

KOL MEVASSER

Rabbi's Message

Sometimes it only takes half a *pasuk* to set the mind churning. In the right context, a scant few words can be loaded with enough meaning to fuel extensive contemplation of an issue in the world around us. Aroused by the text of the Torah, we become conscious of a thread of continuity between ancient problems and the challenges of our own modern lives.

Such a verse can be found in Gen. 19:9, when the people of Sodom react to Lot's attempt to prevent them from assaulting his guests: *"You have come to dwell among us and yet you judge us?! Now we will do worse to you than to them!"* Captured in just ten Hebrew words is one of the uglier sides of human nature that we have all seen at a distance if not tasted first-hand: the tendency to sort everyone into rigid camps of "we" and "you," and to treat each side according to imbalanced, emotionally driven standards. "We" are doing just fine, thank you very much, and don't need weirdos like "you" messing it up!

Yet as identity politics have grown in cultural importance, so too has the idea of "identity" embraced a wider range of possible self-understandings. Together with the weakening of social boundaries against outmarriage, this increases the likelihood that multiple identities will intersect within one person, who thus cannot function as an idealized representative of any single sub-identity. Rising numbers of people are partly "we" and partly "you" at all times, an experience that was movingly captured in a recent Facebook posting by a friend of mine in New York:

"I am the product of a mixed marriage. It doesn't matter who or what. What does matter is that, growing up, I thought this was the worst possible thing to do to a kid – to give them an ambiguous identity. Why? Because neither group to which I lay claim would fully accept me. I didn't look enough like either aesthetically to fit in and be claimed. I didn't speak this way enough, I didn't dress that way enough, and what I knew or didn't know about either group was shameful and laughable. I grew up with family taunting, which would, with stinging scrutiny, explain to me that all of my undesirable traits could be attributed to the 'other' side of the family."

Her words touched me as one who grew up in a different kind of mixed family, but even without that background, many of us have felt the pull (or push) to draw a line in the sand around who we feel we are. Should we define ourselves by how we encounter the world as Jews? Or perhaps as Americans, Iraqis or Persians; men or women; old or young; white or people of color; professionals or what we like to do in our spare time. Does it matter whether the defining feature is something we have the power to change?

Often lost in the interplay is a discussion of the consequences of "belonging" or "being claimed." Does it confer any benefit? Does it exact a toll? Is that equation balanced? If my friend's post is any indication, much is sacrificed on the altar of group solidarity. On this anniversary of the upheaval of Sodom, let us turn their black-and-white posturing on its head as well. A touch of gray looks distinguished, we are told; well let's see what it looks like on the world.



Parashat Vayera

Torah: Gen. 18:1–22:24, 147 Pesukim
Hertz 63–76; Stone 78–105
Haftara: II Kings 4:1–23
Hertz 76–78; Stone 1134–1135
Tefillot: Mashiv Haruah

KJ Schedule

Erev Shabbat

Friday, November 18th

Shaharit 6:25 am
Candle Lighting 4:29 pm
Minha 4:15 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat / Arvit 4:30 pm

Yom Shabbat

Saturday, November 19th

Shaharit / Morning Prayer 8:30 am
Keri'at HaTorah 10:15 am
Musaf 11:45 am
Women's Tehillim right after kiddush

Minha 3:45 pm
Se'uda Shelisheet 4:30 pm
Arvit 5:15 pm
Havdala 5:32 pm

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Weekdays

Sunday, November 20th

Shaharit7:30 am
Talmud Torah10:00 am

Mon to Wed & Fri, November 21--23 & 25
Shaharit.....6:25 am

Thanksgiving

Thursday, November 24th

Shaharit7:00 am

Next Shabbat

Fri & Sat, Nov 25 & 26

Candle lighting4:26 pm
Friday Minha4:15 pm
Shaharit8:30 am
Saturday Minha5:29 pm

Shabbat Shalom U'Mevorakh

Shabbat Kiddush

is sponsored
in loving memory of

Mary Saleh, z"l
Haim Saleh, z"l

by
Viva & Charles Rabbie

Refu'a Shelema

Moselle Amron • Sally Amron
Yehezkel Avrahamy • Haskell Avrahami
Sylvia Cohen • Mordechai Cohen
Esther Duke • Sassoon Ezra • Lev Hakak
Yoel Iny • Tilda Levy • Florice Newberry
Maurice Ovadia • Grace Tizabi
Katie bat Farha • Miriam bat Yetta
Aliza bat Rahel • Aliza bat Victoria
Devora bat Patricia • Simcha bat Rooha

In Memoriam

We remember yahrzeit anniversaries from November 19 to 26, 2016. It is customary to light a memorial candle, donate tzedaka & attend Shabbat services.

18 Heshvan / Shabbat, November 19th

Yeshaiah ben Yaacov Shalom
Hazan Gabriel Solomon *Gavriel ben Shlomo*

20 Heshvan / Monday, November 21st

Mordechai Harkham Mordechai ben Hacham David
Victoria Zeubaida Nissam Victoria Zeubaida bat Lulu
Esther Robbins Esther bat Matana

21 Heshvan / Tuesday, November 22nd

Joshua Moses Yehoshua ben Ephraim

22 Heshvan / Wednesday, November 23rd

Khuzna Levi Khuzna bat Esther HaLevi

24 Heshvan / Friday, November 25th

Joseph Ezrapour Yoseph ben Ezra
Jacob Elias Yaacov Moshe ben Eliyahu

25 Heshvan / Shabbat, November 26th

Charles E. Lelah Salah ben Aharon



Tsitsit Tying Class

Monday, 11/21 @ 7:00 pm

Dinner with RSVP

Want to know how to tie your own tsitsit? Ever wondered why fewer and fewer talletot are available at Kahal on Shabbat?

At Rabbi Melhado's tsitsit tying class, you can try your hand at this mitsva by helping to refurbish the torn and broken tsitsit on our house talletot. What a great opportunity to do a mitsva for your community and learn a useful Jewish skill at the same time!

Dairy dinner is available for \$15 to all who RSVP by 10 pm on Sunday, November 20th.
Register at <http://www.kahaljoseph.org/tsitsit.html>.

Mazal Tov

to Rabbi Melhado on his
21st Bar Mitsva Anniversary

To celebrate, Rabbi Melhado will read
parashat Vayera for the KJ community

Women's Tehillim Group

Join your fellow Kahal Joseph sisters right after Kiddush to recite the Book of Psalms and pray for our community. All women are welcome to participate.



Tribute to Abe Abraham

Friends and well-wishers can send memories and words of comfort to abetribute@gmail.com

It is with deep sadness I heard that my good friend Abe passed to his eternal rest on Kol Nidre evening.

For over three decades I came to respect, admire and cherish him and value his friendship. Abe's keen desire was to preserve the Iraqi traditional "Ta'amim" and melodies he learnt growing up in Shanghai. To Abe, "Prayers without melodies are only words". I admired his devotion to prepare Bnai Mitzvah to recite the Torah and the Maftir in the proper way.

I loved to be invited with my wife, Ruby, for his Shabbat Hamim Lunch, which he cooked and prepared all by himself to perfection. The dessert was truly a finger licking experience. This cherished and memorable occasion only ended after we all sang the Shabbat Shebahot.

He was the happiest when I took him to Central Market, the wholesale fruits and vegetable market; I use to go to regularly to buy fruits for drying. He was like a kid in a candy store. He moved from one stall to another for better fruits and a better bargain. "I feel I am back in Shanghai" he used to tell me.

He sat just behind me at Kahal Joseph. It was easy for me to turn around when I had a question about the Torah portion. He was well-versed and had a wealth of knowledge.

A dozen red roses were placed on Shabbat Ha'azinu. I, like all members of Kahal Joseph, am truly saddened and will always miss him.

Joe Samuels



Yom Kippur Appeal

There is still time to send in your donations!

So far there has been a nice response to the Yom Kippur Appeal. A big Kahal Joseph thank you goes to each person who honored their generous pledges!

If you haven't made payment arrangements or want to join onto the appeal from scratch, there is still time to send in donations. They can be addressed to Kahal with "Yom Kippur Appeal" in the memo line, or you can fulfill your pledge on our secure online form at <http://www.kahaljoseph.org/donate>.



The funds raised will be evenly divided between Kahal Joseph and Yad Eliezer, a charity in Israel that provides food and social services to the poor. Even a small amount can relieve stress and bring joy to families who are struggling to meet their basic needs.

The success of our Yom Kippur appeal reminds us how we may accomplish amazing things when we join together. Collaborating towards a common goal enables each of us to contribute in our own way. The Yom Kippur appeal will not only help Kahal Joseph thrive, but also will bring a lot of happiness to poor people in Erets Yisrael.

LOS ANGELES SEPHARDIC FILM FESTIVAL LAEMMLE MUSIC HALL • 9036 Wilshire

SATURDAY November 19 • 10:00 PM



In Search of Israeli Cuisine

U.S.A. 2016 (100 min) English (Documentary)

The film's chef/guide is Michael Solomonov, a James Beard Award winning chef and co-owner of acclaimed Zahav in Philadelphia.

Mike was born in Israel and grew up in Pittsburgh and is inspired by the flavors and aromas from his Sephardic grandmother's kitchen. The filmmakers follow Mike into hot restaurants and home kitchens, wineries and cheese makers, he eats street food and visits markets. All over the country, he discusses traditions, ingredients, the origins, and the future of Israeli Cuisine, with a nod to the many Sephardic culinary tastes. This is a delicious film!

CLOSING NIGHT

SUNDAY November 20 • 2:30 PM *West Coast Premiere*



Cloudy Sunday

Greece, 2016 (115 min) Greek and Ladino with English Subtitles

Set in 1942 Salonika during the Nazi German occupation, the film, based on true events, tells of the forbidden love between two members of the resistance- Estrea, a young Sephardic girl, and Giorgos, the brother-in-law of the famed composer Vassilis Tsitsanis. Much of the story takes place in and around the night club owned by the then 28-year-old Tsitsanis with beautiful bouzouki music throughout. The film's English title references Tsitsanis' beloved classic "Synnefisameni Kyriaki", one of the songs featured in the movie.

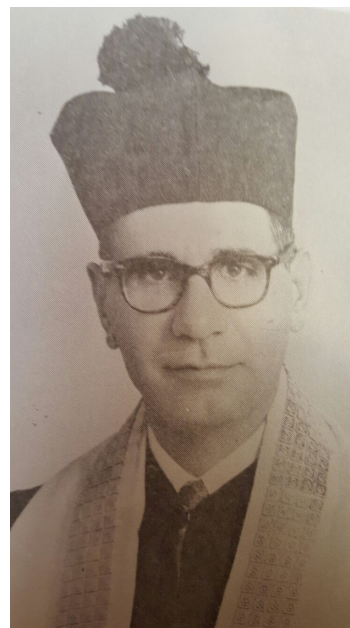
SUNDAY November 20 • 5:30 PM *Los Angeles Premiere*



On the Banks of the Tigris

Australia, 2015 (79 min) English and Arabic with English Subtitles

The film celebrates Iraqi music and the cultural ties that link Iraqis of all faiths. It tells the story of Majid Shokor, an Iraqi-Australian from a Muslim background who seeks the source of songs he loves and discovers that many he grew up with were written by Iraqi Jews, but concealed by the regime. To uncover this hidden history, Majid embarks on a bold journey from Australia to Israel, Europe and Iraq to meet Iraqi musicians, hear their music and stories, and unite them in a concert for peace and reconciliation.



Hakarat Hatov

Kahal Joseph honors the memory of Hazan Ezekiel Hai Albeg (1910-1995), author of our brown *Siddur Shabbat Shalom* prayer books.

Hazan Albeg was born in Baghdad and studied at the Midrash Bet Zilkha before immigrating to Erets Yisrael as a teenager. He was an active participant in the New Yishuv until 1937, an experience that he carried close to his heart throughout the remainder of his life US. In America, he served as editor of the famed Hebrew Publishing Company, as well as hazan for

the Syrian community in Brooklyn, for whom he wrote his siddur and several mahzorim.

He is perhaps best known as a Paytan of the highest order, composing hundreds of songs that are still in use in the Sephardi community today. His "Nava Yafa Tseviya" featured prominently in Ellie Melhado's baby naming, which took place only a few miles from his last residence in Santa Monica.

The Melhados feel fortunate to have found a dozen copies of his long out-of-print siddur online, which they donate to Kahal Joseph on the anniversary of Rabbi Melhado's bar mitzva in honor of the newest addition to their family.

