

KOL MEVASSER

Rabbi's Message

In a recent Judaica auction, I purchased a cheap copy of *Eighteen Treatises*, a translation of part of the Mishna into English by Rabbis David Aaron de Sola and Morris Jacob Raphall (2nd ed, 1845). Thumbing idly through the beginning, I was surprised by a footnote explaining that "The Treatise Nidda not being suited to the refined notions of the English reader, has not been printed; and for the same reason the Hebrew in some places has been substituted for the English."

These rabbis apparently felt that the 1840s were too prude an era for some of the more explicit passages in Tannaitic literature. To an audience unused to the genre, a full translation risked coming across as uncultured. By presenting the Mishna only selectively, they felt that the largest number of readers could recognize its true beauty.

This impulse for self-censorship sprang back into mind as I was researching Pinehas's violence at the end of Parashat Balak. Commenting on the scene where he spears two people during the physical act of love, Rashi makes a rather grisly note that directs readers to the Talmudic Tractate Sanhedrin (82b). Those who actually follow this reference are led to an eyebrow-raising description of Pinehas's action, which is all the more surprising when it is claimed that God helped him with several miraculous interventions.

I'll save the gory details for Sanhedrin, but suffice it to say Our Sages were interested in



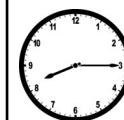
identifying the exact bodily location where Pinehas directed his violence; and in shifting God's role in the bloody conclusion from passive to active. For me this only deepened the perplexing puzzle of the whole Parasha: if God is so opposed to extrajudicial killings, why would He help a man kill two people so mercilessly in front of dozens of witnesses?

Understanding the Talmud's answer to this involves entering more fully into Our Sages' psychology. I have argued before that the morality of a world in which God publicly intervenes is a different equation from what we have in modern times. When God participates in current events, it is extremely subversive to the social and spiritual order to have a lewd tryst occur in the holiest place on earth. Balance must be restored or it will appear that God is not real. When He makes a public example of the perpetrators, this outcome could be seen as entirely of their own making.

What is unusual about this case is that God made His example through a human emissary, and with actions that would be unacceptable in modern times. The prevailing assumption of Our Sages is that Pinehas was possessed of such intense, pure devotion that God saw fit for him facilitate His will. To underscore that this is an impossibly rigorous standard, they note that a cautionary sign is written into the text of the Torah itself: when God rewards Pinehas, the vav in the word "Shalom" is slashed in two (Kiddushin 66b; this is still done in modern Sefers). They interpret this as a warning that anyone acting this way in the future with improper intent will not be similarly blessed. Pinehas may have won God's grudging approval, but don't try this at home, folks!

Parashat Pinehas First Week of Rebuke

Torah: Num. 25:10–30:1, 168 Pesukim
Hertz 686–698; Stone 876–899
Haftara: Jer. 1:1–2:3 (Haftarat Matot)
Hertz 710–713; Stone 1192–1193
Tefillot: Morid Hatal, Hakhrazat Av (Fri)



Reminder

At 244 verses, next week's Parasha is the longest of the year. To try and finish on time, Shaharit on July 14th will be at 8:15 am.

KJ Schedule

Erev Shabbat

Friday, July 6th

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

Yom Shabbat

Saturday, July 7th

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)

BEN HAMETSARIM & THE 9TH OF AV

WHAT IS BEN HAMETSARIM?

The destruction of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem is one of the greatest tragedies of the Jewish people. It caused huge loss of life, mass enslavement, desecration of holy objects, and the end of our ability to follow many laws in the Torah.

We observe several fasts to commemorate this tragedy, including the 17th of Tammuz, on which the walls of Jerusalem were breached, and the 9th of Av, when the Temple was destroyed. The three week period between these two dates is called "Ben Hametsarim," or "Between the Straits" of national tragedy. It is customary to refrain from acts of joy during this time, especially purchases or business deals that make one happy. The restrictions are more pronounced after Rosh Hodesh Av, and even more the week of the 9th.

CUSTOMS OF THE 9TH OF AV

In addition to a 25-hour fast, we express our national sorrow by observing the mourning customs of Shiva: not wearing leather, not bathing or applying oils, avoiding Torah study except for tragic materials, and we abstain from marital relations. Many people also sit on the floor or mourning stools until midday and avoid greeting one another socially.

We read the Book of Lamentations that bewails the lost Temple, and recite poetic kinnot that mourn the many tragedies of the Jewish people. All of the prayers for the day are recited in a lower, less melodic voice.



Mazal Tov

Kahal wishes a warm Mazal Tov to our devoted security guard Stan Roquemore on the graduation of two special members of his family:

His niece Colette Roquemore graduated from the University of Phoenix with a degree in Business and Human Resources Management. We wish her success in using it to advance in her company!

His granddaughter Ryan Green graduated from Maranatha High School, and will attend Los Angeles Community College in the fall.

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
 Chaya Rachel Bat Simcha



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(Continued from page 1)
 Sunday, July 8th

Shaharit 7:30 am

Monday-Thursday, July 9th to 12th

Shaharit 6:25 am

Rosh Hodesh Av

Friday, July 13th

Shaharit 6:05 am

Next Shabbat / Friday-Saturday, July 13-14

Shabbat Candle lighting 7:47 pm

Friday Minha 6:30 pm

Shaharit 8:15 am

Saturday Minha 7:15 pm

Havdala 8:50 pm

In Memoriam

We remember these yahrzeits from July 7 to 14, 2018. It is customary to light memorial candles, donate tzedaka and attend Shabbat services to honor loved ones.

24 Tammuz / Shabbat, July 7th

Aaron David Aharon David ben Avraham Haim
 Elias Joseph Eliyahu ben Yitzhak

25 Tammuz / Sunday, July 8th

Heskel Dabby Haskel ben Yoseph
 Moshe ben Simcha

26 Tammuz / Monday, July 9th

Flossie David-Solomon Farha bat Roza
 David Hattanian David ben Itzhak

28 Tammuz / Wednesday, July 11th

Ezra Said Gouri Ezra Said ben Simcha

29 Tammuz / Thursday, July 12th

Selim Ashair Hanoon Selim ben Ashair

1 Av / Friday, July 13th

Aron Philip Blank Aharon Shraga ben Avraham
 Ezra Ezrapour Ezra ben Avraham Hayim
 Yohanan ben Yehezkel Shamashian

2 Av / Shabbat, July 14th

Shlomo Dallal
 Simon Sarraf



Register now for fall!

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

Registration forms at www.kahaljoseph.org/talmud-torah.html



Young Professionals Shabbat Dinner

Friday, July 27 at 7:30PM

Join Rabbi & Jessica Melhado at their home for
an interesting discussion and amazing meal
for members and friends in their 20s and 30s.

Bring your questions, your appetite and your friends!

RSVP to Rabbi Melhado at rabbimelhado@kahaljoseph.org

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

“The Sassoons”

A multigenerational family biography

By Stanley Jackson

The Sassoon family, popularly known as “the Rothschilds of the East,” rose to prominence in India under patriarch David Sassoon (1792-1864). Escaping hostile politics in Baghdad, he launched a company in Bombay that rocketed him into super-wealth via the legal opium trade.

The success he enjoyed played a shaping role in spreading the Baghdadi rite around Asia. As each relative was dispatched to start branches in new cities, they were sent with lavish funding to support the central aspects of Jewish life and institutions.

This fascinating family produced everything from rabbinic dynasties to heavy-hitters in British aristocratic circles, capturing enough popular attention to fuel several books. *The Sassoons* (1968) continues and deepens the groundbreaking work *The Sassoon Dynasty* by Cecil Roth (1941). While Jackson is a popular biographer who does not use footnotes, the book is enriched by his access to private family papers which Roth had not seen.

Citation: Jackson, Stanley. *The Sassoons*. New York: Dutton, 1968.



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& YOUNG AT HEART

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