Rabbi Daniel Bouskila
Hazzan Yoram Azran
Sr Hazzan Sassoon Ezra
& Hazzan Saeed Jalali to
Lead KJ High Holy Days

We are pleased to announce that
Rabbi Daniel Bouskila, Hazzan
Yoram Azran, Senior 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 Senior 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.

The Divine Word Is Deadly:
Only A Melody Can Rescue It
Rabbi Nathan Lopes Cardozo

Rabbi Azariah and Rabbi Acha said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: When, at Mount Sinai, the Israelites heard the word "Anochi" ("I" -- the first word of "The Ten Words"), their souls left them, as it says [Devarim 5:22]: "If we hear the voice of God any more, we will die." It is also written [Shir HaShirim 5:6]: "My soul departed when He spoke." Then the Word went back to the Holy One blessed be He, and said, "Lord of the Universe, You live eternally and Your Torah lives eternally, but You have sent me to the dead. They are all dead!" Thereupon, the Holy One blessed be He sweetened the Word for them....Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai taught: The Torah which God gave to Israel restored their souls to them, as it says [Tehillim 19:8]: "The Torah of the Lord is perfect, it restores the soul" (1).

It may perhaps be argued that this Midrash, like no other text, encapsulates the essence of Judaism and its dialectic nature. The tension between Jewish Law and the near hopelessness of man to live by it, survive it and simultaneously obey it with great fervor is at the very core of Judaism's complexity.

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In Memoriam
We remember these yahrzeit anniversaries for September 6 to 13, 2014. It is customary to light a memorial candle, donate tzedaka, & attend services the preceding Shabbat.

12 Elul / Sunday, September 7th
Menasseh Saltoon Menasseh ben Nissim

13 Elul / Monday, September 8th
Isaac Ferris Abraham Yitzhak Faraj
Sophie Solomon Simhah bat Khatoon

14 Elul / Tuesday, September 9th
Nathan Assia
Harry Brook Moses Haim Baruch ben Moshe Ezra

15 Elul / Wednesday, September 10th
Sophie Meyer Simha bat Rifka

16 Elul / Thursday, September 11th
Flower Elias Farha bat Yochevet

17 Elul / Friday, September 12th
Gala Nathan Gala bat Sheikoory

18 Elul / Shabbat, September 13th
Rahel bat Rahma Khatoon

Positions for Teachers & Aids
Norma & Sam Dabby KJ Hebrew School
Sundays 9:00 am to 12:00 noon

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

Famous Sephardic Poets: Abraham Ibn Ezra
b.1092 — d.1167

G-d’s Providence
O God, You have searched me and know my mind;
You discern my thoughts from afar, You are privy to my every move.
You anticipate my plans; my walking and reclining.
You observe and are familiar with my ways.
You see the word forming in my heart before it reaches
My tongue; You know when my days will end;
You hem me in behind and in front and from above;
You guide me with your right hand, while your left supports me.
You fill the high heavens and distant sea;
Where can I go from your presence when You confront me everywhere?
Darkness does not conceal me; nothing obscures your view.
It is You who reveals my secrets.
In the beginning You formed me; You knit me together in the womb;
In its depth You crafted my delicate frame.
Your eyes beheld my bare limbs; they were all recorded
In your book; in due time they took their separate shapes.
How vast are the sum of your thoughts, they are most
difficult to comprehend; my “knowledge” and “wisdom is foolishness.
I thank You for your wonders; I am grateful for your mercies.
By your power I am sustained; to You belong my breath and my soul.


Shabbat Kiddush
is sponsored in honor of the marriage of Arielle & Jacob Lewis
by Morad & Nadia Gabai

Mazal Tov
to Arielle & Jacob
on their marriage
Congratulations to the Gabai & Lewis Families

Flavors of Babylon
An Iraqi Cookbook
Copies arrived!
Special Offer—$30
Purchase or pick up your copy today.
Call Sarah at 310.474.0559

Errol Levi Social Hall & Ballroom
Kahal Joseph has one of the most beautiful ballrooms on the Westside for events up to 200 guests. Contact Sarah 310.474.0559

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

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The Divine Word is deadly and causes paralysis. The Word, wrought by fire in the upper world, is unmanageable and wreaks havoc once it descends. Its demands are not of this world; they belong to the angels. The Word therefore comes to naught once it enters the human sphere, since there is no one to receive it. All have died before the Word is able to pronounce its second word. How then can it delight the living soul?

The answer is: sweetness. It has to have grace and therefore must be put to music. The problem with the Word is that it carries the possibility of literal-mindedness (2) and takes the word for what it is, robbing it of its inner spiritual meaning. The language of faith employs only a few words in its own spirit. Most of its terms are borrowed from the world in which the Word creates physical images in the mind of man. But the Divine Word needs to be heard, not seen. To hear is to perceive what is beyond the utterance of the mouth. To live with the Word is to discover the ineffable and act on it through the direction of the Law. The mitzvot are founded on the appreciation of the unimaginable, but they become poison when performed only for the sake of the deed.

Rabbi Shefatia said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: If one reads the Torah without a melody, or repeats the Mishnah without a tune, of him Scripture says [Yechezkel 20:25]: "So, too, I gave them statutes that were not good and laws by which they could not live" (3).

Death refers also to those who do mitzvot in an improper manner. The full impact of Torah and mitzvot comes only when, while performing them, one realizes their great value and gives them their proper due honor.

The function of music is to connect the Word with Heaven. It is not so much the music that man plays on an instrument or sings, but the music of his soul, which is externalized through the use of an instrument or song. It leads man to the edge of the infinite and allows him to gaze, just for a few moments, into the Other. Music is the art of word exegesis.

While a word on its own is dead, it is resurrected when touched by music. Music is the refutation of human finality. As such, it is the sweetness that God added to His Word when the Word alone was wreaking havoc. It is able to revive man when he dies as he is confronted with the bare Word at Sinai. Life without music is death—poignantly bitter when one realizes that one has never really lived.

There is little meaning in living by Halacha if one does not hear its grace. It is not a life of Halachic observance that we need, but a life of Halachic living. Observance does not propel man to a level of existence where he realizes that there is more to life than the mind can grasp.

Jewish education has often been founded on the Word before it turned to God to be sweetened. As a result, there are many casualties and a large part of our nation has been paralyzed.

It is the great task of Jewish educators and thinkers to send the Word back to God and ask Him to teach them how to sweeten it.

Shabbat Shalom

Teshuba is questionable in terms of its credibility and genuineness. Why? Because the whole process of repentance, regret and apologies happened as a consequence of being caught. It is possible that what prompts this person to repent is his fear to lose his reputation, his job, his family, rather than his moral conscience.

Following Maimonides’ words, the perfect act of repentance in this case would have taken place if, while still involved in an illicit relationship or other immoral act, before being caught and with no external impediment to continue with it, one would decide out of his own conscience, to stop, repent and change.

That would be a perfect a and complete Teshuba. There are several aspects to complete Teshubah:

1. Viduy or recognizing the sin & confessing to Hashem. When done silently it is proper to specify the particular transgression.
2. Abandoning the sinful practice
3. Feeling regret for having done the sin
4. Resolving to act differently in the future

In making a resolution for the future, it is often necessary to devise a strategy to cope with temptation. It is appropriate to build a fence around the transgression, that will prevent us from crossing the line. The “fence” for each person should fit his/her situation.

Just as we must repent of sins involving actions, so must we repent of any evil dispositions that we may have, such as an angry temper, hatred, jealousy, greedy pursuit of money and honor, gluttony, and the like.
TESHUBA, in Front of a Camera
Rabbi Yosef Bitton

"What is considered a perfect act of repentance? When one is faced with the same opportunity to repeat the original transgression, but now he does not do it because he has repented... however, when one does not repeat the original transgression, [and refrains from sinning] because now he fears people will find out... his repentance is still accepted, but it is not considered a perfect repentance" Maimonides

To explain a perfect scenario of Teshuba, Maimonides gives the example of a man who is involved in an adulterous relationship and later on repents. The ultimate test of his repentance would take place if that man is eventually faced with a similar opportunity but now he refrains from repeating the transgression, because he repented, and because he has reached a new understanding: now he realizes that following his material impulses will hurt him, driving him away from God.

However, if that man faces a similar scenario but now he refrains from sinning because he fears somebody will find out about his affair, his Teshuba is still acceptable, but it is not considered a complete Teshuba. Why? Because this man might have changed his conduct not because of his repentance and his renewed understanding, but just because of social embarrassment, fear of losing his job, etc.

A modern example: Very often we read in the news about a public figure, usually someone involved in politics, who was caught doing an immoral act. Many times these people would come in front of the TV cameras and publicly express their regret and apologize for what they have done. This is definitely an act of repentance. However, because of its timing, this act of

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