

Rabbi's Message

When I served as a rabbinic intern at Mikveh Israel in Philadelphia, I used to smile at the playful rivalry they had with two other Colonial synagogues about which one of them is the oldest in America. Depending on which metric you use, each has a legitimate claim to be first, and each acts as if their "first" is the one that really counts.

The "oldest Jewish *community*" in America is New York's Shearith Israel, which traces its origins to a Sephardi Rosh Hashana service in 1654. However, their current building is from 1897, allowing Newport's 1763 Touro Synagogue to claim the title of the "oldest synagogue *building*." Yet despite these bonafides, Shearith Israel was shuttered during most of the Revolutionary War, and Touro had no prayers for most of the 19th century. These closures allowed Mikveh Israel to claim the title of "longest *continuously operating* synagogue," harking back to its first services in 1740.

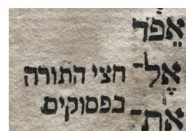
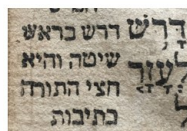
Their jockeying for top status reminds me of a similar feud that comes to a head in Parashat Tsav over the location of the exact center of the Torah. According to the Talmud in Kiddushin 30a, "our early scholars were called 'Soferim' because they used to 'count' (*sofer*) all the letters of the Torah. Thus, they said, the Vav in the word '*gahon*' (Lev. 11:42) marks half the letters of the Torah; the phrase '*darosh darash*' (Lev. 10:16) half the words; and '*vehitgalah*' (Lev. 13:33) half the verses."

All of these midpoints appear after this week's Torah reading, but *Masoret Hashas* (ad loc.)



notes that most Humashim print the halfway point of the verses in Parashat Tsav (Lev 8:8). Given that the Talmudic Rabbis brought out a Torah scroll and counted to make sure, it seems strange to have such a large discrepancy, but this allows Parashat Tsav to argue that it hosts the center of the Torah (see the attached image from *Ezrat Hasofer*, and cf. *Torah Shelema* vol. 28, Lev. 11:42 and ff. 258-259).

While it may take a Prophetic intervention to resolve the midpoint issue (*Minhat Shai*, Lev 8:8), the Supreme Court played a key role this past week in deciding the question of the oldest US synagogue, which has become a legally significant matter in the past seven years. Touro's strategic plan calls for selling some of its Colonial artifacts as a fundraiser, but Shearith Israel is blocking the sale over claims that it is actually the rightful owner of those objects. Documents prove that the Sephardi founders of Touro gave their assets to Shearith Israel when they closed in the late 18th century, raising the question of whether they transferred back to the new Ashkenazi community that formed in 1883. By declining to hear the case this week, the Supreme Court enshrined Shearith Israel as the parent congregation, which will preserve these special artifacts for everyone to enjoy.



*Marginalia on the midpoints of the Torah
Leviticus 8:8, 10:16, and 11:42
"Ezrat Hasofer," Amsterdam: Piza, 1767*

Parashat Tsav

Torah: Lev. 6:1–8:36, 97 Pesukim
Hertz 429–438; Stone 568–587
Haftara: Jer. 7:21–8:3, 9:22-23
Hertz 439–442; Stone 1167–1168
Tefillot: Mashiv Haruah

"Happy Minyan" Fridays at 5:45 pm

Every year from March to September, we read Mincha at a fixed time on Fridays. New to this year, we will meet at 5:45 pm for "Happy Minyan," a cheerful gathering of cold cuts and a small lehayim. Join us for the bonding experience, and stay for the services at 6:00 pm sharp!

KJ Schedule

Erev Shabbat

Friday, March 22nd

Shabbat Candle lighting	6:47 pm
Happy Minyan	5:45 pm
Mincha	6:00 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat & Arvit	6:30 pm

Yom Shabbat

Saturday, March 23rd

Shaharit.....	8:30 am
Keriat HaTorah.....	10:15 am
Sermon	11:20 am
Musaf	11:30 am
Women's Tehillim	5:00 pm
Mincha	6:00 pm
Seuda Shelisheet	6:45 pm
Arvit.....	7:35 pm
Havdala	7:52 pm

Sunday, March 24th

Shaharit.....	7:30 am
Talmud Torah.....	9:45 am

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Membership Benefits Everyone!

You get...

***To be a 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!**

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**

Four Special Shabbatot

The weeks leading up to Pesah contain several distinctive Shabbatot called the "Arba Parashiyot." Their goal is to emphasize themes from the Israelites' experience during the Exodus as we get closer to the Pesah holiday that celebrates our freedom.

We observe the Arba Prashiyot by bringing out a second Torah scroll for an extra reading on the week's theme, followed by a unique Haftara that replaces the regular Prophetic selection for that week. In the Iraqi tradition, it is customary to commemorate these Shabbatot with special songs, which we print in the Kol Mevasser so everyone can participate.

Shabbat Shekalim is the Shabbat before Rosh Hodesh Adar, or Adar II in leap years. Its reading discusses the half-shekel tax that funded the sacrifices in the Holy Tabernacle. This reminds us of our responsibility to maintain places of spiritual worship as a free people.

Shabbat Zakhor is the Shabbat before Purim. Its reading recounts that the nation of Amalek attacked the us from the back as we left Egypt, preying on the weak. Even as a free people, we must remember what it felt like to be victimized, and blot out any remnant of the aggressors.

Shabbat Para is two Shabbatot before Rosh Hodesh Nisan. Its reading discusses the rituals that cleanse and purify us spiritually, a state we had to achieve to offer the Paschal lamb. Alas, it is unavailable in modern times because of the destruction of the Holy Temple.

Shabbat Hahodesh is one Shabbat before Rosh Hodesh Nisan. Its reading announces that the month of Nisan is the foremost month, with Pesah as the preeminent holiday. Tishre may be when we count the years, but the months roll over in time for Pesah.

A fifth day called "Shabbat Hagadol" is observed the Shabbat before Pesah. It has no unique Torah reading, but does include a special Haftara and Iraqi songs. Historically, communal Rabbis would save their most impactful sermons for Shabbat Hagadol.

In Memoriam

We remember these yearzeit anniversaries from March 23 to 30, 2019. We light memorial candles donate tsedaka & attend Shabbat services to honor the memory of our loved ones.

18 Adar II / Monday, March 25th

Nazay Radfar *Nazeh bat Nisan*

19 Adar II / Tuesday, March 26th

Charles Eric Ezekiel *Saleh ben Ezra Yehezkel*

20 Adar II / Wednesday, March 27th

Victoria Simanian *Miriam Victoria bat Ester*

Yona Radfar *Yona ben Shlomo*

22 Adar II / Friday, March 29th

Julian Elias

23 Adar II / Shabbat, March 30th

Rachel Jonah

Moshe Ezra Moses *Moshe Ezra ben Raphael Moshe*

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
Rabbi Eliahu Shalom ben Avigayil Ezran
Arie Yaacov ben Shlomo

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Monday-Friday, March 25th-29th

Shaharit 6:25 am

Next Shabbat

Friday-Saturday, March 29-30

Shabbat Candle lighting 6:53 pm

Friday Minha 6:00 pm

Shaharit 8:30 am

Saturday Minha 6:15 pm

Havdala 7:57 pm




Sell your Hamets

Guaranteed if received by Thurs., April 18 at noon!

Sell your excess hamets through Rabbi Melhado!

Forms available in the lobby or click this image to download & print the form

Return the form via email (rabbimelhado@kahaljoseph.org), fax (310.410.4059), mail them to Kahal Joseph, drop it off at the office, or hand it to Rabbi Melhado



THE NEW IRAQI HAGGADA

edited by Rabbi Melhado, is now available!

\$15 a copy, or 4 for \$52

Featuring:

- A summary of Iraqi customs
- All traditional texts & instructions not found in other books
- A new, easy-to-read English translation by Rabbi Melhado

Order by Wednesday, April 10 by contacting Rabbi Melhado at rabbimelhado@kahaljoseph.org



Seder Matching

Passover is coming!
First night seder is Friday, April 19

On your own for the seders?
We can help!

Do you have an extra seat at your seder table?
We can fill it!

Simply email Jessica at jessica@kahaljoseph.org by Fri. April 12 to be matched!



BIRKAT HAILANOT

Join us to bless God for the flowering fruit trees in this celebration of spring!

Sunday, May 5 - 30 Nissan 5779
11:00 AM

Mildred E. Mathis Botanical Garden, UCLA
at the Hilgard Entrance

RSVP to Jessica at jessica@kahaljoseph.org



Memouna!

Sunday, April 28 at 7pm
RSVP deadline Wed. April 24!

Kahal Joseph Congregation &
The Sephardic Educational Center
invite all our members and friends!

Savor traditional delicacies! Enjoy festive music!
Relish the warmth of community!



Featuring
the music of
Asher Shasho-Levy
and Jamie Papish
of the Aram Soba
Ensemble

\$36 per person
advanced registration requested

RSVP at www.kahaljoseph.org/memouna.html
or call Sarah at 310.474.0559



Kahal Joseph's 14th Annual Purim Carnival

Thank you!

Dear Community members,

Thank you so much for stepping up in every way possible to make our 14th Annual Purim Carnival a great success! This year's carnival was the most successful in 14 years! Our volunteers and sponsors made that possible, since without them, there is no carnival. It was an incredible, multigenerational day where we all gave back while having fun, Purim style! Everyone who was asked, from early volunteers to last minute pinch hitters, jumped at the chance to be a part of our event.

People often ask me why I chair this event. Who has the time? It's so much work! Honestly, I find myself wondering that sometimes in the lead up to the event too! But every year, there is no greater pleasure than seeing whole families show up – with nieces, nephews, grandparents, aunts, uncles, neighbors (you get my drift!) – and have a great time together. There are so few opportunities in which a family can do the mitzvah of fundraising for the synagogue together, while having fun. Think about it – who is going to bring a four-year-old to a trustee dinner?

Each year, at our annual Carnival, we all get to be together and give back to our beautiful Kahal Joseph. Looking ahead, the magic is just beginning – it will be our 15th anniversary year. The planning has already begun. Will you be a part of it?

With happiness,

Melly Jabali



KJ Purim Carnival



Rabbi Salomon Cohen-Scali

Meet a Candidate for Kahal Joseph's Rabbinical Position

Rabbi Cohen was born in Melilla Spain, and he comes from a long line of Sephardic Rabbis and Sofrim (Scribes). He earned his rabbinic ordination from Rabbi E. Abergel, head of the Supreme Rabbinical Court in Jerusalem, and by the Rabbis of the Shehebar Sephardic Center. He himself is a Sofer (scribe), a Mohel, and a Shochet.

Rabbi Cohen received a B.A. with honors in Jewish studies at Jews' College of London and was awarded his degree by the National Council for Academic Awards of England. Rabbi Cohen's wife, Raquel has a Masters degree in Industrial Chemistry. In addition, Rabbi Cohen speaks fluent English, Hebrew, Spanish, and has a good knowledge of French.

Currently, Rabbi Cohen is the rabbi of Union Israelita del Peru. In the past he has served as spiritual leader of Sephardic Congregation "Ezra Bessaroth", Seattle, Washington; the head rabbi of the Jewish Orthodox Community of Barcelona, Spain; and the rabbi and co-founder of the Jewish community of Torremolinos, Spain.



Friday April 5, 2019

Minha & Arbit 5:45 pm

Saturday April 6, 2019

Shaharit 8:30 am

Torah Reading 10:15 am

Sermon 11:15 am

"Small Mitzvot and the Jewish Future"

Musaf following Sermon

Lunch and Learn (members only) 12:00 pm

"Jews and Gentiles: A Complex Relationship"

Class for Women 5:45 pm

Minha 6:15 pm

Seudah & Dvar Torah 7:00 pm

Arbit 7:45 pm