

4 Elul 5774

30 August 2014

KOL MEVASSER

Rabbi Daniel Bouskila & Hazzanim Yoram Azran, Sassoon Ezra and Saeed Jalali to Lead 2014 High Holy Days at Kahal Joseph

We are pleased to announce that Rabbi Daniel Bouskila, Hazzan Yoram Azran, Hazzan Sassoon Ezra and Hazzan Saeed Jalali will be leading our 2014 High Holy Days services at Kahal Joseph.

As our spiritual leader, Rabbi Bouskila will deliver his unique and timely sermons on a host of relevant and intriguing topics, bringing deep meaning and purpose to the High Holy Day experience. Rabbi Bouskila will also introduce new educational components to our services, inserting explanations to enhance the prayers and their meaning for all our congregants.

Joining Rabbi Bouskila will be Hazzan Sassoon Ezra and Hazzan Saeed Jalali along with Hazzan Yoram Azran from Jerusalem, who officiated for us, together with Rabbi Bouskila, last year on Rosh Hashanah. Their powerful voices will inspire community participation, encouraging our congregants to sing our beautiful melodies together.

What a wonderful way to begin our New Year 5775. We look forward to a most enlightened and inspiring High Holy Days experience at Kahal Joseph this year and encourage all our members and their families to attend what promise to be truly memorable services.



BENEFACTOR'S EVENING

My deepest gratitude to all those who attended and supported our 2014 Benefactors Evening. Your unwavering generosity and commitment made it a wonderful night and a huge success.

My special appreciation to Dr. David Amron and his lovely wife Jessica who lent their gorgeous home and gave this important event the perfect setting.

I thank all of this year's Benefactors for the love they share for Kahal Joseph.

Ronald Einy, President

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KJ Schedule Parashat Shoftim

Erev Shabbat / Friday, August 29th

Selihot / Shaharit 5:45 am / 6:30 am
Minhah/Arbith..... 7:00 pm
Shabbat Candlelighting 7:04 pm

Shabbat / Saturday, August 30th

Shaharit/Morning Prayer 8:30 am
Minha, Seudah Shlisheet, Arvit 6:45 pm
Motzei Shabbat / Havdallah..... 8:11 pm

Sunday, August 31st & September 1st

Selihot / Shaharit 6:45 am / 7:30 am

Tuesday to Friday, September 2nd to 5th

Selihot / Shaharit 5:45 am / 6:30 am

Erev Shabbat / Friday, September 5th

Selihot / Shaharit 5:45 am / 6:30 am
Minhah/Arbith..... 6:45 pm
Shabbat Candlelighting 6:55 pm

Shabbat Torah & Haftara Readings

Devarim / Deuteronomy: Shoftim 820-835
Haftara Yishayahu / Isaiah 835-839

Refuah Shlemah

Mordechai Cohen / Mordecai ben Avraham
Moselle Amron/Mazal Tov bat Salha Matana
Tilda Levy / Tilda bat Miriam
Joseph Sharaf / Yossef ben Jamila
Maurice Ovadia / Moshe ben Noosha
Michael Herzbrun / Michael Baruch ben Sarah
Saul Sassoon / Shlomo ben Sasson Menashe

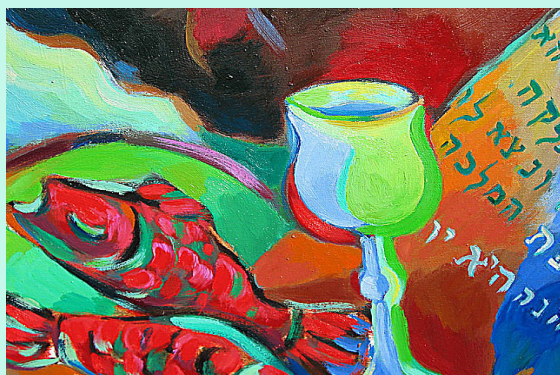
Errol Levi Social Hall & Ballroom

Engagement? Wedding? Brit Milah?

Bar Mitzvah? Baby Shower? Birthday?

Kahal Joseph has one of the most beautiful ballrooms on the Westside for your private event including up to 200 guests.

Contact Sarah at 310.474.0559



KJ Shabbaton

Friday, September 12, 2014

6:30 pm Minha • 7:30 Dinner

Guest Speaker, Rabbi Daniel Bouskila

Families Share a Table • Special Kids Menu

Enjoy delicious food, singing, and spiritual insights while sharing Shabbat with friends and family. This is a special Shabbat for our community to come together and learn about Selihot before the High Holy Days

Prepaid, advance reservations are required by September 8th

\$26 / adult and \$18 / child under twelve

Call the office and speak with Sarah to reserve for your family at 310.474.0559

Positions for Teachers & Aids

Norma & Sam Dabby KJ Hebrew School
Sundays 9:00 am to 12:00 noon

We seek knowledge of Shabbat • Jewish holidays
Basic Halakha • Hebrew • Parasha • Jewish history
Teaching Experience & Certification preferred
Reliable, kind, fun & engaging teachers send resume to dafnayoung@gmail.com or contact 310.502.8548

Shabbat Kiddush

is sponsored in memory of

Sam Dabby, z"l

by

Frank & Karen Dabby

In Memoriam

We remember these yearzeit anniversaries for August 30 to September 6, 2014. It is customary to light a memorial candle, donate tzedaka, & attend services the preceding Shabbat.

4 Elul / Shabbat, August 30th

Edward Kelly

5 Elul / Sunday, August 31st

Lil Bir Leah bat Girji

Aaron Arakie Cohen Aharon Shalom Elisha

Arakie HaCohen

Abraham Ezra Jacob Avraham ben Ezra Yaacov

7 Elul / Tuesday, September 2nd

Yaacov Aboulafia Yaacov ben Sarah

8 Elul / Wednesday, September 3rd

Rachel Ezra Jacob Rahel bat Lulu

Naji Ezra Helali Naji Ezra Helali

Yamin Sassoon Yamin ben Sassoon

9 Elul / Thursday, September 4th

Sam Dabby Shimon ben Haskel

Hilda Deborah Habiba bat Farha

Rachel Hayim Mingail Rahel bat Miriam

We send our condolences to the family of

Maureen Murad, z"l

mother of Susan Einy, Caroline Azouz, Sarah Ezekiel and Alexandra Itzhaki. May Hashem comfort them with all the mourners of Tzion.

Learning & Leadership

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

The parsha of *Shoftim* is the classic source of the three types of leadership in Judaism, called by the sages the “three crowns”: of priesthood, kingship and Torah. This is the first statement in history of the principle, set out in the eighteenth century by Montesquieu in *L’Esprit des Lois*, and made fundamental to the American constitution, of “the separation of powers.”

Power, in the human arena, is to be divided and distributed, not concentrated in a single person or office. So, in biblical Israel, there were kings, priests and prophets. Kings had secular or governmental power. Priests were the leaders in the religious domain, presiding over the service in the Temple and other rites, and giving rulings on matters to do with holiness and purity. Prophets were mandated by God to be critical of the corruptions of power and to recall the people to their religious vocation whenever they drifted from it.

Our parsha deals with all three roles. Undoubtedly, though, the most attention-catching is the section on kings, for many reasons. First, this is the only command in the Torah to carry with it the explanation that this is what other people do: “When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, ‘Let us set a king over us like all the nations around us ...’” (Deut. 17: 14). Normally, in the Torah, the Israelites are commanded to be different. The fact that this command is an exception was enough to signal to commentators throughout the ages that there is a certain ambivalence about the idea of monarchy altogether.

Second, the passage is strikingly negative. It tells us what a king must not do, rather than what he should do. He should not “acquire

great numbers of horses,” or “take many wives” or “accumulate large amounts of silver and gold” (17: 16-17). These are the temptations of power, and as we know from the rest of Tanakh, even the greatest – King Solomon himself – was vulnerable to them.

Third, consistent with the fundamental Judaic idea that leadership is service, not dominion or power or status or superiority, the king is commanded to be humble: he must constantly read the Torah “so that he may learn to revere the Lord his God ... and not consider himself better than his fellow Israelites” (17: 19-20). It is not easy to be humble when everyone is bowing down before you and when you have the power of life and death over your subjects.

Hence the extreme variation among commentators as to whether monarchy is a good institution or a dangerous one. Maimonides holds that the appointment of a king is an obligation, Ibn Ezra that it is a permission, Abarbanel that it is a concession, and Rabbenu Bachya that it is a punishment—an interpretation known to John Milton at one of the most volatile (& anti-monarchical) periods of English history.

There is, though, one positive and exceptionally important dimension of royalty. The king is commanded to study constantly:
When he takes the throne of his kingdom, he is to write for himself on a scroll a copy of this law, taken from that of the Levitical priests. It is to be with him, and he is to read it all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the Lord his God and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees and not consider himself better than his fellow Israelites and turn from the law to the right or to the left. Then he and his descendants will reign a long time over his kingdom in Israel. (Deut. 17: 18-20)

Later, in the book that bears his name, Moses’ successor Joshua is commanded in similar

terms: *Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. (Josh. 1: 8)*

Leaders learn. That is the principle at stake here. Yes, they have advisors, elders, counsellors, an inner court of sages and literati. And yes, biblical kings had prophets – Samuel to Saul, Nathan to David, Isaiah to Hezekiah and so on – to bring them the word of the Lord. But those on whom the destiny of the nation turns may not delegate away the task of thinking, reading, studying and remembering. They are not entitled to say: I have affairs of state to worry about. I have no time for books. Leaders must be scholars, *bonei Torah*, “children of the Book,” if they are to direct and lead the people of the Book.

The great statesmen of modern times understood this, at least in secular terms. Gladstone, four times Prime Minister of Britain, had a library of 32, 000 books. We know – because he made a note in his diary every time he finished reading a book – that he read 22, 000 of them. Assuming he did so over the course of eighty years (he lived to be 88), this meant that he read on average 275 books a year, or more than five each week for a lifetime. He also wrote many books on a wide variety of topics from politics to religion to Greek literature, and his scholarship was often impressive. For example he was, according to Guy Deutscher in *Through the Language Glass*, the first person to realise that the ancient Greeks did not have a sense of colour and that Homer’s famous phrase, “the wine-dark sea” referred to texture rather than colour.

Visit David Ben Gurion’s house in Tel Aviv and you will see that, while the ground floor is spartan to the point of austerity, the first floor is a single vast library of papers, periodicals and 20, 000 books. He had another 4,000 or so in Sde

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Boker. Like Gladstone, Ben Gurion was a voracious reader as well as a prolific author. Disraeli was a best-selling novelist before he entered politics. Winston Churchill wrote almost fifty books and won the Nobel Prize for Literature. Reading and writing are what separate the statesman from the mere politician.

The two greatest kings of early Israel, David and Solomon, were both authors, David of Psalms, Solomon (according to tradition) of The Song of Songs, Proverbs and Kohelet/Ecclesiastes. The key biblical word associated with kings is *chokhmah*, "wisdom." Solomon in particular was known for his wisdom:

When all Israel heard the verdict the king had given, they held the king in awe, because they saw that he had wisdom from God to administer justice. (1 Kings 3: 12)

Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the people of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt ... From all nations people came to listen to Solomon's wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom. (1 Kings 5: 10-14)

When the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon... she was overwhelmed. She said to the king, 'The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true. But I did not believe these things until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half was told me; in wisdom and wealth you have far exceeded the report I heard' ... The whole world sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart. (1 Kings 10: 4-24)

We should note that *chokhmah*, wisdom, means something slightly different from Torah, which is

more commonly associated with priests and prophets than kings. *Chokhmah* includes worldly wisdom, which is a human universal rather a special heritage of Jews and Judaism. A midrash states "If someone says to you, 'There is wisdom among the nations of the world,' believe it. If they say, 'There is Torah among the nations of the world,' do not believe it." Broadly speaking, *chokhmah* refers to the sciences and humanities – to whatever allows us to see the universe as the work of God and the human person as the image of God. Torah is the specific moral and spiritual heritage of Israel.

The case of Solomon is particularly poignant because, for all his wisdom, he was not able to avoid the three temptations set out in our parsha: he did acquire great numbers of horses, he did take many wives and he did accumulate

great wealth. Wisdom without Torah is not enough to save a leader from the corruptions of power.

Though few of us are destined to be kings, presidents or prime ministers, there is a general principle at stake. Leaders learn. They read. They study. They take time to familiarise themselves with the world of ideas. Only thus do they gain the perspective to be able to see further and clearer than others. To be a Jewish leader means spending time to study both Torah and *chokhmah*: *chokhmah* to understand the world as it is, Torah to understand the world as it ought to be.

Leaders should never stop learning. That is how they grow and teach others to grow with them.

Shabbat Shalom



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