

# KOL MEVASSER

## Rabbi's Message: Religious Values of the Hanukkah Story

In my sermon last Shabbat, I quoted the story of Hanukkah as it appears in the Talmud, where it is related in a detached, businesslike fashion in the space of just a few lines. Since it will make a useful point of departure in seeking the religious values of Hanukkah, I will begin there:

*"Our Rabbis taught: the eight days of Hanukkah start on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Kislev, and eulogies and fasting are forbidden. For when the Greeks entered the Temple, they defiled all the oils in it, and when the Hasmonean kingdom prevailed over them and defeated them, they searched and found only one jar of oil lying with the seal of the Kohen Gadol; and it had only enough to light [the Menorah] for one day, but a miracle happened and they lit with it for eight days. The next year these were appointed as festival days with reciting Hallel and thanksgiving."*  
– Shabbat 21b.

In this account, which is the only canonical text to discuss the Hanukkah narrative, the emphasis lies squarely on the miracle of the oil. It is a rare event indeed for God to personally intervene in the affairs of mankind, and any time He does, we must celebrate it to the hilt. More than any other theme, the rituals of Hanukkah

are designed to highlight that once when the Jews were pushed to the edge, God did no less than suspend the laws of physics for our benefit. And it is not enough for *us* to know that He did it, but rather the primary objective of the increasing nightly lights is to make the *whole world* recognize that an actual miracle was performed on our behalf.

How different, then, is the focus of Megillat Antiochus, the non-canonical "sixth megillah" which has been preserved in Jewish liturgy by the Leazim and Temananim. At 76 verses it is considerably longer than the Talmudic account, and it infuses a wealth of missing details into the story, including the names and roles of the Macca-bees, and the exact nature of the villainy presented by King Antiochus and his governors Nicanor and Bagris. The following early passage captures the objectives of the Greek persecutions very well:

*"Antiochus... said to his officers: You are aware that the Jews of Jerusalem are in our midst. They neither offer sacrifices to our gods nor observe our laws; they abandon the king's laws to practice their own. They hope moreover for the day when kings and tyrants shall be crushed, saying 'O that our own king might reign over us, that we might rule the sea and the land, so that the entire world would be ours.' It is indeed a disgrace for the royal government to let them remain on the face of the earth. Come now, let*

(Continued on page 3)

## Parashat Vayesheb

**Bar Mitzvah of Yoni Wozniak**

*Torah:* Gen. 37:1–40:23, 112 Pesukim

Hertz 141–151; Stone 198–221

*Haftarah:* Amos 2:6 – 3:8

Hertz 152–154; Stone 1142–1143

*Tefillot:* Mashib Haruah, Hakhrazat Tebet

Barekh Alenu starts Motsa'e Shabbat

## KJ Schedule

### Ereb Shabbat

Shabbat Eve

Friday, December 4th

Minha.....4:30 pm

**Candle Lighting .....4:25 pm**

Arbit / Kabbalat Shabbat...5:00 pm

### Yom Shabbat

Shabbat Day

Saturday, December 5th

Shaharit / Morning Prayer 8:30 am

Keri'at HaTorah..... 10:15 am

Musaf ..... 11:30 am

Minhah ..... 4:00 pm

Women's Tehillim ..... 4:00 pm

Se'udah Shelisheet..... 5:00 pm

Arbit ..... 5:20 pm

Habdallah..... 5:28 pm

(Continued on page 2)

## Congratulations

Yoni Wozniak

Mazal Tov

Ronit & Jerome Wozniak  
Danny, Eden, Yaniv & Ava  
and grandparents  
Hildegard & Karl Wozniak  
Gila & Rahamim Hassidim

## Shabbat Kiddush

is being sponsored  
in honor of

Yoni's Bar Mitzvah

by

Ronit & Jerome Wozniak

## In Memoriam

We remember yahrzeit anniversaries from Dec 5 to 12, 2015. It is customary to light a memorial candle, donate tzedaka & attend Shabbat services.

**23 Kislev / Shabbat, December 5th**

Joseph Azar Yosef Sion ben Yaacob

**24 Kislev / Sunday, December 6th**

Regina David Regina bat Salha Matana

Lily Jacob Leah bat Masooda

Mansour Sedaghat Mansour ben Benayahu

**25 Kislev / Monday, December 7th**

Ezra Abraham Ezra Avraham ben Rahma

Rachel Moses Rachel bat Hannah

**26 Kislev / Tuesday, December 8th**

Dan Darwish Daniel ben Rahamim

Sassoon Jacob Jonah Sasson ben Yaacov

Yitzhak Sinder Yitzhak ben Shimon

**27 Kislev / Wednesday, December 9th**

Yoseph Rahamim ben Yaacov Shalom

**28 Kislev / Thursday, December 10th**

Joseph Jacob Yosef ben Avraham Hayim

Habeeba bat Aziza

**29 Kislev / Friday, December 11th**

Ralph Isaac Rafel ben Yehezkel

Simcha Ezra Isaac Simcha bat Masooda

## A Perfect Hannukah Gift Flavors of Babylon

2nd ed., Reserve a Copy



Linda Dangoor was born in Baghdad and settled in the UK. Although she left Iraq when only ten, the link to her roots through food has always been very strong.

Her Middle Eastern background and travels enhanced the discovery of dishes & inspired the creation of new ones. To order call 310.474.0559 or send a \$30 check to



Attn: Flavours of Babylon

Kahal Joseph, 10505 Santa Monica Blvd  
Los Angeles, CA 90025

## KJ Schedule (continued)

### Hanukkah

1st Night—Sunday, December 6th

Shaharit ..... 7:30 am

Talmud Torah ..... 10:00 am

**First Night Lighting at KJ ..... 4:15 pm**

2nd to 6th Nights—Mon to Fri, Dec 7 to 11

Shaharit ..... 6:15 am

Hanukkah Candle Lighting ..... after dark

### Hanukkah

#### Ereb Rosh Hodesh Tevet & Ereb Shabbat

6th Night—Friday, December 11th

Shaharit ..... 6:15 am

Minha ..... 4:30 pm

Hanukkah Candle Lighting

(just before Shabbat Candles) ..... 4:20 pm

**Shabbat Candle Lighting ..... 4:26 pm**

Arbit / Kabbalat Shabbat ..... 5:00 pm

**Happy Hanukkah!**

## Condolences

We send our thoughts & prayers to the family of Abdollah Shahrabani, z"l, especially to his son Ronny Shahrabani, daughter-in-law, Edna, & their children. May Hashem comfort them together with all the mourners of Tzion.

## Refuah Shlemah

Abe Abraham • Moselle Amron  
Mordechai Cohen • Esther Duke  
Sassoon Ezra • Miriam bat Yetta  
Sylvia Cohen • Tilda Levy • Maurice Ovadia

(continued from page 1)

*us attack them and abolish the covenant made with them: Sabbath, new moon festivals, and circumcision.” – Antiochus 6-9*

In this rendition, the emphasis is much more about cultural attitudes and identity politics than miracles. The problem with the Jews from Antiochus's perspective was that we clung to our culture, failing to Hellenize and adopt the false gods of the Greeks. Moreover, our continued pride in our Jewish heritage even when faced with the reality of foreign conquest was an insult to everything that Greek civilization stood for. Hence, the true assault on the Jews began only *after* our military defeat, and it was aimed at the rituals that we held most dear *qua* Jews. The Megillah lionizes those who would sacrifice everything including their lives for these traditions, and only mentions

the oil at the very end of a narrative that is primarily about the vitality of the Jewish spirit. And even then, the oil is marshaled towards this point, since lighting the Menorah symbolizes the reestablishment of the Temple cult that formed the center of our uniquely Jewish worship rites.

Looking back at both of these versions, it seems that each has value to offer us in today's world. On one hand, we might look to Hanukkah as a call for embracing the benefits of particularism in a society that applauds universalism and expects assimilation. These eight days give us a moment to be proud of being Jewish, and inspire us to deepen our acquaintance with the tradition that nourished our people through so many centuries. On the other hand, we could equally look to Hanukkah as a simple reminder of the miraculousness of our lives in LA. Nations may have sought to overthrow

us, but the fact that we have a safe haven here in which to continue as Jews could very well have the hand of God on it. He may no longer intervene in such a dramatic way, but the idea that we are *still* commemorating a divine intervention from millennia ago when all the other chief players have been eliminated from the world is pretty amazing. After all, what relevance does the question of Hellenizing even have when there is no more ancient Greece?

Whatever Hanukkah is to you, I wish that it may be a source of spiritual reawakening in your lives. I have attached the Megillat Antiochus to the email version of Kol Mevasser for your reading pleasure in the hopes that it may inspire a sincere introspection on our values as Jews in the modern world.

Shabbat Shalom,

Rabbi Melhado

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



## Hanukkah Celebration

Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup> 2015 at 11:00 am

*featuring wonderful entertainment*

**Clown & Balloon Art Amazing Magician**

*Sweets & Treats for the Children & Fun for the Whole Family*

RSVP Requested by Dec. 11th

Elsa at 323.934.3439 Louise 818.884.0120 Hannie 310.247.0220



Norma & Sam Dabby Jewish Education Center



**KJ Talmud Torah  
& Sunday School**  
**Friends Creativity**  
**Jewish Learning**

**For information contact**  
Mrs. Hanna Elkouby, Director  
424-283-0893



## Eight Days of Lights!

Celebrate Hanukkah with KJ!

Night 1 - Sunday, December 6th

First Night Lighting - 4:15 PM

Start your Hanukkah off right with mincha, a short class on Hanukkah, § arbit, followed by candle lighting with donuts and music

Week of Hanukkah

Special Hanukkah Shaharit

Monday, December 7 - Friday, December 11 §

Monday, December 14 - 6:15 AM

Sunday, December 13 at 7:30 AM

Join us each morning as we read shaharit with Hallel, do a special Torah reading for Hanukkah, § light the menorah to celebrate the miracle of Hanukkah

Day 6 - Saturday, December 12

Shabbat Hanukkah Kiddush

We will have a special Hanukkah kiddush, sponsored by Rabbi Melhado § family in honor of Penny's first birthday, and by Louise Nathan § Sunny Sassoon in memory of their father, Jack Sassoon.

Day 7 - Sunday, December 13-Parties!

Talmud Torah Hanukkah Party - 10:00 AM

Raffles, prizes, food § surprises!

Sisterhood Hanukkah Celebration - 11:00 AM

Clown § balloon art! Magician! Sweets and treats for the children! It'll be fun for the whole family. RSVP by Dec 11th

Westwood Synagogues' Hanukkah Block Party

5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

In front of the Westwood Jewish Center - Westwood Ave. and Massachusetts. Join us for a DJ, food and menorah lighting, with friends from all of the Westwood-area synagogues.

## Hanukkah Blessings

As we light the Hanukkah candles each night of the holiday we thank G-d for giving us mitsvot and for performing miracles.

On all eight nights we recite these two blessings:

ברוך אתה יי, אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו  
במצותיו, וצונו להדליק נר חנוכה.  
ברוך אתה יי, אלהינו מלך העולם, שעשה נסים  
לאבותינו, בימים ההם בזמן הזה.

1. Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-he-nu Me-lech ha-olam a-sheer ki-de-sha-nu be-mitz-vo-tav ve-tzi-va-nu le-had-lik ner Cha-nu-kah.

2. Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-he-nu Me-lech Ha-olam she-a-sa ni-sim la-avo-te-nu ba-ya-mim ha-hem bi-zman ha-zeh.

1. Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to kindle the Hanukkah light.

2. Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who performed miracles for our forefathers in those days, at this time.

We say the third blessing, Shehekheyanu, only on the first night, to thank G-d for allowing us to experience Hanukkah anew:

ברוך אתה יי, אלהינו מלך העולם, שהחיינו וקיימנו  
והגיענו לזמן הזה:

3. Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-he-nu Me-lech Ha-olam she-heche-ya-nu ve-ki-yi-ma-nu ve-higi-a-nu liz-man ha-zeh.

3. Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion.