

Rabbi's Message

As the father of two daughters, I have a soft spot for Lekh Lekha because it forms the basis of the main prayer in the Zeved Habat, or baby-naming ceremony for girls. In the Parasha, Sarah Our Matriarch is consistently called "Sarai" until God Himself renames her and promises that her offspring will found royal dynasties (Gen. 11:29, 17:16-17, and Berakhot 13a). Centuries later, the fact that God personally blessed Sarah was recast into a prayer for women called "mi sheberakh," which is still used today.



The main text of this prayer reminds God that He once blessed important women in Tanakh from Sarah on down, and asks Him to bestow that same intensity of blessings on the newborn girl. Composed in Iraq in the 9th century, the Mi Sheberakh genre was written first in male language, and was altered later to suit women's experiences. Female-oriented Mi Sheberakh prayers can now be found for many situations, such as when we pray for a woman who is ill, or has just made a contribution to the synagogue, or wants to turn over a new leaf in her life. In each instance, the formula begins the same way: listing Matriarchs in Tanakh whom God has already blessed, and asking Him to extend that intensity of blessing to the affected party.

Given this history of female Mi Sheberakhs, I was surprised to learn of a responsum by Rabbi Avraham Binyamin Zilberberg (*Mishnat Binyamin* siman 55) that advises against using them in our liturgy. His basic argument is that

because Rahel Our Matriarch died in childbirth, she was not blessed by God – or at least not with the kind of blessing we would want to bestow on other women. Her name is necessarily included in the opening expression, "May He Who blessed our Matriarchs..." so her lethal blessing is always invoked, endangering the very women whom we are trying to protect with the prayer. He concludes that even though we can distinguish between a pregnant woman and other cases, we should never use female language in such a prayer because of the possibility that we might make a mistake once in a while.

Although Rabbi Zilberberg was a renowned authority in Jewish law, I must respectfully disagree with his conclusion. The face of Judaism is already quite male, and if there is a permitted way to make it more reflective of women, we should give them the opportunity. In fact there is a 300-year history of saying female Mi Sheberakhs, several of which appear in siddurim edited by well-known Rabbis of the 18th and 19th centuries (cf. "Seder Tefillot," Attias: Amsterdam 1728, p. 210b). Clearly they had a stature equal to Rabbi Zilberberg's, and if they allowed it I feel safe in assuming there is a reasonable case to permit it.

More broadly, I contend that God surely did bless the women of the Tanakh. Even when the text does not use the word "berakh," or when biblical women faced tragedies, does this mean that God was not with them?! I have a strong, simple faith that He was by their side seeing them through adversity. If we can celebrate that fact in prayers for other women, so much the better!

Parashat Lekh Lekha

Torah: Gen. 12:1–17:27, 126 Pesukim
Hertz 45–60; Stone 54–77

Haftara: Is. 40:27–41:16

Hertz 60–62; Stone 1133–1134

Tefillot: Mashiv Haruah, Birkat Halevana

Fall Minha Times

Until March, the Minha time on Saturday will be exactly thirty minutes earlier than the Minha time on Friday. For example, this week Minha is at 5:45 pm on Friday and 5:15 pm on Saturday.

KJ Schedule

Erev Shabbat

Friday, October 19th

Candle lighting	5:56 pm
Minha	5:45 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat & Arvit	6:15 pm

Yom Shabbat

Saturday, October 20th

Shaharit	8:30 am
Keriat HaTorah	10:15 am
Sermon	11:20 am
Musaf	11:30 am
Women's Tehillim	4:15 pm
Minha	5:15 pm
Seuda Shelisheet	6:00 pm
Arvit	6:45 pm
Havdala	6:58 pm

(Continued on page 2)



Beauty Restored

Join the Rabbi in Fixing our Parokhets

Every year, the Ekhal curtains that come out at Hoshana Rabba call to me from the walls of our sanctuary. Each has its own unique history, commemorating people who have passed and the worlds that produced them.

It is by using these curtains that we keep their memories alive, but many of our Parokhets cannot be hung during the year because they do not fit our Ekhal. Measured for our old building at 1520 Robertson or for synagogues back in Calcutta, they just don't work in the opening we have.

I was pleasantly surprised that the Parokhet you see this week could be refitted to our Ekhal for only \$35, which I personally donated. Paired with two side curtains from Sass's robing room, it really brings out the blue in the stained glass above.

If anyone would like to join me in an effort to breathe new life into our Parokhets, please contact me at rabbimelhado@kahaljoseph.org

Seuda Shelisheet

is sponsored
in loving memory of

Mary Mussry, z"l
Miriam bat Yaacov Saleh Mussry

(Continued from page 1)

Sunday, October 21st

Shaharit..... 7:30 am
Talmud Torah..... 9:45 am
Sheshbesh Tournament..... 10:00 am

Monday- Friday, October 22nd-26th

Shaharit..... 6:25 am

Thursday, October 25th

The Great Challah Bake see box on p.3

Next Shabbat

Friday-Saturday, October 26-27

Candle lighting 5:48 pm
Friday Minha 5:30 pm
Shaharit..... 8:30 am
Mizrahie Torah Rededication & Luncheon
Saturday Minha 5:00 pm

KJ Children's Room

While children are always welcome in the sanctuary, the playroom upstairs is available every **Shabbat from 10 am to 12pm** for children needing a break or for those too young to sit for very long.

Have questions or suggestions?
Talk to Rabbi or Jessica Melhado!

In Memoriam

We remember these yahrzeits anniversaries from October 20 to 27, 2018. It is customary to light memorial candles, donate tzedaka and attend Shabbat services to honor the memory of our loved ones.

11 Heshvan / Shabbat, October 20th
Jacob Silas Mussry *Yaacov ben Saleh*

12 Heshvan / Sunday, October 21st
Joseph Jacob *Yoseph ben Yaacov Azoory*
Flora Rahamim Pinhas
David Dallal
Yair ben Menashe

13 Heshvan / Monday, October 22nd
Akhtar Sarraf *Khanom Agha bat Kokab*
Isaac Ezer *Itzhak ben Shaul*

14 Heshvan / Tuesday, October 23rd
Albert Simon *Albert Yeheskel Moshe Simon*
Haskel Kelly
Helen Zakoo *Habiba bat Mazli*

16 Heshvan / Thursday, October 25th
Reuben Jacob *Reuben Hayeem ben Yaacov*

17 Heshvan / Friday, October 26th
Haim Saleh *Haim ben Aziza*
Eric Kelly *Eliyahu ben Saleh Moshe Kadoorie*

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 • Habiba bat Farha
Meir Ezra ben Rahel • Dina bat Rahel
Chaya Rachel Bat Simcha
Eti Esther bat Fortuna
Rahel bat Ramah Regina

A Tremendous Tishre

Kahal was bustling with activity throughout a full and meaningful holiday season. Enjoy this look back on the highlights of Tishre!

Rosh Hashana observances began with community Selihot on Erev Yom Tov. The call for more participation was answered by 50 people, who enjoyed both the prayers and the delicious bagel breakfast (*pictured*). When the New Year arrived, our hearts were moved to reach for God through special melodies sung by Hazanim Sasson Ezra, Saeed Jalali, and Michael Ben Atar. Rabbi Melhado framed our spiritual yearnings with sermons and English explanations, and a new content-based children's program was added to the usual play.

In the leadup to Yom Kippur, Selihot reigned king. We poured out our souls each day across the entire Selihot booklet, adding even more supplications on Tsom Gedalia. On the Sunday of the Days of Awe, our partner the Sephardic Educational Center hosted a Selihot concert in our sanctuary (*pictured*). This annual extravaganza convened special Arab musicians and six Israeli Hazanim who modeled the very best of how our atonement can sound. Putting this into action on the evening of Yom Kippur, we held an especially elegant Kol Nidre service. Throughout the entire next day we bared our deeds before our Maker, which crescendoed into powerful Neila prayers that resounded around a packed house.

Sukkot kicked off with the Family Dinner that had 40 people bursting out of the Kahal Sukkah (*pictured during setup due to Yom Tov*). Services on First Days were a joyous celebration with the full Hallel, waving the Lulav and Etrog, and fruity kiddushim. On Shabbat there was a lively Young Professionals dinner at the Melhado family's cozy Sukkah, with food from Got Kosher (*pictured during setup*). On Hoshana Rabba a dedicated group of men and one woman (go Rita!) kept the tradition of nighttime readings alive, followed the next morning by seven Hakafot and the beating of the Aravot. All was rounded out by a decorous Shemini Atseret and the spirited Hakafot of Simhat Torah, including a scrumptious dinner in memory of Hilda and Jack Sassoon.

We bade farewell to the holiday season to the sounds of our teenagers reading Parasha – kudos to Daniel Itzhakov and Shai Elghanian for taking on the mantle of our tradition for another generation!



Erev Rosh Hashanah Selihot



Selihot Concert





Selichot Concert



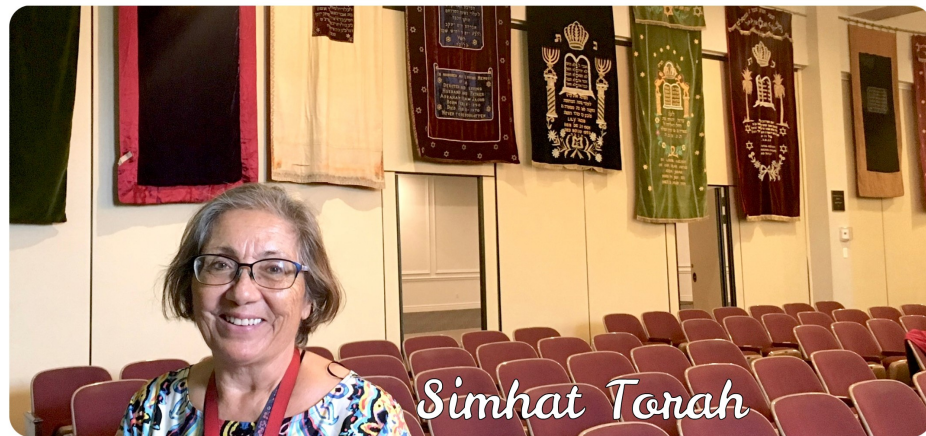
Sukkot



Hoshana Rabba



Ready for Kol Nidre



Simhat Torah

**JIMENA and Kahal Joseph
invite you to the Fall 2018
All-Ages Backgammon Tournament
Sunday, October 21 - 10am to 4pm
10am - Tournament check-in
11am - Tournament begins (don't be late!)**

Preregistration (ends 10/19) - \$20 tournament entry, \$10 adults, kids free
Online at bit.ly/sheshbeshkj2018

At the door - \$30 tournament entry, \$20 adults, \$5 kids
Middle Eastern food! Music! Raffle giveaway!
Grand prize for the winner of the tournament!



**LA Great Big Challah Bakes
Thursday, October 25, 2018
The Great PINK Challah Bake
Shalhevet High School**

In honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, learn about Breast Cancer and get tested for the BRCA gene. Wear your best pink!

7:00 PM - Dessert Reception & Screening

8:00 PM - Program led by Joyce Azaria

Admission - \$36 per person

The Great Big Valley Challah Bake

Emek Hebrew Academy Auditorium

6:00pm - Dessert 6:30 pm - Program

Admission - \$25 per kit (2 people per kit)



You're Invited!

**MIZRAHIE TORAH REDEDICATION
& CELEBRATORY LUNCHEON
Saturday, October 27
Parashat Vayera**

Brought from Surabaya, Indonesia by
Rebecca and Saul Mizrahie, this Torah scroll
is dedicated to the loving memory of
Eliyahu ben Mordechai Mizrahie.

After being extensively repaired by our sofer,
the entire KJ community celebrates its return!

Join us for special celebratory psalms and
songs at services, and a festive
kiddush luncheon to follow.

All are invited!

This celebration was inspired in part by The Shabbat Project,
an annual event in which Jews around the world
come together to experience the magic of Shabbat.

You're Invited!

For 50 years of
magnanimous generosity
and love of our community,
the Board of Directors
and the Sisterhood
of Kahal Joseph Congregation
will honor

Moselle and Michael Amron
the first night of Hanukkah,
Sunday, December 2, 2018 at 6:00 PM

*Dinner
&
Dancing*



*Valet
Parking*

\$100 minimum donation, tax deductible
RSVP at www.kahaljoseph.org/50-years
or call Sarah in the office at 310.474.0559
by Monday, Nov. 26

**KAHAL JOSEPH
CONGREGATION and
GLOBAL DAY OF JEWISH LEARNING
present...**



*Journey into
Iraqi Kurdistan:
Reflections
from a
Young Traveler*



Join us as we hear from Alan Niku,
a Persian Jew with Kurdish ancestry.
Enjoy amazing photography from a
seldom-visited part of the world
with deep connections to Kahal.

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11 at 2:30PM
LIGHT RECEPTION TO FOLLOW**