

Guest Rabbi's Message

*Redacted from a longer article by
Rabbi Jonathan Lord Sacks*

At Mount Sinai a new kind of nation was being formed, and a new kind of society – one that would be the opposite of Egypt. In Egypt, the few had power and the many were weak and enslaved. This new nation was to be, in Abraham Lincoln's words in the Gettysburg Address, "conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

Without the Sinaitic covenant between the Jewish people and God, Lincoln's words would have been unimaginable. For nowhere else do we find anything like the politics of Sinai, which envisioned a society whose members freely undertook to be bound, individually and collectively, by a moral code from on high.

Three things about the Jewish people's experience at Sinai were to prove crucial. The first is that long before Israel entered the land and acquired their own system of government, they had entered into an overarching covenant with God. That "Brit Sinai" set moral limits to the exercise of power. The code we call Torah established for the first time the primacy of right over might. Any king who behaved contrarily to Torah was acting beyond legitimate authority and could be challenged. This is the single most important fact about biblical politics.

The second key element lies in the prologue to the covenant. God tells Moses to say to the people "Now, if you obey Me fully and keep My covenant, you will be My treasured possession,



for the whole earth is Mine.'" (Exodus 19:5-6) and the people reply: "We will do everything the Lord has said" (19:8).

Until the people had signified their consent, the revelation could not proceed. The principle at stake was that there is no legitimate government without the consent of the governed, even if the governor is Creator of heaven and earth. I know of few more radical ideas anywhere.

The third, equally ahead of its time, was that the partners to the covenant were to be "all the people" – and not just certain classes. The Torah states specifically that the entire people is to be gathered together for Hakhel, the septennial covenant renewal ceremony, "men, women and children" (Deuteronomy 31:10-13).

Many historians studying the history of the politics of freedom trace this idea back to Greek philosophers like Plato and Aristotle, and to the Greek city states (e.g. Athens) of the 5th century BCE. But they are mistaken in this. A thousand years after Sinai, when Athens experimented with democracy, only a limited section of society had political rights. Women, children, slaves and foreigners were excluded.

True democracy was born in Europe and America in the 17th and 18th centuries, and the philosophers of these times who were thinking and writing about these ideas looked first and foremost to the Hebrew Bible for inspiration. The concept of a free society was born at Mount Sinai. With the revelation at Sinai, something unprecedented entered the human horizon, though it would take centuries, millennia, before its full implications were understood. At Sinai, the politics of freedom was born.

Parashat Yitro Decalogue

Torah: Ex. 18:1–20:23, 75 Pesukim
Hertz 288–301; Stone 394–415
Haftara (§): Is. 6:1–13
Hertz 302–304; Stone 1154–1155
Tefillot: Mashiv Haruah

Reminder: The Sephardic aliyot divisions in the Hertz are for a different minhag.

KJ Schedule

Erev Shabbat

Friday, January 25th

Shabbat Candle lighting 4:58 pm
Minha 4:45 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat & Arvit 5:15 pm

Yom Shabbat

Saturday, January 26th

Shaharit 8:30 am
Keriat HaTorah 10:15 am
Sermon 11:20 am
Musaf 11:30 am
Women's Tehillim *right after kiddush*

Minha 4:15 pm
Seuda Shelisheet 5:00 pm
Arvit 5:45 pm
Havdala 6:02 pm

Sunday, January 27th

Shaharit 7:30 am
Talmud Torah 9:45 am

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Mazal Tov

Jessica and Rabbi Raif Melhado
on the birth of a baby girl
on Tu Bishvat 5779

Besiman Tov to

Sisters

Penny and Ellie

Grandparents

Annette and Bill Cavanagh
Lee and Evan Melhado

and the whole extended family

The baby naming will take place
on Sunday, Feb 3rd at 2:30 pm
at Kahal Joseph Congregation

We are thrilled to invite
the whole community to attend

RSVP at

kahaljoseph.wufoo.com/forms/zebed-habat-for-baby-girl-melhado/

Shabbat Kiddush

is sponsored
in loving memory of

Norma Dabby, z"l
Naima bat Farha

by
Karen and Frank Dabby

Seuda Shelisheet

is sponsored
in loving memory of

Snira Klein, z"l
Snira bat Avraham and Devora

by
Shula Wyner and Family

The song "Ashir LaEl" can be found
in *Shir Ushvaha* on page 287.

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Weekdays

Monday-Friday, January 28th to February 1st
Shaharit..... 6:25 am

Next Shabbat

Friday-Saturday, February 1st-2nd
Shabbat Candle lighting..... 5:05 pm
Friday Minha 5:00 pm
Shaharit..... 8:30 am
Saturday Minha 4:30 pm
Havdala 6:09 pm

In Memoriam

We remember these yahrzeit anniversaries from
January 26 to February 2, 2019. We light memorial
candles, donate tsedaka & attend Shabbat services
to honor the memory of our loved ones.

20 Shevat / Shabbat, January 26th

Edward David *Ezra ben Meir Shemtov*
Nissim Moondani *Nissim ben Moodani*
Georgette Solomon

23 Shevat / Tuesday, January 29th

Victoria Elie *Victoria bat Caden*
Maurice Shamash *Menashe Hayim*
Carl Zekaria *Keduri ben Sion*

24 Shevat / Wednesday, January 30th

Snira Klein, *Snira bat Avraham and Devora*
Rachel David *Rahel bat Regina*

25 Shevat / Thursday, January 31st

Norma Dabby *Naima bat Farha*
Morton Raymond Einy *Mordecai ben Rahamim*
Abraham Sales *Avraham ben Sassoon*

26 Shevat / Friday, February 1st

Moshe Solomon *Moshe Hai ben David*
Abraham Haim Yaacov *Avraham ben Haim*

27 Shevat / Shabbat, February 2nd

Ezra Avrahamy *Ezra ben Yosef*
Nathan Bass *Nathan ben Yisrael*

Refua Shelema

Sassoon Ezra • Moselle Amron • Sally Amron • Sylvia
Cohen • Esther Duke • Mehry bat Miriam Hakimpour
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 • Rahel bat Ramah Regina
Eti Esther bat Fortuna • Karen bat Chana

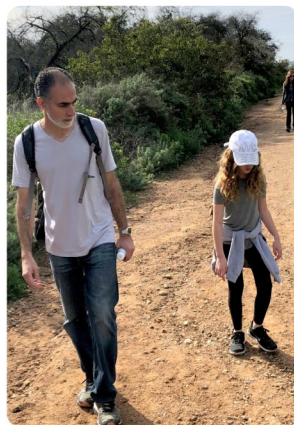


Tu Bishvat Community Hike Will Rogers State Park Sunday, January 20

**Last Sunday, the Talmud Torah and the
Kahal community enjoyed a beautiful day
at Will Rogers State Park.**

**Hiking to the top of Inspiration Point, we got
a bird's eye view of the Los Angeles skyline,
as well as the natural beauty of our area.**

**Afterwards, everyone gathered for a picnic
lunch with holiday fruits and fun games.**



Save the Date!

Adult Bat Mitzvah

**Saturday, February 9
4 Adar I, 5779**

Parashat Teruma

**Ladies are invited
to the
upstairs synagogue
for a**

**Torah service
to celebrate
the**

**Adult Bat Mitzvah class's
momentous achievement!**

**Celebratory Kiddush to
follow in the Social Hall**



KAHAL JOSEPH INVITES YOU TO

PURIM CARNIVAL

Games! Food! Fun! Prizes!

Sunday, Mar. 10

11 AM - 3 PM

\$20 WRISTBAND

UNLIMITED RIDES & GAMES

All proceeds benefit Kahal!

Co-chairs Molly Jalali & Nicole Mathalon



Purim Baking

for Kahal gift baskets

Sunday, March 17

10:00 AM



Sponsor the Carnival!

RINGMASTER - \$1000

TROUPER - \$500

JUGGLER - \$250

**Contact Molly at
molly@emetek.com or
310-880-3418 to set up your
sponsorship today!**

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT KAHAL!

Volunteer
with the
carnival!

Several
time slots
available!

Sunday, March 10

Contact Molly at molly@emetek.com or
310-880-3418 to sign up!

