

# KOL MEVASSER

## Rabbi's Message

Whenever we come across Parashiyot about the sacrificial cult, I start getting questions about it. "Rabbi, I don't know how to connect with this. It is so unlike anything we do in modern times. Is this what we are praying to have happen when Mashiah comes?!"



Despite the explicit challenge, I usually feel that they are asking respectfully. It takes a special honesty to share how hard it can be to find meaning in rituals that are so far outside one's lived experience. These people are sincerely put to the test by the high place that the Torah gives to the sacrificial cult, and they feel a genuine sense of loss that their natural inclination doesn't lean the same way.

In my personal weekly parasha studies, I recently came across an interesting series of answers to this problem in Numbers Rabbah (19:8). The passage opens with an idol worshiper heckling Rabban Yohanan ben Zakai about the Waters of Lustration. "This looks like some sort of witchcraft!" he exclaims. "You make a potion from the ashes of a cow, and whenever someone becomes impure, you just sprinkle a few drops on him and he is magically pure again!"

Rabban Yohanan's answer addresses the idol worshiper in terms that he can understand. He asks the man if he has ever seen someone possessed by an evil spirit, and if so, what remedy the sages of his culture would use. The man replies that he has indeed witnessed a possession, and they used a very similar

remedy of burnt incense and water. "See?" Rabban Yohanan cries. "Our ritual impurity and your evil spirit work the same way, and have the same solution!" This speaks the pagan's language, and he is satisfied.

When Rabban Yohanan returns to his students, they pounce: "We know that for a stranger you gave this weak answer, but what would you say to us?" Without missing a beat, he emphasizes the eternal power and wisdom of God, Who sees fit to explain the logic of only some halakhot. God reserves the right to ask that we accept other laws (*hukim*) on faith, and this is but one example among many.

This may be an inspiring response to men such as those, steeped in lifelong Torah studies, but what about the average person with sincerely expressed doubts? Thankfully the Midrash adds a few more lines after Rabban Yohanan: "Why are all the sacrifices performed with male animals, yet the Waters of Lustration are made from a female cow? To remind us of the Golden Calf, which was also female." Since the female calf represented the first sin, then the pathway for returning to God must also be made with the ashes of a female animal.

At last we have an explanation that speaks in logical symbolism! The Waters of Lustration may appear outwardly like magic, but they actually tell a story that makes internal sense. What is more, the ritual can be explained to a variety of different populations, each according to their needs and spiritual intelligence. If an ancient ritual can be appreciated at once by pagans, Torah scholars, and everyday Jews, then it truly deserves a cherished place in our

## Parashat Hukat

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

## Reminder

*The 17th of Tammuz falls next Shabbat, so the fast will be delayed until Sunday.*

## KJ Schedule

### Erev Shabbat

*Friday, June 22nd*

Candle lighting.....	7:49 pm
Minha .....	6:30 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat.....	7:00 pm

### Yom Shabbat

*Saturday, June 23rd*

Shaharit .....	8:30 am
Keri'at HaTorah .....	10:00 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

*(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, & children's programs

### You support . . .

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

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

## Sponsor a Kiddush or Seuda Shelisheet!

Celebrate a family milestone!

Honor the memory of a loved one!

Share a simha with the community!

Celebrate and commemorate with  
your Kahal Joseph community by  
sponsoring a Kiddush or Seuda  
Shelisheet for all to enjoy

Contact Sarah in the office at  
310.474.0559 to reserve your date

(Continued from page 1)

Sunday, June 24th

Shaharit ..... 7:30 am

Monday-Friday, June 25th to 29th

Shaharit ..... 6:25 am

### Next Shabbat

Friday-Saturday, June 29-30

Shabbat Candle lighting ..... 7:50 pm

Friday Minha ..... 6:30 pm

Shaharit ..... 8:30 am

Saturday Minha ..... 7:15 pm

Havdala ..... 8:53 pm

### In Memoriam

We remember these yahrzeits from June 23 to 30, 2018. It is customary to light memorial candles, donate tzedaka and attend Shabbat services to honor loved ones.

#### 10 Tammuz / Shabbat, June 23rd

Khanbaba Pouladian *Itzhak ben Avraham*

*Hatoon bat Haviva*

Isaac Shamash *Itzhak Rahamim ben Abraham*

#### 11 Tammuz / Sunday, June 24th

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 Tammuz / Monday, June 25th

Eshagh Sarraf *Eshagh ben Yehuda*

#### 14 Tammuz / Wednesday, June 27th

Rachel Meyer Judah *Rachel bat Aziza*

#### 15 Tammuz / Thursday, June 28th

Mazal Sawdayi *Mazal bat Rima Cohen*

#### 17 Tammuz / Shabbat, June 30th

Abdallah Ezra *Abdallah ben Ezra Itzhak*



### Support the Eruv

Shabbat in major Jewish communities is much easier because of a special structure called an Eruv. This simple boundary creates a common space and allows us to bring objects between buildings on Shabbat. With-

out it, many would not carry things in pockets or take children to synagogue in strollers.

Let's keep the eruv up and running, enabling all members of our Jewish community to share the Shabbat experience together. For just a dollar per Shabbat, a \$52 donation, you can do your share.

[Go to laeruv.com](http://Go.to/laeruv.com) to contribute.

### New Blessing Cards

Rabbi Melhado has edited the Torah and Haftara blessing cards in large typeface. If you used the draft copies this week or got a chance to examine them, please give him your honest feedback for the final version.

### Refua Shelema

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



## A Note from the Talmud Torah

It's hard to believe another Talmud Torah year is over! It feels like it was just September, with shofar-blowing, shaking the lulav and Etrog, and even building graham cracker Sukkot. Over the year, we made brownie menorot, hamentashen for Purim, had a haroset competition for Pesah and, of course, made challah.

But it wasn't all about the food! We also learned the halakhot (laws), minhagim (traditions) and berakhot (blessings) for each holiday. Each week, we began with a prayer service: our children's sincere and beautiful prayers, as well as Tehillim for those who are ill, were moving to hear. In our lessons, we learned about the parasha, embracing the timeless and universal lessons of our ancestors, like hakhnasat orehim (welcoming guests) from Avraham, or forgiveness from Yosef.

As educators, it was particularly gratifying to see how the children gained insight and wisdom through the weeks. All of this, of course, included increasing their Hebrew reading abilities: for the youngest, letter recognition; and for our oldest, learning to read and understand our prayers. Supplementing the classroom was our experiential learning: our Tu Bishvat family hike, the Pesah Model Seder, the Yom Haazmaut "trip" to Israel, and more.

We are so proud of everything that the children have learned, and cannot wait to continue next year! A strong Jewish foundation is one of the most important blessings parents can provide for their children, one that they keep with them throughout their lives. May they grow and become leaders of the Jewish community and the world!



## 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](mailto:molly@emetek.com) or Rabbi Melhado at [rabbimelhado@kahaljoseph.org](mailto:rabbimelhado@kahaljoseph.org) for more information!

Registration forms at [www.kahaljoseph.org/talmudtorah.html](http://www.kahaljoseph.org/talmudtorah.html)

## Join Kahal Joseph at the Ball Park!



Jewish Community Day at Dodgers Stadium!  
Sun., Aug. 5 at 1:10 PM - Dodgers v. Houston Astros

← Group tickets \$36 including a  
Dodgers in Hebrew baseball tee

RSVP by July 5 - call the office at 310-474-0559  
If we get 20 tickets, Kahal's name will be on the Jumbotron!







# Prints of Babylon

**Recommended Reading on the Iraqi Jewish Diaspora**

**“A History of the Jews in Baghdad”**  
by David Solomon Sassoon  
Edited by Solomon David Sassoon

David Solomon Sassoon (1880-1942) was a scion of the illustrious Sassoon family in Bombay and London. Over a lifetime of dangerous travels in the Middle East and North Africa, he preserved thousands of previously unknown treasures of rabbinic scholarship from the past millennium. His massive collection was described in the two volumes of *Ohel Dawid* in 1932, and a substantial part of it is publicly available at the University of Toronto.

This passion brought him many materials related to the Jews of Baghdad, and in 1932 he finished the first book-length treatment of the subject in English. Sadly, he never lived to see it in print, nor did he find the time to create similar works on the Jews of India and China as he had hoped. Yet his efforts were not in vain, and the book, which his son finally published in 1949, was an inspiration to future generations of scholars.

Citation: Sassoon, David Solomon. *A History of the Jews in Baghdad*. Letchworth: Solomon D. Sassoon, 1949.



KAHAL JOSEPH  
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS  
& YOUNG AT HEART

## Wines of Israel Social

Wine tastings from vineyards all around Israel  
Come join us for a lechaim & some ya'yin!

**July 12, 2018**  
**7:30 PM**

Advanced Reservation \$26.00  
At the Door \$30.00  
Per Person

**RSVP**  
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