

# KOL MEVASSER

## Hannah and Rachel

A True Story of Love & Hope

By Joe Samuels

Baghdad, Iraq my ancestral home, is the place where I was born in 1930. Arabic was my mother tongue. In the mid-1940s, the Jews in Iraq numbered 130,000 out of a population of four million. But, in Baghdad they were over 20% of the population. My family, importers of textiles for decades, did business with Muslims who were honest and intimate friends.

The rise of Hitler brought anti-Semitism to the Arab world. The Jewish minority suffered under great tension and fear. My family survived Baghdad's Farhud (a pogrom) in June 1941, when thousands of Jewish homes were looted and several hundred people were murdered. In 1948 Iraq, one among five other Arab countries, declared war and attacked Israel. For us, persecution, summary arrest, torture and public executions were the result of the Iraqi government's failure in that war. In December 1949, at the age of 19, I escaped; I was smuggled out of Iraq.

The Jewish community, alarmed by the present and fearful of the future in Iraq, waited anxiously. Nearly two years later, inexplicably, the Iraqi government announced that Jews could leave Iraq. The majority applied. Those who did had their citizenship as well as all their properties and holdings confiscated. They were allowed to leave with only one suitcase per person. Hannah and Rachel's family was one of those families who packed their belonging in suitcases. "In one week we are out of this hell," said the father to his beloved Hannah (18), Rachel (19) and the rest of the family when he got his notice. Hugging and kissing with great joy and trepidation of the unknown, Hannah's family said their farewells to the rest of the family and friends.

To All Our Members, Family & Friends  
Wishing You and Your Loved Ones Be  
Blessed with a Happy & Healthy Hanukkah  
Filled with Light, Joy, Hope & Peace  
The Board of Directors of Kahal Joseph

Then, just two days before their departure, the family's ecstasy melted to grief and their hope spun into calamity. Hannah never returned home that evening. Frantically the family checked everywhere and with everybody. No one could solve the mystery of her disappearance. Hannah, an obedient, mild-mannered daughter, had vanished into thin air. The authorities were of no help or were not interested in finding her.

After the family left for Israel, Hannah's father stayed for two months in Baghdad looking for Hannah. A broken down man, he arrived in Israel without his daughter. Hannah's mother died from depression a few months later. Hannah was lost; hope turned to despair, but she was not forgotten. Her picture adorned the living room wall, and her story was told and retold to the next generation. Her sister Rachel got married, the family settled down, and life went on.

From the day of her disappearance, Hannah's life took a new direction, new identity, and new structure. Her beauty and youth were the cause of the tragedy about to unfold. A Muslim from her neighborhood seized the opportunity and kidnapped her. She became a sex slave, a servant to his other wives, and a nanny to his kids. At night, the only comfort for her loneliness was crying over a photograph taken with

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## KJ Schedule Hanukkah / Miketz

### Erev Shabbat & Hanukkah Night 4

*Friday, December 19th*

Shaharit / Morning Prayer .. 6:15 am  
**Hanukkah Candles light with long-burning candles just before Shabbat**  
**Shabbat Candle Lighting..4:28 pm**  
Minha / Arbith ..... 4:28 pm

### Shabbat Hanukkah & Parashat Miketz

*Saturday, December 20th*

Shaharit/Morning Prayer .... 8:30 am  
Minha, Seudah, Arvit..... 4:00 pm  
Motzei Shabbat / Havdala... 5:32 pm  
**Hanukkah 5 Candles after Havdala**

### Hanukkah Night 6 & Erev Rosh Hodesh Tevet

*Sunday, December 21st*

Shaharit ..... 7:30 am  
Children's Hanukkah Party 10:00 am  
**Hanukkah Candles light after dark**

### Hanukkah, Nights 7 & 8 Rosh Hodesh Tevet

*Mon & Tue, December 22nd & 23rd*  
Shaharit/Morning Prayer ..... 6:00 am  
**Hanukkah Candles light after dark**

### Hanukkah, Day 8

*Wednesday, Dec 24th*

Shaharit / Morning Prayer .. 6:15 am

### Weekdays

*Thursday & Friday, Dec. 25 & 26*  
Shaharit / Morning Prayer .. 6:30 am

### Erev Shabbat

*Friday, December 26th*

Shaharit / Morning Prayer .. 6:30 am  
**Shabbat Candle Lighting 4:32 pm**  
Minha / Arbith ..... 4:32 pm

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her sister Rachel that she had carried in her purse at the time she was kidnapped. Over the years, when the tears dried up, she kissed the photo, an icon that kept the flame of hope glowing. She had to dress up, act and conduct herself as a Muslim woman. Her heart ached, but she had to act indifferently when she heard of Jews being tortured or saw their hung bodies swaying in the public square.

Abandoned by the world, betrayed by the United Nations, and angry at the Americans is how the Iraqi people felt after the Gulf War of 1991. Envious of the liberated Kuwaitis, their long waited liberation vanished when the coalition didn't enter Iraq and remove Saddam. They desperately resigned themselves to his intensified torture techniques, human shredders, rape squads, and mass murder.

The Iraqi people's long-awaited liberation arrived in Baghdad March, 2003. Jubilation erupted in the streets of Baghdad, ecstasy in Kurdistan in the north, celebration in the Shiite area in the south. Saddam's tyranny had ended and his two evil sons were dead. The people looked up with adulation at President Bush, analogous to a present-day Moses liberating the Hebrews from Pharaoh.

Hannah's kidnapper died in 2007. She was alone and had no children during her captivity. One day on her weekly shopping route, Hannah ventured on a different path. She stopped an American soldier. Intrigued by her story but suspicious, he took her to his superior.

March 2008: The Menashe family of Ramat Gan received a phone call from Israel's Interior Ministry. On June 13<sup>th</sup>, newspaper, radio and TV reporters were waiting at a special lounge at Ben Gurion airport. Rachel, her brothers, their children, grandchildren, cousins and other members

## Shabbat Kiddush

is sponsored in honor of  
the Bar Mitzvah of  
Eyal Shalom Tizabi  
to take place in Israel

by Frank Tizabi & Family

### Refuah Shlemah

Moselle Amron • Tilda Levy • Joseph Sharaf  
Maurice Ovadia • Michael Herzbrun  
Saul Sassoon • Sassoon Ezra

of the family were also waiting. For 58 years they had been waiting for Hannah to return. At 76, accompanied by an airline hostess, bewildered and puzzled, Hannah walked gently toward an anxious and impatient family. "Hannah is here," a young grandchild screamed. There was not a single dry eye in the crowd. "I am only sorry that my Mom and Dad are not here to witness this moment. I knew we would meet again one day," said Rachel. "The circle is complete, Hannah is here."

When my friend Shaoul Goury brought to my attention Hannah's story published in the Israeli newspaper, Yedi'ot Aharonot, I felt a seismic shock, an earthquake for my psyche and a whirlwind in my memory. Her story rekindled fear and reawakened a flood of dormant experiences buried in the seams of my past.

At 14, I nearly lost my life when two Muslim youth chased me with a knife for stopping them from molesting my neighbor's daughter. When I saw what they were doing, I punched one of them and ran. Kidnapping for sex slavery was common in Baghdad. I came to know of two

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## Mazal Tov

Michelle & David Solomon  
on the birth of a baby girl  
Naavah Esther Roza  
Congratulations to the grandparents  
Rueben & Myrtle Solomon, Rita & Sonny  
Elias, & grandaunt Diana Solomon  
Aunty Tamara & Aunty Kathy

### Torah & Haftara Readings

Genesis/Beresheet: Miketz 155 to 166  
Haftara for Hanukkah 987 to 989

### In Memoriam

We remember these yahrzeit anniversaries for Dec 20 to 27, 2014. It is customary to light a memorial candle, donate tzedaka, & attend services the preceding Shabbat.

#### 28 Kislev / Shabbat, December 20th

Joseph Jacob Yosef ben Avraham Haim  
Habiba bat Aziza

#### 29 Kislev / Sunday, December 21st

Ralph Isaac Raful ben Yehezkel Mulla Rahamim  
Simcha Ezra Isaac Simcha bat Masooda

#### 1 Tevet / Tuesday, December 23rd

Saul Mizrahie Shaul ben Eliyahu Mordechai  
Jack Sassoon Yaacov Yoseph ben Sasson  
Victoria Saul

#### 2 Tevet / Wednesday, December 24th

David ben Ezra

#### 3 Tevet / Thursday, December 25th

Isaac Jacob Itzhak ben Yaakov  
Vicky Messiah Rahma Victoria bat Khatoon  
Rivka bat Dudu

#### 4 Tevet / Friday, December 26th

Seemah Meyer Simha bat Azizah

#### 5 Tevet / Shabbat, December 27th

Mida Judah Masooda bat Dina  
Esther Sales Esther HaMalka bat Rivka  
Elisha Samuel Elisha ben Sassoon

## Sephardic Recipes for Hanukkah

*After the Maccabees fought off the Syrian-Greek invaders, they cleaned and rededicated the Bet HaMikdash (the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem) a place of holiness and worship that had already stood for nearly a millennium at that time. However, when they went to light the seven-branched golden Menorah, a constant light kindled in the sanctuary, they found only enough pure olive oil to light the Menorah for one day, while eight days were required to replenish the supply. Then, the miracle of Hanukkah occurred: the small supply of oil lit the Menorah for eight days and nights. For this reason, we light our Hanukkah menorah, also known as a Hanukkiah, for eight nights. Also, in honor of the miracle of oil, we eat foods cooked in oil. We invite you to enjoy the traditional recipes below.*

### Belehat Arouss: A Fried Fish Dish

Fish dumplings in turmeric sauce

#### Ingredients

2 pounds cod or tilefish fillets	1 cup matzoh meal
1 small onion, quartered	Oil for deep frying
3 cloves garlic, sliced	4 cups fish stock or water
2 teaspoons ground cumin	2 tablespoons lemon juice
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper	1/2 teaspoon turmeric
1 egg	3 tablespoons tomato paste
Salt and black pepper to taste	Sprigs of flat-leaf parsley

#### Directions

1. Cut fish into 1-inch pieces. Place in food processor and add onion, garlic, cumin, cayenne pepper, egg, salt and pepper. Process until smooth. Add matzoh meal and process.
2. Shape fish mixture into plump ovals about 3 inches long.
3. Heat oil for deep frying to 375 degrees in deep fryer, saucepan or wok. Fry until golden brown. Drain on paper.
4. Bring stock or water to boil in 1 or 2 large saucepans, add lemon juice, turmeric and tomato paste. Bring to slow simmer. Drop drained fish rolls into simmering broth and cook slowly, uncovered. Rolls should be single layer. Simmer until broth has reduced and thickened, about 40 minutes.
5. Serve warm garnished with parsley. Yield: 8 servings

### Sfenj: Moroccan Donuts

The recipe makes enough for 12 people, so it may be halved.

#### Ingredients

1 cup warm water	1 teaspoon salt
1 oz. fresh yeast	1 ½ cups more warm water
2 lbs. sifted white flour	Oil for frying the sfenj
2 tablespoons sugar	Granulated sugar

#### Directions

1. Dissolve the yeast in 1 cup of water.
2. In a large bowl, mix the flour, sugar, and salt.
3. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and pour in the yeast/water mixture. Add 1 1/4 more cups of water.
4. Mix the ingredients with a long-handled spoon. If it becomes difficult, add a little more water. The texture should be loose and sticky, more like a thick batter than a dough.
5. Cover the bowl and let the dough rise 3 to 4 hours. It should be light and bubbly, having doubled in size.
6. Start heating the oil in a deep frying pan. Use a medium flame and give the oil at least 5 minutes to heat up.
7. Don't beat the dough down. You want to keep as much of the bubbles in it as you can, to keep the fritter light.
8. When you judge the oil to be hot, wet your hands.
9. To make the sfenj fritters, pull out a piece of dough about the size of a large plum. Pull the center of the dough lump out to the sides, making a hole in it and forming a ring. Drop it into the hot oil
10. Keep your hands wet to prevent the dough from sticking. Drop the fritters into the oil one by one, but don't crowd them in the pan. When you see that the bottoms are brown, turn them over.
11. When both sides are golden brown, remove the sfenj from the oil. Drain them on paper towels.
12. Let the fritters cool down slightly, then lower each one onto a plate that's covered with a thick layer of sugar. It's enough to sugar only one side. Remove them from the sugar and pile them onto a clean platter. Serve right away.

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teen age Jewish girls who were kidnapped. One was a maid at our next door neighbor's home, and the other was from a small village in Kurdistan, called Sandor. I met her on a school camping trip in the summer of 1947. They were both sold into prostitution.

Hannah's legend is but a grain of sand in a vast Sahara of untold stories. For the first time after 58 years, on Hanukkah 5769, Hannah celebrated the Miracle of Hanukkah with her sister Rachel and the rest of her family. May God bless us to always celebrate the miracle of Hanukkah together with our families and friends in good health

# Shabbat Hannuka Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Daniel Bouskila

Saturday, December 20, 2014  
Following Morning Services

*Kahal Joseph Members—No Charge but must RSVP  
Non-members—\$26 with paid reservation*

*In celebration of Hanukkah, a holiday most deeply connected to the Zionist ethic of contemporary Judaism, join Rabbi Bouskila in a community conversation on a timely and important topic seriously affecting Israel & the Jewish people.*

Topic  
**Delegitimizing Israel:  
Who's Doing It, and Why We  
Should be Concerned**

*RSVP requested before December 16th  
to Sarah at 310.474.0559*



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

# Hanukkah Celebration

Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup> 2014 at 10:00 am  
*featuring wonderful entertainment*



**Clown & Balloon Art**

**Amazing Magician**

*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!**

