments will be served

The Jewish Federation Building 6505 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90048





בס"ד

To our dearest community members,

On behalf of the Israel Defense Force,

The Kelly family would like to welcome you to a dinner and evening of inspiration, in loving memory of David Kelly Z"l, a distinguished member of our community, and his relative Shlomo Dabora Z"l who served in the Palmach during the birth of the state of Israel.

The Israel defense force is excited to introduce a new project to the Kahal Joseph Congregation, in loving memory of David Kelly Z"l, and Shlomo Dabora Z"l.

The dinner is hosted by the Kelly family, and will take place on November 3rd, 2013 at the Kahal Joseph Synagogue, located on 10505 Santa Monica Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90025

Dinner will start at 5:00PM

RSVP is required by October 28.

Please call Hannie Kelly: 310-925-2123

Or email Malki Perla at: malhecker21@gmail.com

Warm regards

Hannie Kelly and Family



Rabbi Hagay Batzri, Ronald Einy and Safra Veseifa Project

נפלה עטרת ראשנו

בא קמל תאסף שאיפה פר גששת חאכאם ארודא יוסף ואי אעלם סלואי האני דליא רא יאסורם חמקישאן תשלית
 מיקוניום . יאמין מאיטת מכלסי יורא האלשי פו רוז יאכשתה 13 אכטור סאעט# 7 אבד זא פלור פו קיסאי
 טעח אסראל פו קורז חאקורד

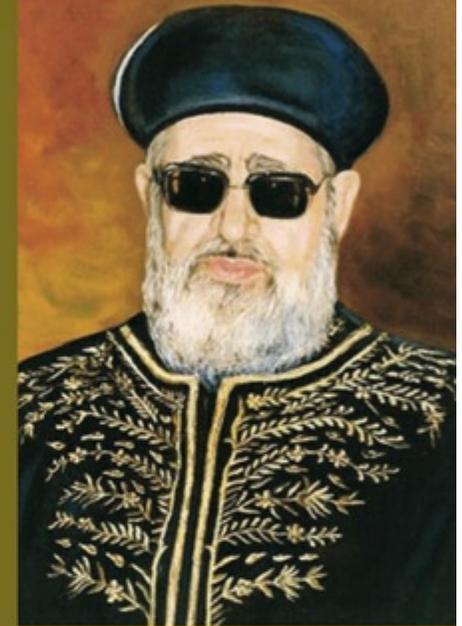
With Deep Sorrow the
 Los Angeles Jewish
 Community will gather to
 Remember

HACHAM OVADIA YOSEF

of blessed memory,
 the Preeminent
 Torah Leader and Scholar
 of our time

Sunday, October, 13, 2013
 Mincha: 4:40 pm
 Memorial: 5 pm to 7 pm

Nessah Synagogue
 142 South Rexford Drive
 Beverly Hills, CA 90212



Participating Organizations

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Bait Aaron Torah Outreach Center | KTC - Kol Torah Center |
| Netan Eli | Nessah Synagogue |
| Ohr Haemet | JEM |
| Meor Hatorah | Torat Hayim |
| HDC - Hebrew | JUN |
| Discovery Center | STAR |
| Westwood | Yachad |
| Sephardic Center | Ahavat Shalom |
| Ohel Rachel | Magen David |
| CPY - Chabad | Link Kollet |
| Persian Youth | Meir BaalHaNess Institute |
| Ohel Moshe | Yeshivat Ohr |
| Maimonides Academy | Chanoch |

Readings for Shabbat, Parashat Lekh Lekha
Torah: Genesis/Sefer Beresheet, Hertz edition pages 45-60
Haftara: Isaiah/Yishayahu Hertz edition pages 60-62