

# KOL MEVASSER

## Prayers that Ascend

by Rabbi Marc D. Angel

*"How full of awe is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."* (Bereishith 28:17)

A story is told of the great Hassidic master, Rabbi Levi Yitzhak of Berdichev. He had been visiting a town and attended prayer services in the local synagogue. One day, he stopped at the synagogue door and did not enter the sanctuary. The many people who were accompanying him were perplexed. Why did the Rebbe not enter the synagogue? Rabbi Levi Yitzhak told them: "I am not entering the synagogue because it's too crowded." But the synagogue was empty! The Rebbe explained: "The synagogue is full of prayers, there's no room left for us.

Usually, when we pray, our prayers ascend to the gate of heaven; however, in this synagogue, the prayers are recited without proper concentration and devotion, so the prayers don't reach heaven. In fact, they are trapped in the synagogue building--so there is no room left for us in the synagogue."

The people then understood. Our spiritual goal must be to raise our hearts and voices

*(Continued on page 3)*

## President's Message

Dear Members,

A hot-button topic over the past several months has been the Iraqi Jewish Archives that are now in Washington D.C. I am pleased to inform our members that Kahal Joseph is at the forefront of this important issue. We are working closely with Washington bureaucrats, the media, and government officials to ensure that hundreds of pieces of Iraqi Jewish historical documents, Judaic artifacts, Torah scrolls, and ancient ephemera will be properly preserved and remain in the United States, travel to Europe or receive a permanent home in Israel.

I am grateful to Joseph Dabby who is spearheading the West Coast movement in conjunction with other Jewish organizations, and who has been representing Kahal Joseph in this most meaningful endeavor. As you can imagine, it is a complex undertaking steeped in diplomatic and cultural bureaucracy, and may take a long time to resolve. Kahal Joseph is invested in seeing to it that these archives will find their rightful home.

I also want to thank the Kelly family--Hannie, Jonathan, and Sigal--for hosting a wonderful

*(Continued on page 2)*

## KJ Schedule Parashat Vayetze

*Please Note:*

*Shabbat begins one hour earlier this week due to Daylight Savings Time*

### Erev Shabbat

#### Friday, November 8th

Shaharit/Morning Prayer .....	6:30 am
Shir Hashirim.....	4:20 pm
Shabbat Candle Lighting.....	4:36 pm
Minhah/Arbith .....	4:36 pm

### Shabbat

#### Parashat Vayetze

#### Saturday, November 9th

Shaharit/Morning Prayer .....	8:30 am
Minha, Seudah Shlisheet, Arvit.....	4:00 pm
Motzei Shabbat / Havdallah .....	5:38 pm

### Weekdays

#### Sunday, November 10th

Shaharit.....	7:30 am
---------------	---------

### Veteran's Day

#### Monday, November 11th

Shaharit.....	TBA
---------------	-----

### Tuesday to Friday, November 12th to 15th

Shaharit.....	6:30 am
---------------	---------

### Tuesday, November 12th

**KJ Kids Talmud Torah Chanukah  
Projects & Craft Day .....** 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm

### Erev Shabbat

#### Parashat Vayishlach

#### Friday, November 15th

Shaharit/Morning Prayer .....	6:30 am
Shir Hashirim.....	4:15 pm
Shabbat Candle Lighting.....	4:31 pm
Minhah/Arbith .....	4:31 pm

(Continued from page 1)

fundraiser last Sunday night in loving memory of David Kelly, z"l. The Safra Ve'Seifa project raises money for the Israel Defense Force to restore Torah scrolls for Israeli military units. The enthusiasm and love for Israel shined through in all those who attended, and we raised enough money to restore two Torah scrolls for this wonderful cause.

It was truly a heartwarming evening, and I thank all our members and friends who attended and gave generously to this worthy project. May we always support and protect our homeland and, especially, the troops who fight to secure its future.

Shabbat Shalom

Ronald Einy

### Readings: Shabbat Vayetze

**Torah:** Genesis/Sefer Beresheet

Hertz edition pages 106 to 117

**Haftara** Hosea / Hoshea

Hertz edition pages 135 to 137

### David S. Kelly KJ Youth Choir

Rabbi Hagay Batzri, Director



The next Choir meeting will take place  
Sunday, November 17th 2013

## In Memory

This month we remember  
our long-term member at Kahal Joseph

**Ralph Nathan, z"l**

on the year anniversary of his passing.

He is survived by his wife, Louise  
his daughters, Marlene, Loretta & Grace  
& many relatives and friends.

## Shabbat Kiddush

is sponsored  
in loving memory of

**Haim Saleh, z"l and  
Mary Saleh, z"l**

by

**Viva and Charles Rabbie**

## Congratulations

**Melissa and Michael Akiva**  
on the birth of your son

Congratulations to grandparents  
Vera & Jacob Helali,  
and Drora & Jacob Akiva

Mazal Tov to great-grandparents  
Latif Levy & Suad Said-Nejad

♥ Shabbat Shalom ♥

*Wishing You a Peaceful Shabbat*

## In Memoriam

We remember these yearzeit anniversaries for  
November 9th to 16th, 2013. It is customary to light  
a memorial candle, donate tzedaka, and attend ser-  
vices the preceding Shabbat.

**6 Kislev / Shabbat, November 9th**  
*Maggie Dabby Marjorie bat Shmuel*

**7 Kislev / Sunday, November 10th**  
*Eliyahu Ezer Eliyahu ben Yoseph Ezer*

**9 Kislev / Tuesday, November 12th**  
*Isaac Joseph Itzhak ben Yoseph  
Ezra Yitzhaki Ezra ben Reuven  
Sholkhat Zekharia Sholkhat bat Zekaria*

**10 Kislev / Wednesday, November 13th**  
*Ruhama bat Chana*

**11 Kislev / Thursday, November 14h**  
*Ludwig Altman  
Sassoon Cohen Sassoon Shimon Duek HaCohen  
Rachel bat Simha*

**12 Kislev / Friday, November 15th**  
*Yedidyah Yehudah Yedidyah ben Yehudah*

**13 Kislev / Shabbat, November 16th**  
*Eliza Maslavi Eliza bat Tifaha*

## Refuah Shleimah

Vera Levi

Joseph Sharaf / Yossef ben Jamila  
Maurice Ovadia / Moshe ben Noosha  
Tilda Levy / Tilda bat Miriam

Pnina Herzbrun / Pnina bat Esther  
Michael Herzbrun / Michael Baruch ben Sarah  
*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](mailto:dafna@kahaljoseph.org)*

### Please Return Missing Library Books

Many people enjoy our amazing library. But we ask  
—if you have a KJ library book, please return it.

---

*(Continued from page 1)*

in prayer so that the prayers will ascend to the gate of heaven. This can only happen if we are sincerely engaged in our prayers. If we simply go through the motions, rattle off the words, and then rush off to our business—then the prayers remain in the synagogue, and the room becomes too crowded.

A synagogue is a holy place dedicated to the glory of God. If prayers are to ascend to heaven, the synagogue must reflect sanctity and humility. In some cases, though, synagogues fall short of the ideal. Instead of being dedicated to the glory of God, it sometimes happens that synagogues seem more dedicated to the glory of human beings. There are synagogues where the rabbis strive to be quasi-cult figures promoting their own glory—not God's. There are synagogues where the cantors or lay readers strive to show off their voices, promoting their own glory—not God's. There are synagogues where congregants engage in "shul politics" in order to gain power for themselves, seeking to aggrandize their own glory—not God's. Such synagogues are "crowded with prayers" because the prayers do not ascend to heaven.

Indeed, it seems that the Divine Presence is absent from such synagogues. The human ego has crowded out the Divine. There's no room in such synagogues for those who seek to pray sincerely, to serve the Almighty in humility, to live for the glory of God.

Recent surveys of Jewish life have noted that a vast majority of Jews do not attend synagogue services at least once a week. This does not mean that these Jews lack spiritual yearnings. It does mean, though, that for a great many Jews our synagogues lack the Divine Presence. If and when they do attend services, they do not feel the glory of God. They hear too much idle chatter, they see too many people—even rabbis—reading books or journals during services. They experience synagogues as businesses run by people who are interested in promoting themselves. The sanctity, humility and spirituality are missing.

Happily, though, there are synagogues and prayer groups that strive to keep the Divine Presence among them. They foster reverence, selflessness, and sincerity. Their services are free from external conversations and jesting. They yearn to have their prayers ascend to the gate of heaven.

For those fortunate to pray in such an ideal setting, the prayer experience is uplifting and joyful. For those whose synagogues fall short of the ideal, the prayer experience can be frustrating and unhappy.

Sincere seekers of God must look for communities of worshipers who share their religious sensibilities. If no such synagogue or prayer group is available, then one should try to internalize prayers to the extent possible, keeping one's mind free from the distractions that infect the synagogue's atmosphere. One should pray with eyes focused on the prayer book or

with eyes closed. One should sit apart from those who chatter or jest. One should avoid looking at those who are busy reading books or journals rather than devoting themselves to the prayers.

Synagogues must be sanctuaries where our prayers can ascend to the gate of heaven, where we can transcend ourselves and reach deeper spiritual insight and fulfillment. If the glory of God is forced out by those who promote the glory of humans, then the spiritual seeker must try to forge a private path to the gate of heaven.

Like our forefather Jacob, one should be able to say about the synagogue: "How full of awe is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

*Shabbat Shalom*

---

**Rabbi  
Batzri's  
Hotline**



*Plan Your Next Shabbat Dinner ...*  
**Discuss your Jewish home and learn the secrets that create a Jewish environment. Rabbi Batzri offers explanations of our halakhot and Jewish matters for young families and the entire family.**

Write him at [hbatzri@gmail.com](mailto:hbatzri@gmail.com)  
*Let's Set Your Table . . .*

---



The Sisterhood of Kahal Joseph  
invites the children of our community to a

# Hanukkah Celebration

Sunday, November 24<sup>th</sup> 2013 at 11:00 am  
*featuring wonderful entertainment*



**Clown & Balloon Art**

**Magician Extraordinaire!**

*Sweets & Treats for the Children*

Fun for the Whole Family



RSVP Requested

Elsa at 323.934.3439

Louise 818.884.0120

Rita 310.839.4206

Hannie 310.247.0220

Hag Sameah! ♥ Happy Hanukkah!



## Sephardic Educational Center presents our

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

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2013 @ 7:00 PM**  
Are Sephardim Orthodox, Conservative or...??

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2013 @ 7:00 PM**  
Contemporary Jewish Problems, Creative Sephardic Solutions



Please bring a photo ID for security - Refreshments will be served  
For reservations please email [sharon@secjerusalem.org](mailto:sharon@secjerusalem.org)  
or call Sharon at (323) 272-4574

All lectures will be held at **The Jewish Federation Building**  
6505 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90048

Parties Shouldn't Be This Difficult



### 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:3104740559).*

### KJ Children's Playroom

We invite kids to our children's playroom this Shabbat. When they need a little space, our child-friendly room is available.

*Please note: Children are the responsibility of their parents while in the Kahal Joseph building, including the playroom, at all times.*