

KOL MEVASSER

Death Gives Life

By Rabbi Joseph Dweck

Reading Parashat Hukat, it seems that almost everything in it is a life and death issue. Its first verses open with the Para Aduma (Red Heifer), and the purification process for one who has come into contact with death. Miriam and Aharon die, and Moshe is sentenced to death. Masses die by snakebite, and it is here that we are told that the entire adult male population that left Egypt died in the desert. The parasha is clearly death-heavy. But fittingly, it is also life-heavy. It is here that a whole new and hopeful generation of Israel is born. We read of their first victories and the great battles they waged en route to the Promised Land. Having experienced death and loss, they learned to embrace life. They found, ironically, that their lives were important enough to risk dying for.

The idea that death gives life its luster may sound odd, but let us consider -- what meaning would a life have if it never ended? What would ultimately define it as a life? Knowing that our days will inevitably come to an end and that our lives are finite makes every day -- indeed, every moment that we live -- utterly unique and special. Losing consciousness of our mortality inevitably leaves life without meaning, for when life has no end, it has no definition. When a society does not include death as a vital part of life its days lose their vigour and deteriorate into the generic. Time then becomes something to



“pass”, “fill” and even “kill” rather than something prime and precious.

Perhaps the worst outcome of this is that it creates a society submerged in ennui whose highest bar of achievement is set firmly (and safely) at mediocrity. This may be an exaggerated description of our modern world, but it is not, at least, unfamiliar. When we choose to forget that our hours and days, months and years, are the only ones we'll ever have, we let life pass and before we know it, it does. We stop caring enough to do our best and instead of living life, it lives us.

We settle for, and often hide behind, the unexciting, the unexceptional and the undistinguished. In all of this the greatest casualty is our own identity. We steadily become convinced that we don't matter, we find refuge in indifference and we fail to find and create the beauty that only a finite existence allows for. We regularly say we've done our best (which, by definition, is the most one can do) when instead, we've merely done what we were comfortable with. Perhaps, at the core of it all, we fear that achieving our greatest self is just too great a weight to bear. Hukat teaches us in its theme that the greatest motivation to living a vibrant and meaningful life is to know that it is the only one we will ever have.

We must come to remember that no one will live our lives for us and that the existence we have will be great or small, powerful or weak, successful or failing because of what we choose to make it. Knowing that it is utterly unique and irrevocable is what fills our days with glorious beauty.

Parashat Hukat

Independence Day Weekend

Torah: Num. 19:1–22:1, 87 Pesukim

Hertz 652–664; Stone 838–855

Haftara: Judg. 11:1–33

Hertz 664–667; Stone 1187–1189

Tefillot: Morid Hatal, Birkat Halevana

KJ Schedule

Erev Shabbat

Friday, June 30th

Shaharit	6:25 am
Candle lighting.....	7:50 pm
Minha.....	6:30 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat / Arvit	7:00 pm

Yom Shabbat

Saturday, July 1st

Shaharit / Morning Prayer	8:30 am
Keri'at HaTorah	10:15 am
Musaf	11:40 am
Women's Tehillim	6:15 pm
Minha	7:15 pm
Se'uda Shelisheet.....	8:00 pm
Arvit	8:40 pm
Havdala	8:53 pm

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Mazal Tov

to
Bahareh Orly Haykani and
Jason Moshe Saidian
on their marriage
last Sunday

Besiman Tov
to proud parents
Mr. & Mrs. Bijan Haykani
and Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Saidian

On Independence Day
Kahal Joseph

Salutes the Memory of
Francis Salvador

The first Jew to hold public office
in the Thirteen Colonies,
and on August 1st, 1776
the first Jewish casualty
of the American Revolution

Volunteers Needed for the Playroom!

Join us on
Sunday, July 16th
& enjoy a pizza
lunch for your
trouble.



Contact jessica@kahaljoseph.org

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Sunday, July 2nd

Shaharit 7:30 am

Monday & Wednesday-Friday, July 3, 5-7

Shaharit 6:25 am

Independence Day / Tuesday, July 4th

Shaharit 7:00 am

Next Shabbat / Fri-Sat, July 7-8

Shabbat Candle lighting 7:49 pm

Friday Mincha 6:30 pm

Shaharit 8:30 am

Saturday Mincha 7:15 pm

Havdala 8:52 pm

A MINUTE OF MIDRASH

PARASHAT HUKAT * BEMIDBAR RABBA 19:1

"ZOT HUKAT HATORAH / THIS IS THE
ORDINANCE OF THE TORAH." – this verse is in
conversation with a parallel text from Job:

"WHO CAN BRING FORTH A CLEAN THING
FROM AN UNCLEAN? NOT ONE." (Job 14:4).

With our parasha in mind, the second verse should be read
as if it were saying,

"Who can bring someone like Avraham from Terah; or
Hizkiya from Ahaz, Yoshia from Amon, Mordekhai from
Shimi, the Israelites from the idol worshipers; or something
like The Next World from This World? Who has done this?
Who has commanded this?

Who has decreed this if NOT the ONE,
God of the Universe!"

*This Midrash turns one of the most depressing verses in
Job into a remez, a hint, of the greatest successes of God's
will. By aligning Hukat with it, we emphasize how
triumph can emerge from anywhere, even the unlikely
of sources, through the power of God.*

*May all our endeavors be like God's words, and like
flowers that grow in concrete.*

In Memoriam

We remember the following yearzeit anniver-
saries from July 1 to 8, 2017. It is customary to
light a memorial candle, donate tzedaka &
attend Shabbat services.

8 Tamuz / Sunday, July 2nd

Isaac Shamsi *Itzhak ben Shemuel*

10 Tamuz / Tuesday, July 4th

Khanbaba Pouladian *Itzhak ben Avraham*
Hatoon bat Haviva

Isaac Shamash *Itzhak Rahamim ben Abraham*

11 Tamuz / Wednesday, July 5th

Joseph Bensabat *Yosef ben Simy Moryousef*
Florence Nathan *Farha bat Toba*
Moshe Sasson *Moshe ben Sasson*
Solomon Leo Sassoon *Shlomo ben Yamin*
Esther Levy Solomon *Esther bat Leah Matana*

12 Tamuz / Thursday, July 6th

Eshagh Sarraf *Eshagh ben Yehuda*

14 Tamuz / Shabbat, July 8th

Rachel Meyer Judah *Rachel bat Aziza*

Refu'a Shelema

Moselle Amron • Sally Amron
Haskell Avrahamy • Sylvia Cohen
Mordechai Cohen • Esther Duke
Sassoon Ezra • Tilda Levy
Florice Newberry
Aliza bat Rahel • Aliza bat Victoria
Arlette bat Rashel • Chaya Chana bat Batya
Katie bat Farha • Malka bat Rahel
Mehry bat Miriam Hakimipour
Miriam bat Yetta • Miryam bat Malka
Moshe Ezra ben Mazal Tov
Yvonne Moalim • Simcha bat Rooha

Shabbat Matters!

**Rules, Rituals and Meaning
Mondays at 8PM live on YouTube!**

Join Rabbi Melhado for an
interactive, online series on
all aspects of Shabbat

Email rabbimelhado@kahaljoseph.org for the direct link

Session II begins in July!

July 3: What are we resting from: The 39 Labors

July 10: Is that Practical? Food & Transportation

July 17: Bend Me, Break Me: Shabbat & Other Values

July 24: Crescent & Cross: Shabbat & Non-Jewish
Society

Missed Session I?

Find them online at

www.kahaljoseph.org/shabbat-matters.html

Class 1: What's it all about? The Philosophy of Shabbat

Class 2: Get the Spirit: Honoring & Protecting Shabbat

Class 3: Who/What/Why? Candles, Kiddush, Meals & Havdala

Class 4: Trumped! Shabbat v. Special Circumstances

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

SHABBAT DINNER

FRIDAY, JULY 14 AT 7:30 PM

Interested in....

a delicious dinner?

meeting new people?

an interesting discussion?



Join Rabbi Melhado and his family at home for a
relaxed, joyful Shabbat dinner with good people.

Open to members and friends in their 20s and 30s.

Register now by emailing Rabbi at rabbimelhado@kahaljoseph.org.

FEEDBACK WANTED!

We're sure you have lots to say!



Parents, grandparents, friends, kids!

*We're looking to improve the
children's programming at Kahal.*

*What do you like now? What would you like to see us do
differently? What new things do you think we should do?
How do you want to be involved in the future?*

*Email Jessica at jessica@kahaljoseph.org with your
thoughts. I'm looking forward to hearing from you!*



Register now for fall!

The Sam and Norma Dabby Talmud Torah

Hebrew * Fun * Parasha * History
* Friends * Values * Holidays *
* Food * Mitzvot *
and you!

Contact Molly Jalali at molly@emetek.com or Rabbi Melhado at rabbimelhado@kahaljoseph.org for more information!

Registration forms at www.kahaljoseph.org/talmudtorah.html



Join Kahal Joseph at the Ball Park!
**Dodger's Jewish
Community Day**
Sunday August 13 at 1:10PM
Los Angeles Dodgers

v.

San Diego Padres

Group tickets \$34 including
Hebrew Dodgers hat!

RSVP by Wednesday, July 5
by calling the office at 310-474-0559

