

KOL MEVASSER

Rabbi's Message

As the younger of two brothers, I often think of Sefer Beresheet as a guilty pleasure. In nearly every generation of our forefathers, it is the younger brother who comes out on top despite social rules that should favor the firstborn. What lower sibling in the pecking order wouldn't be thrilled to hear that a higher one's dominance could be upended?



Time and time again this same story keeps coming back, no matter how complex the family structure. Yits'hak is the younger of two half-brothers, while Yaakov is the younger of fraternal twins. For Yosef's part, he is simply a younger brother among many, so it is only when his son Ephraim surpasses Menashe that we first encounter a rivalry between two non-twin brothers from the same parents.

Yet as much as I may enjoy reading about the ascendancy of these younger siblings, I have difficulty getting past what the older siblings' experiences must have been like. Who could blame Yishmael for growing up a "wild ass of a man" when he had to live through Sarah's harassment of his mother and Abraham disinheriting him? (Gen. 16, 21:1-21, 25:1-6). And while we can't condone the murderous rage of Esav or Yosef's brothers, we can well understand the emotional state that would lead them to detest their siblings so intensely (Gen. 27, 37).

Each of these older brothers entered into that funk for different reasons. Yishmael faced a heavenly decree against which there could be no argument, and ultimately seemed to make peace with it. On the other hand, Esav tasted a much more personal

betrayal from his twin, and spent 20 years getting over the sting. Reuben was simply jealous of their father's favoritism, momentarily pushed over the edge by Yosef's dreams only to see him kidnapped before Reuben could redeem himself.

What they all share is that something was taken from them that they had a right to expect. It is not only that the ancient world prized firstborn status, but God Himself Who makes it a central portion of our Jewish religion. Why else would He talk about the Jews as His "firstborn son," dedicate the firstborn to His service, and award the firstborn a double portion of the father's inheritance? (Ex. 4:2, 16:1-16, Deut. 21:15-17). The eldest son is clearly a respected station, and these displaced firstborns have every right to be upset about losing a tangible benefit.

That is why the response of Menashe is so intriguing. As a humiliating conversation about how much better his brother will be takes place right in front of him, he withholds his reaction and remains calm. He does not enter into the fray, complicating the story even more with angry recriminations or violence. Rather, he appears to accept that the lesser blessing from his grandfather is still a high compliment – indeed, to this very day Jewish children are blessed every Shabbat using Menashe's name. He seems to acknowledge that not everyone has to be first, and that there is grace, value, and beauty to a respectable second place. We might well ask whether he has done justice to his own feelings, and alas the text leaves that unanswered. Yet I like to imagine that the reward for his maturity is the loving support of his father as he processes his new lot. May we all be blessed with such forbearance!

Parashat Vayhi End of Beresheet

Torah: Gen. 47:28–50:26, 85 Pesukim
Hertz 180–191; Stone 268–289
Haftara: I Kings 2:1–12
Hertz 191–192; Stone 1145–1146
Tefillot: Mashiv Haruah, Birkat Halevana

Reminder

Shaharit next Shabbat will start at 8:15 to accommodate a simha and guest speaker.

KJ Schedule

Erev Shabbat

Friday, December 29th

Minha PROMPTLY at 4:30 pm
Candle lighting 4:34 pm

Yom Shabbat

Saturday, December 30th

Shaharit 8:30 am
Keri'at HaTorah 10:15 am
Musaf 11:40 am
Women's Tehillim *right after kiddush*
Minha 4:00 pm
Se'uda Shelisheet 4:45 pm
Arvit 5:25 pm
Havdala 5:38 pm

Sunday, December 31st

Shaharit 7:30 am
Talmud Torah *winter break*

(Continued on page 2)

Membership Benefits Everyone!

You get . . .

- ◆ To be part of the Kahal family
- ◆ High Holy Days tickets
- ◆ Rabbi for lifecycle events
- ◆ Pastoral counseling
- ◆ Preferential rates for space rentals, Talmud Torah tuition, and children's programs

You support . . .

- ◆ Educational programs
- ◆ Social events
- ◆ Prayer minyanim
- ◆ Keeping Kahal here for you when you need it!

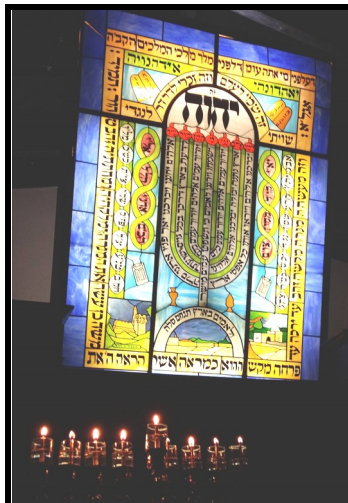
**Contact the office at 310-474-0559
or speak to Rabbi Melhado to join!**



Serving in Style

Arash Shadi mean-muggin' it with Rabbi Melhado after his volunteer shift last week.

To help do your part around Kahal, email rabbimelhado@kahaljoseph.org



As 2017 Ends, Give to KJ

The miracle of the oil that we just celebrated on Hanukkah is every non-profit's dream: making eight things happen with resources that should only cover one.

With the support of beloved members and friends like you, we can keep Kahal's light shining for everyone to share.

Make a tax-deductible contribution with our secure online form at www.kahaljoseph.org/donate or send a check with "Shine the Light" in the memo to Kahal Joseph at 10505 W. Santa Monica Blvd.

You can also volunteer at events, for the office, or for Rabbi Melhado's organization projects, email rabbimelhado@kahalioseph.org

Every person's gift makes a difference, great or small.

(Continued from page 1)

Federal Holiday

Monday, January 1st

Shaharit 7:00 am

Tuesday to Friday, January 2nd to 5th

Shaharit..... 6:25 am

Nes Tahmasp (no Tahanun)

Wednesday, January 3rd

Next Shabbat

Friday-Saturday, January 5-6

Shabbat Candle lighting..... 4:39 pm

Friday Minha 4:30 pm

Shaharit 8:30 am

Saturday Minha 4:00 pm

Havdala 5:44 pm

Refua Shelema

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

In Memoriam

We remember these yahrzeits from December 30 to January 6, 2017. It is customary to light memorial candles, donate tzedaka & attend Shabbat services in honor of loved ones.

13 Tevet / Sunday, December 31st

Ester Avrahami *Ester bat Gazala*
Fortuna Sinder *Fortuna bat Suzan*

16 Tevet / Wednesday, January 3rd

Khasnah bat Rahel

17 Tevet / Thursday, January 4th

David Jacob *Haskel Hai ben Yaacov*
Victoria Reuben *Victoria bat Chahla*
Farha Shamash *Farha bat Masooda*

18 Tevet / Friday, January 5th

David Davoudian *David ben Yehezkel*
Esperance Mathalon Shaaya *Esperance bat*
Simcha

19 Tevet / Shabbat, January 6th

Yeheskel Goury *Yeheskel ben Shaul*
Solomon Raymond *Shlomo ben Rahamim*

FORGOTTEN YOUR HEBREW? NEVER HAD ANY?

HEBREW FOR BEGINNERS

WITH RABBI MELHADO

FIRST MEETING

WED. JAN. 3 AT 6:30PM

Adult Bat Mitzvah Class

First Meeting

Wed. Jan. 3 at 7:30PM

Women with all levels of Hebrew &
Jewish knowledge welcome!

Contact Yvette Dabby at YvetteDabby@gmail.com
to sign up for either class or both!

JANUARY

Children's Shabbat



SATURDAY, JANUARY 6 - PARASHAT SHEMOT

PLAYROOM OPENS AT 10:00 - PROGRAM BEGINS AT 10:30

EXPLORE THE STORY OF MOSES WITH US!

START THE MORNING WITH *PRAYER*

PARTICIPATE IN GAMES & ACTIVITIES

ENJOY A *PARASHA-THEMED* SNACK

TORAH TOTS - 0 to 5

TORAH & ME - 6 to 12

Email Jessica at Jessica@kahaljoseph.org for more information or to volunteer!



Kahal Joseph's 5778

Speaker Series



Professor Nadia Malinovich

Saturday, January 6, 2018



Professor Malinovich received her bachelors in History from Oberlin College and her PhD in History from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. After a Post-doctoral Fellowship at New York University, she began teaching in France.

Now an Associate Professor of American Studies at the Universite Picardie-Jules Verne, she has a special interest in French Jewish History, about which she has written extensively.

Her current project is an exploration of the lives of graduates of the Alliance Israelite Universelle schools in the Middle East and North Africa, both pre- and post-immigration to France, Canada and the United States.

Did you or your parents attend an Alliance Israelite Universelle school in the Middle East or North Africa?

In addition to speaking at Kahal, Dr. Nadia Malinovich will be in Los Angeles from January 5 to 13 to conduct in-person interviews with people who graduated from the Alliance Israelite Universelle schools in the Middle East or Africa.

In collaboration with the AIU Library in Paris and the Sephardi Federation in New York, she has already completed 40 interviews in Paris & Montreal. Now, she looks to the Los Angeles community.

To find out more, or to schedule a time to speak,
email her at nmalinovich@gmail.com.

Save the date!

Tu Bishvat Community Hike
Sunday, January 28

**Tu Bishvat
Community Shabbat Dinner**
Friday, February 2

**Young
Professionals
Shabbat Dinner**

Friday, January 12 at 7:30 PM
RSVP to RabbiMelhado@kahaljoseph.org

Members & friends in your 20s & 30s

**Join Rabbi Melhado at home for a delicious
Shabbat meal and an amazing discussion.**

**Bring your appetite! Bring your friends!
Bring your questions!**

Purim Baking!

Sunday, February 18
10AM until the dough is done

**Bake traditional Iraqi treats for the KJ Purim
baskets, which are distributed to members
of our congregation.**



Can't make it?

Make a dough-nation!

**Send a check to the Kahal Joseph
office, call 310-474-0559 or
www.kahaljoseph.org/donate**

ספאדלר אי וואס ים ווילע או חתן צעה"כ ופע כגדאד
יעיא גס ציוס ק"יז טצה וי"א צאצ ופכי הנקים סנעסו
צהם סנפתחה העיר וספאדלר סהיו לרים עליה מלכי פרק :
ואחר סחורה או יסי סס ה' מוציק .

Nes (Miracle) of Tahmasp

16 of Tevet - January 3, 2018

This Wednesday, we have a tradition to not say Tahanun because of two miracles in the Baghdadi Jewish community.

First, Baghdad was under cruel Persian rulers who maltreated and robbed the inhabitants. Fortunately, a Baghdadi Jew laid his hands on a secret document, and bravely brought it to the caliph. Sultan Murad entered Baghdad on the 11th of Av, 1638 and relieved the suffering inhabitants.

The second miracle happened almost a century later when Baghdad was under the Sultan Mahmud. The Persians, led by Shah Tahmasp, besieged the city but were repulsed and a great victory was won on the 16th of Tevet, 1733. Both of these days are called "The Miracle of Tahmasp" and celebrated as special Purims for Baghdadi Jews.

Rabbi Ezekiel Musleah, "The Sojourn of the Jews in Calcutta," pp. 225-226