

KOL MEVASSER

The Haggadah In Arabic?

By Rabbi Daniel Bouskila

"Our Passover Seder is translated into Arabic," I used to tell my friends in school. "Arabic?" they responded in bewilderment, "that's so weird! How could you translate a Seder into Arabic? Isn't Arabic the language of the enemy?"

Growing up in a French speaking Sephardic-Moroccan home in Los Angeles, my sisters and I were never taught that Arabic was the "language of the enemy." That is, unless we considered our parents "the enemy," who spoke it amongst themselves when they didn't want us to understand what was being said. I have vivid memories of Judeo-Arabic being spoken in my home. It was a "private" language for my parents, as well as a form of cultural communication for my parents and their friends. In fact, there are several jokes for which to this day, I don't know the punch line, as they started out in French, and just when the suspense was at its peak, the punch line rolled out in Judeo-Arabic. When my sisters and I would beg my father to translate, the answer always was "I could translate, but it won't be the same."

I have come to understand my father's principle of "I could translate, but it won't be the same" to also mean that there are times when linguistic expression is often more powerful than the actual translation itself. Throughout my upbringing, the first chant at the Passover Seder that really made it feel like Pesach for all of us around the table sounded like this:

Haq'da Qssam L'lah lb'har ala tnass l'treq 'hin khrzeu

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President's Message

Dear Members and Friends,

The story of the Exodus is thousands of years old, yet it remains as relevant today as ever.

Throughout our history, there have been those who targeted the Jewish people, as we are painfully and constantly reminded; just as, throughout history, there have been those who seek to oppress others because of their religion, ethnicity or the color of their skin.

Tonight, Jews around the world will renew their faith that liberty will ultimately prevail over tyranny. We will give thanks for the blessings of freedom, while remembering those who are still not free. We will ask one of life's most difficult questions: once we have passed from bondage to freedom, how do we make the most of what God has given us? The search for this answer has deepened the Jewish people's commitment to repairing the world with selflessness, with a common hope, and with a remarkable sense of obligation.

Letizia and I are proud to celebrate at our Seder with family and friends, and we wish all our members, Rabbi Daniel Bouskila and his family, Hazan Saeed Jalali and his family, Hazan Sassoon Ezra and his family, and our entire Kahal Joseph family a beautiful and meaningful Passover focused on all the things that matter most in our lives.

May each of us rejoice in the rich traditions of Pesach, with warmth and reflection, togetherness, prosperity and happiness always.

Hag Sameach,

Ronald Einy, President

KJ Schedule

Passover /Pesah
2015 5775

Thursday, April 2nd

Shaharit / Morning Prayer ..6:30 am
Hametz Sale Form due before noon
Bedikat Hametz /Check for Hametz
Search homes for hametz after dark

Erev Shabbat & Erev Pesah

Taanit Bechorot /Fast of Firstborn

Friday, April 3rd

Shaharit / Morning Prayer ..6:30 am
Siyuum with Rabbi Bouskila to follow
Firstborns are invited to participate in a celebration of Torah learning. They will then be exempt from fasting.

Stop Eating Hametz... by 10:49 am

BurnHametz by 11:52 am

Candle Lighting 6:57 pm

Minha, Arbit & Hallel..... 6:30 pm

First Pesah Seder begins after dark

Second Night Seder

**First Day Passover
Shabbat**

Saturday, April 4th

Shaharit/Morning Prayer8:30 am
Rabbi Bouskila Sermon "**What Does the Wicked Child Really Say?**"

Minha, Arvit, Hallel6:30 pm

Candlelighting.....after 8:06 pm

Sefirat Ha'Omer, First Night

Second Pesah Seder begins after dark

Yom Tov, Second Day Passover

Sunday, April 5th

Shaharit8:30 am

Minha & Arbit..... 7:30 pm

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What is a Mimouna?

By Rabbi Daniel Bouskila

In Arabic, the word *mimoun* means “*mazal*”; it’s a night when we bless each other and pray for “mazal” in our lives. Because Passover is the anniversary of our deliverance from slavery to freedom, we conclude Passover with an expression of belief — which in Hebrew is *emunah* (sounds like Mimouna) — that God will continue to bless and protect us beyond Passover. We greet each other by saying *Tirbah u’tis-sad* or “may you prosper and succeed.”

Mimouna centers around a colorful table adorned with symbols of blessing. A bowl of flour filled with gold coins represents livelihood and sustenance. Branches of greenery symbolize a successful agricultural spring season, and a fish represents fertility and plentitude.

The table is colorful, and so are the clothes we wear. The women wear long, elaborately embroidered dresses called *kaftan*, and the men wear embroidered shirts or long robes called *jalabiya*. The sounds of Andalusian music fill the room, and as things warm up, so does the hand clapping and dancing. Shot glasses of *mahya* (the Moroccan name for arak) are passed around.

There are two “mandatory Mimouna foods” that everyone must eat. The first is a date filled with butter and honey. The host of the Mimouna welcomes you with this delicacy, accompanied by the greeting “*Tirbah u’tissad*.” Eating this indulgent combination of sweets symbolizes the sweetness of prosperity and success.

Then there is *moufletta*, the *piece de resistance* of any authentic Mimouna. Moufletta is a thin, tortilla-style crepe fried in oil and served hot with butter, honey or jam. It’s our first post-Passover chametz, and — appropriately for Mimouna — it’s sweet!

Some additional features of a Mimouna table include fresh and dried fruits, marzipan pastries, sesame cookies rolled in honey, a variety of jams and jellies, butter-milk and Moroccan tea with *nana* (fresh mint).

We kick off the night with a long, festive, beautifully chanted *havdalah* that not only “distinguishes between Passover and weekday,” but also features blessings for health, prosperity, happiness and safety.

Refuah Shlemah

Moselle Amron • Maurice Ovadia • Tilda Levy
Esther Duke • Abe Abraham • Sassoon Ezra

In Memoriam

We remember these yearzeit anniversaries for April 4 to 11, 2015. It is customary to light a memorial candle, donate tzedaka, & attend services the preceding Shabbat.

15 Nisan / Shabbat, April 4th

Tillie Shansky *Tillie bat Evellyn*
Naima Shashoua *Naima bat Zvida*
Eyob Yehuda *Eyob ben Yehuda*

16 Nisan / Sunday, April 5th

Errol Levi *Ezra ben Shaul HaLevi*
Sanford Norman Levine *Shlomo Nachum ben Yaacov*
John Nahai *Homayoun John Nahai*

21 Nisan / Friday, April 10th

Ester Avramy *Ester bat Batia*

22 Nisan / Shabbat, April 11th

Edward Ezrapour *Eliyahu ben Ezra Avraham Hayim*
Hanini Horesh Suleiman

Kahal Joseph Membership

We want you to be a member!

Did you join us for the Operation Michael-berg talk? Did you enjoy “Ask the Rabbi about Passover?” Join our wonderful community! Call Sarah about an annual membership 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 at 310.474.0559

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zdoud'na min massar, âla yed sid'na oun'bina
moussa ben amram haq'da n'khrzeu min had
l'galouth amen ken yehi ratson.

My father chanted this during Yahatz, as he split the middle matzah. It was not a formal part of the Haggadah. It was a text that stood by itself, and although none of us understood a word of what was being said, we all chimed in, and we all had our own images and perceptions of how this moment was speaking to us.

For me, in the truest spirit of Passover, this Judeo-Arabic chant represented a journey through my roots. In a language whose words I did not understand, but whose tone and music evoked deep emotions within me, this chant helped tell me the story of Jewish life in Morocco. On the night where we are mandated to "tell the story," here came a chant in a language I did not speak, yet told me the story of my Moroccan Jewish heritage more vividly than any history book ever could. It evoked images in my mind of my great-grandfather Rabbi Yosef Pinto, sitting at his Seder in Marrakesh dressed in a Jalabiya with a scarf on his head, breaking the middle matzah and recounting the exodus to his family in the same Judeo-Arabic. It transposed me back to the Moroccan Mellah (Jewish Ghetto), a place I've only been to in my mind, but a place that I nonetheless could hear, feel and even smell, especially at that moment. Haq'da Qssam L'lah even reminded me – because it was in Arabic – that Moroccan Jewry once had positive and cordial relations with their Muslim neighbors, something we've painfully lost today.

As the Seder journeyed on, it was peppered with other Judeo-Arabic chants. Examples include Had taam d'eef kleu zdoud'na fi ardi massar (Ha Lahma Anya – This is the Bread of Poverty) or

Fkhrouz Israel mn masar (B'Tset Yisrael Mimitzrayim – When Israel Left Egypt – Psalm 114). These were the sounds at my Seder – raw, unfiltered and deeply authentic. Hearing the Haggadah in Arabic took us away from our first generation American milieu, and transposed us back to a place where Judaism thrived in a deeply spiritual fashion, enriched by a rich cultural world that enjoyed an intimate bond with the cuisine, spices, music and language of North African Arab culture.

With my parents no longer alive, my family continues our Judeo-Arabic chanting at the Seder. These chants continue to tell the story of Pesach – my Moroccan ancestor's Pesach – to my children, in the original language of their ancestors. Pirkei Avot teaches us to "know from whence we come." This is as important a story on the night of Pesach as is the master story in the Haggadah.

I am proud to raise my children to understand that, despite the ugly extremism of jihadists and fundamentalists, Arabic is still not the "language of the enemy," and that Jews have a long-standing relationship with Arabic language and culture. It reminds my children that Jewish works of outstanding spiritual and intellectual stature, such as Judah Halevi's Kuzari or Maimonides' Guide to the Perplexed, were written in Arabic, and that nobody accused these great minds of writing in the "language of the enemy."

After my father's passing a few years ago, I found the translation of the text we read while breaking the middle Matzah: This is how the Holy One Blessed be He split the sea into twelve separate paths, when our ancestors left Egypt, through the leadership of our master and prophet, Moses son of Amram, of blessed memory. Just like God redeemed them and saved them from harsh labors and brought them to freedom,

KJ Prayer Schedule

Sunday, April 5th (continued)
Sefirat Ha'Omer, Second Night
Havdallah8:07 pm

Days Passover

Chol HaMoed, Days 3 to 6

Monday, April 6 to Thurs, April 9
Shaharit / Morning Prayer ...6:30 am
Sefirat Ha'Omer, Nights 3 to 6

Erev Yom Tov, Sixth Day Passover

Thursday, April 9th
Shaharit / Morning Prayer ...6:30 am
Eruv Tavshillin before candle lighting
Candle lighting7:02 pm
Minha & Arbit7:00 pm
Sefirat Ha'Omer, Sixth Night

Erev Shabbat & Seventh Day Pesah

Friday, April 10th
Shaharit / Morning Prayer ...8:30 am
Candle lighting7:02 pm
Minha & Arbit7:00 pm
Sefirat Ha'Omer, Seventh Night

Shabbat Pesah & Eighth Day Passover

Saturday, April 11th
Shaharit / Morning Prayer ...8:30 am
Minha & Arbit7:25 pm
Havdalla8:11 pm
Sefirat Ha'Omer, Eighth Night

Torah & Haftara Readings

Shemot / Exodus XII: 21 to 51
pp. 257 to 260

Bamidbar / Numbers XXVIII: 16 to 25
pp. 695-696
from Yehoshua / Joshua pp.1009-1011

so, too, may the Holy One Blessed be He, redeem us for the sake of His great name, and let us say, Amen.

Sounds—and feels—so much better in the original. **Moadim L'Simcha**

KAHAL JOSEPH MEMOUNA CELEBRATION

with Rabbi Daniel Bouskila

Sunday, April 12th @ 7 pm
The Errol Levi Social Hall

Come enjoy with your community
a delightful evening of Live Middle Eastern Music
Food, Friendship, & Fun

\$18 per person Please RSVP to Sarah 310-474-0559

24 Days

January 20, 2006. After dinner with his family, Ilan Halimi called an attractive girl he had met at work and made plans to meet her for coffee. Ilan did not suspect a thing; he was 23 and had his whole life ahead of him. The next time Ilan's family heard from him, it was through a cryptic online message from kidnappers demanding a ransom in exchange for their son's life. Director Alexandre Arcady presents the vicious circle from the kidnapping and torture of Ilan Halimi, to the 100s of phone calls, insults, and threats received by the family, through the Parisian police's incompetence in dealing with what was clearly an anti-Semitic crime.

"24 Days" will have a nationwide release on April 24, 2015. In Los Angeles, the film will be playing at Laemmle's Music Hall. "24 Days" will also be available on iTunes the same day



Join the SEC for our Yom HaShoah Observance 2015

A Screening of the film "God on Trial"

Facing their inevitable extermination in Auschwitz, a group of inmates contemplate how God could allow for so much suffering. With death and genocide surrounding them, they proceed to put God on trial, exploring faith in the most horrific of situations.



Wednesday Night, April 15, 2015

Doors open at 6:30pm - Program at 7:00pm sharp
The Jewish Federation Building
6505 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048

(Evening will include a brief Yom HaShoah memorial service and a discussion led by Rabbi Daniel Bouskila following the film).

No Charge, but RSVP an absolute must!
To RSVP or for more information, email
info@secjerusalem.org or call 323-272-4574

Shabbat Shalom & Moadim L'Simcha

Wishing You a Shabbat Shalom
Happy & Kosher Passover—Hag Pesah Kasher v'Sameah