

KOL MEVASSER

Message from the Rabbi *On Communal Memory in the Spirit of Pesah*

For a parashah with narrative action, it doesn't get much fuller than Parashat Bo. The text ranges thrillingly from the last three plagues to the first Paschal Lamb, to the mitsvot of Matsah and Pidyon Haben (redeeming the firstborn); and its crowning glory is that this is the parashah in which Pharaoh agrees to free the Israelites. We start Bo as slaves near the lowest point we have ever experienced, but we end it as Am Yisrael, an unprecedented nation that is still surviving and thriving more than three thousand years later.

Reading the text, we might think that this story is unforgettable, but to ensure that it stays that way, God commands us to retell the tale to every subsequent generation among us (Ex. 13:5-8). Along with a few other parallel passages, this commandment forms the basis not only of the annual Seder tradition, but also of the eponymous section of the Haggadah known as "Maggid." Indeed, the commandment is so central to the themes of Pesah that Our Sages leave its words ringing in our ears



as the Maggid draws to a close: "In every generation one must look upon himself as if he had personally come forth from Egypt, in keeping with the Biblical command, 'And you shall tell your child on that day, it is because of that which the Lord did to *me* when I went forth from Egypt.'"

We will have plenty of time to explore these themes when Pesah rolls around in a few months, so I will put a different twist on it for this week by raising the question of other stories of communal memory that have come up since the Exodus. The Jews have been through many highs and lows in the past three millennia, in numerous lands around the Mediterranean, Asia, and the New World – what is our responsibility to teach ourselves and others about these as well?

In the Classical Period, our Babylonian-Persian Hahamim saw the Purim and Hanukkah stories as so important that the blessings they coined for the Megillah and Menorah audaciously describe them as commandments from God (for the Scriptural justification of this type of blessing, see Shabbat 23a). Neither of these events was as epoch-making as the Exodus, but they were both times when the Jewish people faced an urgent situation where everything they held dear was about to be lost. In the eyes of the Hahamim, the fact that we made it to the other side is significant, and must be preserved for

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Parashat Bo

Torah: Ex. 10:1–13:16, 106 Pesukim
Hertz 248–262; Stone 340–365
Iraqi Haftarah: Is. 19:1–25
Handout (not in the Hertz or Stone)
Tefillot: Mashib Haruah

KJ Schedule

Ereb Shabbat

Friday, January 15th

Shaharit 6:25 am
Minha..... 4:30 pm
Shabbat Candle Lighting 4:48 pm
Arbit / Kabbalat Shabbat.... 5:00 pm

Yom Shabbat

Saturday, January 16th

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 5:52 pm

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Shabbat Kiddush

is sponsored
in loving memory of

Mollie Einy Konigsberg
z"l

by The Einy Family
& The Konigsberg Family

Condolences

to the Family & Friends of
Mollie Einy Konigsberg z"l
especially her husband, Norman
Konigsberg, and her children, our
Board President, Ronald Einy (Letizia)
and Edmund Einy (Devin).

She was the loving grandmother of
Macklin, Anson, Charles and Miranda.
*May Hashem comfort them together with all
the mourners of Tzion.*

Refuah Shelemah

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

Thank You

The Board of Directors
would like to express their thanks
and utmost gratitude to

The Ironi and Kamara Families

for the significant contribution
they have made in loving memory of

Mr. and Mrs.
Menashe & Marcel Kamara, z"l

and it will be dedicated by
the naming of our synagogue sanctuary
in their names.

Shabbat Shalom Umborakh

Wishing You a Peaceful Shabbat of Blessings

KJ Schedule (continued)

Weekdays

Sunday, January 10th

Shaharit 7:30 am
Talmud Torah & Sunday School 10:00 am

Monday, January 18 to Friday, January 22

Shaharit 6:25 am

Ereb Shabbat

Friday, January 22nd

Shaharit 6:25 am
Minha 4:30 pm
Shabbat Candle Lighting.....4:55 pm
Arbit / Kabbalat Shabbat 5:00 pm

In Memoriam

We remember yearzeit anniversaries from
January 16 to 23, 2016. It is customary to light
a memorial candle, donate tzedaka & attend
Shabbat services.

6 Shebat / Shabbat, January 16th

Albert Gaub Avner Abraham ben Khatoon
Maurice Jacob Jonah Maurice ben Yaacov

8 Shebat / Monday, January 18th

Ezra Ekaireb Ezra Sion ben David
F. Ellis Meyer Elijahoo Faraj ben Avraham Shalom
Rebecca Mizrahie Rivka bat Toba
Edward Shashoua Sion Edward ben Elisha

9 Shebat / Tuesday, January 19th

Saul Zakoo Shaul Hai ben Ezra Zakoo HaLevy

10 Shebat / Wednesday, January 20th

Naima Dabby Naima bat Chahla

11 Shebat / Thursday, January 21st

Malacj Khamani Serah bat Simcha

12 Shebat / Friday, January 22nd

Abraham M. Cohen Avraham Shalom Mor-
dechai Yitzhak HaCohen
Matthew Ellenhorn Matatyehu ben Shmuel
Maurice Kadoorie Moshe ben Saleh Kadoorie
Rachel bat Masooda

13 Shebat / Shabbat, January 23rd

Sheila Cohen Sulha Khatoon bat Rivka
Nanejan Davoudian Nanejan bat Hacham Mo-
la Rebbi
Alex Sassoon

Norma & Sam Dabby Jewish Education Center

KJ Talmud Torah

Friends Creativity Jewish Learning

For information contact

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Rabbi's Message

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all generations through the creation of mandatory holidays and ritual actions.

Yet in that regard, Hanukkah is clearly the exception that proves the rule: in a post-Biblical world, only this one story is preserved through a formal holiday sanctioned by all Jewish denominations. The rest of our many tales – be they good or bad – require a different sort of custodianship without the stamp of God's authority.

So what are we to do? As a synagogue with members from across Asia, we know that our histories are unique, but without our encouragement, the wider community may not invest in maintaining these narratives for us. Instead it is up to us, and we have several pathways available:

We can preserve them through our minds by reading (or writing!) books and articles about the history of our individual Jewish communities.

We can preserve them through our actions by creating events and displays such as our recent Iraqi Jewish Archives bus trip to Yorba Linda.

And we can preserve them through our relationships by reaching out to our elders and getting to know them *à la* Deut. 32:7.

Some of us may be better equipped than others, but each of us has the power to have some impact on sharing our past with the people who represent our future. In the weeks between now and Pesah, I encourage you to ask yourself: "What can I do to take ownership of my roots?" If you do this with your whole hearts, it will add a new layer of meaning to the holiday in which we spend one week reminding ourselves where the Jews first came from.

Shabbat Shalom!



Conversations

The Journal of the Institute for Jewish Ideas & Ideals

Kahal Joseph is excited to offer FREE copies of the newest edition of "Conversations," the journal of the Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals. The Institute's founder, Rabbi Marc D. Angel, visited us in October, so if you enjoyed meeting him and hearing his reflections, you'll be sure to find the journal worth a read. This edition focuses on the challenges of Jewish education, and features articles from Rabbis, academics, politicians, and laypeople who approach the question from many different angles and perspectives.

Copies will be given away at 1 copy per household on a first-come, first-served basis (contact: Rabbi Melhado). Each edition addresses topics that touch our lives as Orthodox Jews in modern society.

KJ Events

January to March 2016

Tu Bishbat Celebration

Sunday, January 24th



A family-friendly Tu Bishbat program, with fun for parents and children! RSVP at kahaljoseph.org Contact Jessica@kahaljoseph.org

Rabbi's Installation

Sunday, March 6th

Formal investiture of Rabbi Melhado as spiritual leader of Kahal Joseph. This community building event will be a chance to share our beautiful congregation with the wider LA Jewish world, so mark your calendars for a great evening!



Purim Baking

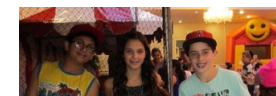
Sunday, March 13th

Join the fun & bake traditional Iraqi sweets for KJ's Community Gift Baskets. We are so happy to use our beautiful new ovens for this mitsvah!

Purim Carnival

Sunday, March 20th

KJ's annual festive celebration with carnival booths, fun games & rides, amazing costumes & wonderful food.



Remembering Lieutenant General JFR Jacob

On January 13, 2016, Jacob Farj Rafael Jacob, an Indian Army Lieutenant General, passed away in India, at the age of 92. His family came from Iraq in the middle of the 18th century and settled in Calcutta. He enlisted in the British army in 1942, after he was motivated by reports of the Holocaust of European Jews during World War Two. He served in that war and was best known for commanding Indian troops in the two wars his country fought with Pakistan in the last half century: One in 1965 and the other in 1971 that ended in the liberation of Bangladesh. The following article shed some light about General Jacob. —Maurice Shohet

article by Manimugdha S Sharma
from *The Times of India*

“I will tell you what Bill Slim had told me once: punctuality is the hallmark of an officer”—these were the first words of Lieutenant General Jack Farj Rafael Jacob (Retired) to me one March morning in 2012. I was 12 minutes late for a meeting with him at his Som Vihar residence and the general was clearly not amused. Libyan militia had destroyed war graves of British and Commonwealth troops, including Indians, at Benghazi and I had reached out to General Jacob for a reaction.

“Before you ask me anything, I want you to take a look at that thing on the wall,” Jacob directed my attention to a notice dated May 1, 1941. It read, *“Officers and other ranks, whether on duty or on leave in this station, are forbidden to discuss military subjects in public. Severe disciplinary action will be taken against any officer or other rank who disobeys this order.”* I thought the meeting



was going badly. Jacob then calmed my nerves saying, “Of course, I am not serious. That was in the Second World War!” He explained that it was handed to him when he had joined duty as an Emergency Officer. “I joined the Indian Army because I wanted to fight the Nazis for what they did to the Jews. I’m a Jew myself,” Jacob said. He was later commissioned into the Royal Indian Artillery.

And so we started talking about the Second World War and his role in it, his association with Glubb Pasha, the Bangladesh War, Niazi’s surrender, the Hamoodur Rahman Commission, Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, etc. over many cups of Darjeeling tea. The general had surrounded Dhaka with 3,000 troops and forced General A A K Niazi of Pakistan Army to surrender unconditionally—a rare feat that got him immortal fame.

Yet Jacob seemed particularly glad to talk about the Second World War. “My unit took on the might of Rommel’s Afrika Korps in North Africa. We faced the Panzer divisions without any tank support and were cut up quite badly. We had to regroup,” the general recounted with a sense of pride and loss, both at the same time. He missed most of the action in North Africa, though, as he lost contact with his unit. But he saw action

in Burma as part of Field Marshal Viscount William ‘Bill’ Slim’s Fourteenth Army.

As part of this multinational force, 65% of which was Indian, Jacob had many close shaves. “At Ramree Island, we fought the Japanese in crocodile-infested waters. Those bloody crocs! We used to carry sticks to hit them if they came close. Then in Burma, I was wounded in a strafing attack by Japanese fighters. One of the jemadars (a VCO) who was offering namaz was shot in his bottom. Those were terrible times,” Jacob had recalled.

But he was also very critical of our role as journalists in disseminating information about the war. “Young Sharma, I wonder why your media always harps on the Bangladesh War to glorify the Indian Army. Our army achieved far greater glory in WWII than anywhere else. Why not talk about that?”

Jacob was well-liked by the forces, but his critical opinion about the role of Field Marshal Manekshaw and Lieutenant General Jagjit Singh Aurora in the Bangladesh War earned him some detractors. However, he wasn’t too bothered about that. “I have nothing to win or lose now. I have donated everything I had to charity. I only hope someone will read the Kaddish for me when I am dead,” he had said.

As the news broke this morning that General Jacob was no more, the only thing I could think of was if someone had read the Kaddish for him. An eventful chapter in this country’s history has now closed.
