



# Kehila Kedosha Janina

## Synagogue and Museum

### October 2019 E-Newsletter

Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,

We wish our friends a Happy and Healthy New Year surrounded by family and friends. May 5780 bring peace throughout the world. May we continue to grow and flourish. May our wealth be counted, not in material possessions but, rather, in the love of family, friends and community. L'Shanah Tovah, Xronia Polla, Anyos Munchos i Buenos. Attached to this E-newsletter you will find our Holiday schedule. Do join us for services. Our seats are free and our hearts are open.



Andrew Marcus and Seth Kofinas

An apology: Where we usually like to print entire articles, there were a number in this newsletter that were exceedingly long. Therefore, we were forced to take highlights from the articles and direct our readers to the websites where they can find the articles in their entirety. If you have a problem, contact us at [museum@kkjsm.org](mailto:museum@kkjsm.org) and we will email you the entire article.

This newsletter, our 127<sup>th</sup> will, as always, cover news regarding Kehila Kedosha Janina and news concerning Greek Jewry. We hope you find our newsletter interesting. Your feedback is of utmost importance to us. If you missed previous issues, they can be accessed on our website [www.kkjsm.org](http://www.kkjsm.org).

We have now reach over 10,000 households worldwide. What an accomplishment for a little synagogue on the Lower East Side of New York City. Our community of 'friends' continually grow with each newsletter. If you know others who wish to be part of this ever-growing network, please have them contact us at [museum@kkjsm.org](mailto:museum@kkjsm.org)

As always, you are all invited to attend our Saturday morning Shabbat services. Just give our Shamas, Sol Kofinas, a heads up by emailing [info@kkjsm.org](mailto:info@kkjsm.org) so we are sure that our Kiddush (traditional Greek Jewish Kosher foods) is sufficient. If you wish to sponsor a Kiddush for a special occasion or an Adara, contact Sol.

---

### Simchas

It is with great joy that we welcome the second great grandchild of Shirlee Paganetti, Nash Kleiner, the son of Maxx and Kelly Kleiner, the grandson of Rhonda Paganetti and Ted Kleiner, the great-grandson of Shirlee Paganetti and the great, great grandson of Moisis and Eva Cabilis.



Cabilis family in New York

---

### Passings

It is always a painful month when we must list the passings of so many people from our small community. We mourn the passing of the following members of our Greek-Jewish world:

Joe Alcabes: born: Mar 16, 1931 – Jul 25, 2019. Husband of Fran of Blessed Memory. Joe is fondly remembered as a frequent participant of the Pasha reunions in Florida.

Rochelle Feuerman (sister of Mae Gabrielides) 1/30/1940-9/3/2019 - widow of Gerald Feuerman, daughter of David Abraham and Ester Elias, granddaughter of Kalomira (Mazalto) Eliezer and Eliezer Abraham, and the great granddaughter of Rabbi Lazar Eliezer and Sarah Galanos Eliezer

Mae Gabrielides' sister-in-law Marilyn Abraham (4/3/36-8/7/2019), widow of Eliezer Abraham.



Ester Abraham and Louis Elias

---

Melvin Mathios (7/12/1927-July 10, 2019), husband of Pearl Blumenfield of Blessed Memory, father of Janet and Allan, grandfather of Alexander, Leslie, Michelle and Erin. Melvin is survived by Irene Mathios, the last of his siblings. Melvin was the son of Abraham Mathios and Leah Negrin Mathios, the grandson of Matathias and Esther Negrin Matathias, the great grandson of Moses Matathias and Rose Negrin Matathias and the great great-grandson of Haham Matathias.



Leah Negrin and  
Abraham Mathios



Matathias Matathias

---

Anna Sabba Ullman, (Nov 20, 1949 – Sep 13, 2019) wife of Jonathan Ullman and sister of Abraham Sabbas. Anna is survived by 3 children and two grandchildren.



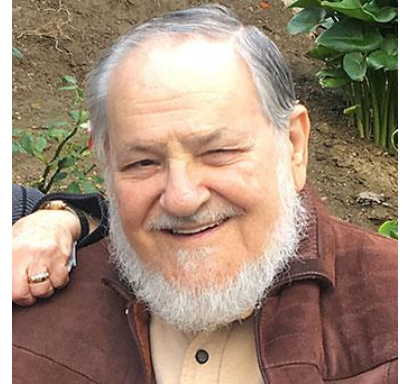
---

We are sad to announce the passing of Renee Hecht Adwar, (Jun 8, 1935 – Sep 15, 2019) mother of our dear friend, Elissa Sampson. Renee was born in 1935 in the Lower East Side. She was a Social Studies teacher at Erasmus High School in Brooklyn where her students were immigrants from Haiti and Jamaica. As the child of Polish Jewish immigrants, she felt passionate about the importance of offering immigrant kids a good education.

The mother of Katherine Askinazi, Olga Markarian (née Orsich) passed on September 20, at age 93. Born in Ukraine, she survived many challenges during her lifetime: premature birth, the Holodomor famine, the ravages of World War II and a paralyzing brain abscess. A strong proponent of women's education, she completed her dental degree while living in a displaced-persons camp after World War II. Predeceased by her husband Ashot of 61 years, she will be lovingly remembered by daughters Nina (Alexander) and Katherine, grandchildren Rose (Stefan) and Valerie, nephews and niece and cousins.

---

We mourn the passing of William (Bill Elhai), who was the son of Abraham Elhai who was from Crete and the grandson of Joshua Elhai who was from Smyrna. The Elhai's immigrated to New York but many family members moved to California. Members of our community (Richard and Paul Solomon) are directly related to the Elhais. He was 90 years old when he passed on June 30<sup>th</sup>. He was predeceased by his beloved wife, Corinne (Corky), as well as five of his six siblings. He is survived by his older sister, Rae; his four children Sarah (Uri) Rahamim, John (Cindy) Elhai, Robert (Laura Hoyt) Elhai, and Philip (Krista Carson) Elhai; and eleven grandchildren (Avri, Roneet, Daniel, Lindsey, Dylan, Noah, Nathaniel, Alexander, Julia, Kellie and Michelle).



---

It is with the deepest regret that we announce the passing of Rabbi Solomon Maimon, Rabbi Emeritus of Sephardic Bikur Holim Congregation in Seattle. Born in Turkey to a Sephardic rabbinic family, Rabbi Maimon was a giant among men and an iconic figure in the Seattle Sephardic Community. He helped to found the Sephardic Adventure Camp in Seattle, kept generations of young Sephardic Jews connected to their community, and spoke with a love that could only come from an extraordinarily special man. He helped to teach thousands of students over a career that spanned decades, graduating as the first Sephardic Rabbi from Yeshiva University in 1944 and serving not only his own community, but dozens of others throughout the United States. Celebrating his 100th Birthday this year, he embodied what it meant to be a real, genuine Sephardic Rabbi and his loss is a loss for all of us.



The Rabbi is survived by his two sons Rabbi Abraham and Rabbi Michael Maimon.  
Min HaShamayim Tenuhamu - May they be comforted from Heaven.

## KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA

INVITES YOU TO JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL  
KAL NIDRE – EREV YOM KIPPUR SERVICE ON  
OCTOBER 8 AT 5:45PM WHEN WE WILL RECITE

## HASHKAVOTH MEMORIAL PRAYERS

On Yom Kippur it is traditional to recite memorial prayers for the dearly departed. In many synagogues this ritual is observed by conducting a Yizkor service. At Kehila Kedosha Janina we follow the centuries-old Romaniote custom of our people by reciting Hashkavoth (memorial prayers) and the individual names of our dearly departed during the Kal Nidre Yom Kippur Eve service. If you wish to honor the memory of your family members or friends in this very special way, please email their names as soon as possible to [Museum@kkjism.org](mailto:Museum@kkjism.org). It is customary to include a voluntary donation of your choosing. The names and donation may also be submitted via PayPal on our website [www.kkjism.org](http://www.kkjism.org).

WISHING YOU GOOD HEALTH AND HAPPINESS  
AS WE APPROACH THE HIGH HOLIDAYS

תזכו לשנים רבות

KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA  
280 BROOME STREET NEW YORK, NY 10002  
[MUSEUM@KKJSM.ORG](mailto:MUSEUM@KKJSM.ORG)

## **ΔΙΚΟΙ MAS – Dikoi Mas – Los Muestros**

### **Visitors Flock to Kehila Kedosha Janina**

September was filled with visitors from around the world, old friends and new friends.



Anna Matathias and Jacque Frances



Rhonda and Murray Askinazi



Susan Frenchu & Rena Cassuto Deutch



Rachel, Lowell and Saara Gallin



Visitors from Slovakia



Pavlos Bozos



Ted Weiner and docent Stuart



Tour Group from Westchester



NYU Professor  
Natalie Jeremijenko

And of course, we often have nobility visiting...



Joanie Josephs, granddaughter of Joe Josephs, the founding President of KKJ



Lois Genee Ledner and Lillie Ledner, daughter and great-granddaughter of Hy and Lil Genee

---

### Upcoming Events at Kehila Kedosha Janina

#### Save the Dates!

We are very excited about our Fall calendar. Please remember to RSVP to [museum@kkjism.org](mailto:museum@kkjism.org) or 516-456-9336.

**October 6:** Professor Steven Bowman will give a lecture on the Uprising of the Sonderkommando at Auschwitz-Birkenau in honor of the upcoming 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the event.

**October 13:** Karen Batshaw will present her latest book "Light and Shadows"

In addition to events at Kehila Kedosha Janina, our synagogue/museum will be represented in two events: the first at the Greek Consulate in New York, and the second at the Greek Embassy in Washington DC.

**September 19-October 3 at the Greek Consulate in New York:** "Romaniote Memories – A Jewish Journey from Ioannina, Greece to Manhattan" Photographs by Vincent Giordano. There will be a special Panel Discussion that includes our Museum Director on September 25. The exhibit will subsequently move to the Greek Embassy in Washington DC from November 7-15, with a panel discussion to be held at the Embassy on November 13.

Full event details follow below.

Kehila Kedosha Janina is honored to be among the sponsors for the concert "The Soul of Epirus" on October 5.  
Purchase tickets online [here](#)



Axion Estin Foundation in association with the Panepirotic Federation of America presents

# *The Soul of Epirus*

Under the Auspices of the Consulate General of Greece in New York  
Cd release concert of the duo album *The Soul of Epirus*



**Petroloukas Halkias**  
*"The world's most  
beguiling folk music."  
New York Times Magazine*

**Vasilis Kostas**

**SATURDAY**  
**OCTOBER 5**  
**2019 | 7:00 pm**

Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity  
337 E 74th St, New York, NY 10021

*Petroloukas Halkias, clarinet | Vasilis Kostas, laouto  
Beth Bahia Cohen, violin | Panos Georgakopoulos, defi  
With special guests*

**TICKETS**  
General Admission: \$45  
Purchase/book tickets by calling (914) 222-4564



Axion Estin Foundation's "Panegyris" programming is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature

980 Broome Street, New York, NY 10009

October 6: At Kehila Kedosha Janina we will stop and remember the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the uprising of the Sonderkommando. Professor Steven Bowman will present a lecture on the rarely mentioned story of the role that Greek Jews played in the uprising.

KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA IS HONORED TO WELCOME  
**PROFESSOR STEVEN BOWMAN**  
FOR A SPECIAL PRESENTATION ON THE  
**SONDERKOMMANDO REVOLT AT  
AUSCHWITZ**



**SUNDAY OCTOBER 6<sup>TH</sup> AT 2:00PM**  
**KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA**  
**280 BROOME STREET NYC**

Professor Bowman will give a presentation on the Revolt of the Sonderkommando in honor of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the uprising and in anticipation of his upcoming paper on this topic.

Professor Bowman, Professor Emeritus of the University of Cincinnati, has spent decades studying Greek Jews, especially their history in Byzantium and losses during the Holocaust. Among the books he has authored are "The Jews of Byzantium," "Jewish Resistance in Wartime Greece," and "The Agony of Greek Jewry." Professor Bowman also served as Editor in Chief of the Sephardic and Greek Holocaust Library through Sephardic House and the American Sephardi Federation.

**We Never Forget.**

**REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED.**  
**PLEASE RSVP TO [MUSEUM@KKJSM.ORG](mailto:MUSEUM@KKJSM.ORG) OR 516-456-9336**

October 13: In memory of the deportation of the Jews from the Bulgarian zone of occupation during WWII and the 97<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Burning of Smyrne, we are honored to host Karen Batshaw to present her latest book.

KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA IS PROUD TO WELCOME BACK

**KAREN BATSHAW**

TO PRESENT HER NEW BOOK

**LIGHT AND SHADOWS**



**SUNDAY OCTOBER 13<sup>TH</sup> AT 2:00PM**

**KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA**

**280 BROOME STREET NYC**

It is rare that one reads historical fiction and is so enraptured, both on the historical end and on the fictional end. Thus is the case with Karen Batshaw's latest book, "Light and Shadows." Karen has a knack for picking themes that many do not know about, as in her first book, "Hidden in Plain Sight," covering the Holocaust of Jews in Salonika, Greece.

"Light and Shadows" takes on two rarely mentioned, but extremely painful historical events in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the extermination of Jews from the Bulgarian Zone of Occupation in Greece (in March 1943) and the Population Exchange of Asia Minor Greeks (in 1923). Karen uses her protagonists, a Sephardic Jewish woman from Kavala, Greece, and a Greek-Orthodox Christian man from Asia Minor Turkey, to tell the stories. Karen is a rare author who has both the talents of a fiction writer, creating story lines and characters that are unforgettable, and the intense research necessary to present the historical events in an accurate way. Karen will be available to sign purchased books. Copies of her first book "Hidden in Plain Sight" will also be available.

**REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED. RSVP TO [MUSEUM@KKJSM.ORG](mailto:MUSEUM@KKJSM.ORG)**

**Greek Jewish & Sephardic Young Professionals Network**

**Fall Nature Hike in Long Island – October 27**



**Greek Jewish & Sephardic  
Young Professionals Network**

Κοινότητα קהילה Komunita

## **COLD SPRING HARBOR FALL NATURE HIKE**

**SUNDAY OCTOBER 27**

**COLD SPRING HARBOR, LONG ISLAND**

**ESCAPE THE CITY FOR THE DAY AS WE VISIT TRAILS IN COLD  
SPRING HARBOR AND TAKE IN THE BEAUTIFUL FALL FOLIAGE.  
AFTERWARDS WE'LL ENJOY DELICIOUS PERSIAN SEPHARDIC FOOD**



**FULL DETAILS PROVIDED UPON RSVP  
OPEN TO YOUNG ADULTS IN THEIR 20'S AND 30'S  
RSVP TO [GREEKJEWISHYPN@GMAIL.COM](mailto:GREEKJEWISHYPN@GMAIL.COM)**

## Pop-Up Exhibit on the Jews of Rhodes in New York – Oct 29 through Nov 24

### Los Corassones Avlan

Conversations on Jewish Life in the Island of Rhodes  
A pop-up public space to discover, discuss and remember.



A fully immersive experience celebrating and exploring the lives of the Jews of Rhodes, the multimedia installation "**Los Corassones Avlan**" (The Hearts Speak, from a Sephardi saying) will open in the heart of the West Village, at **148 West 4th Street**, on October 29 through November 24, 2019. **Opening hours:** Sunday through Thursday from 1 pm to 9 pm. Friday from 1 pm to 4 pm and Saturday from 5pm to 10:30 pm.

*Coffee, tea, burekitas and pastry will be served daily during visiting hours. The bar behind the exhibition space is open to the public at night.*

**Crossing over** the lines between cultures, history and personal memories, "Los Corassones Avlan" has been created by **Centro Primo Levi** and the **Rhodes Jewish Historical Foundation** to challenge the idea of traditional museum narratives, expanding on the previous project "*the Rome Lab*", a 2017 installation conceived to play on the tension between personal memory, official history and ongoing research debates.

At the core of "Los Corassones Avlan" there is **a thread of personal and intimate connection** bonding past and present, imagination and history, life and oblivion. Inspired by the recollections and family tales of Auschwitz Survivor **Stella Levi** and **Aaron Hasson's** Los Angeles-based collection of artifacts and books, the fascinating story and life of the Jews of Rhodes will come alive as a tapestry of experiences and conversations.

Artifacts, archival photos and books documenting traditional Jewish life in a Mediterranean island together with life-size projections and surprising soundscapes will invite the public to visualize this past and reflect on the complexities of memory and (hi)story telling.

The project will be installed in a 19th century carriage house on West 4<sup>th</sup> street that shares the courtyard with the historic night bar named after Antoine Saint-Exupéry's novel *Vol de Nuit*. The bar was once a popular eatery and cabaret called The Samovar, which the photographer Jessie Tarbox Beals seized in one of her legendary images of lower Manhattan and where Al Jonson is believed to have performed in his early career.

During the month of November, the carriage house, which is usually closed, will become home to the exhibition and to roundtables, readings, talks, film and music presentations, where the public will **experience the little-known story and traditions of the "Rodeslis"**, the Jewish community living on the island of Rhodes for an unknown number of centuries until its destruction in 1944.

A mercantile and cultural hub during Antiquity and the Byzantine period, Rhodes retains traces of Hellenistic Judaism. Under Ottoman rule, it became an important Sephardi center, which - like many cities in the Mediterranean and elsewhere - local Jews affectionately called "Little Jerusalem".

The breath-taking views of the sea, the cobble-stone narrow streets of the Juderia, the bright colors of the exotic cuisine and the sweet sounds of the **Judeo-Spanish language** are still very vivid in **Stella Levi's recollections** of Jewish life on the island where **Turks, Greeks and Jews** found forms of coexistence under different rules.

The Turkish and Rodeslis communities shared the traditional bath and their century-old rituals, Greek, Turkish and Rodeslis cuisines, music, and languages overflowed into one another. With the advent of colonialism and the fall of the Ottoman Empire, Rhodelis began to emigrate to other countries, to Africa, the Americas and Europe. Their rich cultural heritage blossomed in new communities they created or joined around the world. The Juderia became the imagined home they carried to their new countries.

**Kehila Kedosha Janina is proud to support the 13<sup>th</sup> annual NYC Greek Film Festival International in New York. This year, there is a special documentary film on Romaniote Jews.**



### **Save the Dates – October 17-23, 2019**

The New York City Greek Film Festival welcomes the congregants of Kehila Kedosha Janina and the readers of its newsletter to a weeklong celebration of Greek culture and arts at Florence Gould Hall (55 East 59<sup>th</sup> Street) from October 17 to 23, 2019.

It is worth noting that for this upcoming 13<sup>th</sup> year, apart from the Greek features, documentaries and shorts, the festival launches a new section with international productions of Greek interest, meaning films with Greek elements no matter the country of their origin. Furthermore, a purely international section of short films from all over the world will be introduced, solely at the online edition of NYCGRFF. One documentary of particular interest is Agnes Sklavou and Stelios Tatakis' film entitled **Romaniotes: The Greek Jews of Ioannina** (Documentary, 67', 2019). This documentary chronicles how the Romaniotes were an integral part of the cultural mosaic of the city of Ioannina since the Byzantine era and faced the danger of extinction in the harsh period of WWII. This creative duo has over 26 years of experience working in film, television, advertising, documentaries, and shorts, having won several national and international awards for their documentaries. Skavou studied film directing while Tatakis studied cinematography at Stavrakos Film School in Athens.

Attendees have the privilege of meeting such directors at industry parties as well as for Q&As following screenings. Everyone is encouraged to vote for their favorite films, and winners will be announced at a special ceremony.

Another unique feature of this year's festival is to honor the legacy of Alexander the Great through a collaboration with notable Greek archeologists and artists for two exhibitions. A digital exhibition previously showcased at the Greek Institute of Venice compiles a 14<sup>th</sup> century manuscript of Alexander recounting events to the Byzantine emperor of Trabzon, who commissioned this rendering for his private library.

Compiled by the era's most able copyists, the manuscript is also enriched with 250 miniatures narrating the entire life course of this magnificent warrior. A physical exhibition of Alexander the Great-themed engravings,

carved by important artists from Crete's "XOTARIS" Gallery, will also honor this ruler who spread the Greek spirit and culture throughout the then known world.

Attendees can also look forward to the other cultural offerings such as a tribute concert to award winning composer Maro Theodorakis, niece to renowned composer Mikis Theodorakis, with Greek female singers. This event spotlights this year's theme of appreciation to women, and to their abuse in modern society.

In short, the New York Greek Film Festival encourages everyone to attend this weeklong exploration of Greek culture through an array of international films, exhibits championing the legacy of Alexander the Great, and concerts. Become part of the process by voting for your favorite films and mingling with the cast and crew at special events. Look forward to the upcoming schedule in the October newsletter. Follow the festival on social media on Facebook and at <https://nycgreekfilmfestival.com>.

Looking forward to welcoming you all!

### **Maria Tzompanaki**

Director of NYC Greek Film Festival  
Ambassador of Crete's Culture  
Actress

---

### **Ongoing Events**

#### **"Romaniote Memories: a Jewish Journey from Ioannina, Greece to Manhattan" Exhibit at the Greek Consulate in New York**

Article by Tasos Kokkinides from the Canada Jewish News

Exhibition on the History of Romaniote Jews Opens at Greek Consulate in NYC

A photography exhibition documenting the history of Greece's Romaniote Jews, or "Romaniotes," opens on Thursday, September 19 at the Consulate General of Greece in New York City. The exhibition, titled "Romaniote Memories, a Jewish Journey from Ioannina, Greece to Manhattan," will feature photographs showing the history of the ethnic Jewish community which once thrived in the northwestern Greek city of Ioannina.

The photographs are part of a multi-media archive created by Vincent Giordano, who died in 2010. His work on this important subject was sponsored by the International Survey of Jewish Monuments. Since June of 2019 Giordano's exhibit has found a new home, as part of the Hellenic American Project and Special Collections at the Library of Queens College, New York, which is under the direction of Dr. Nicholas Alexiou. The project has received support from a number of philanthropic institutions, including a grant from the Fulbright Foundation in 2009, with the Jewish Museum of Greece acting as the host institution. In 1999, photographer Giordano made an unplanned visit to New York City's Kehila Kedosha Janina synagogue, located on the Lower East Side. He knew little about Judaism or synagogues, and even less about the Romaniote Jewish tradition of which this tiny temple, built in 1927, is the lone North American representative.



The Romaniotes are among the oldest and least-known of all the Jewish communities of the diaspora. Their distinct language was actually Judaeo-Greek, a Greek dialect which contained Hebrew along with some Aramaic and Turkish words.

Naturally, their descendants now speak modern Greek or the languages of their new home countries, but the ancient dialect of their ancestors has never been forgotten. Since the Holocaust, when 85 percent of all Greek Jews perished and the historic Romaniote communities in Greece were largely destroyed, the Kehila Kedosha Janina synagogue has struggled to maintain its millennium-old traditions.



A lecture and panel discussion about the enduring history of the Romaniote Jews took place at the Greek Consulate on Thursday, September 26th, 2019 at 6:00 PM.

### Photos from the Panel Discussion held at the Greek Consulate in New York

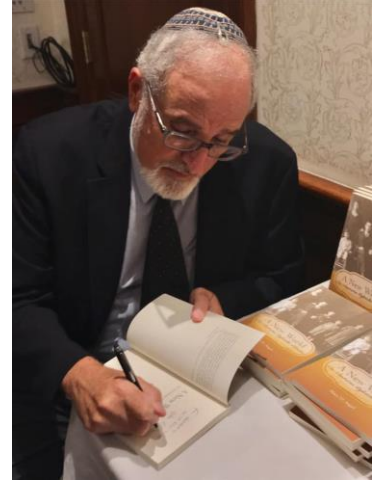


Prof. Nikos Alexiou, Marcia Haddad-Ikonomopoulos, Prof. Steven Bowman and Prof. Samuel Gruber



## Past Events at Kehila Kedosha Janina

Thank you to everyone who joined us for Rabbi Marc Angel's presentation of his newest book "A New World: An American Sephardic Memoir." He recounted the traditional wisdom of his family who hailed from Rhodes and Turkey. Email us at [museum@kkjsm.org](mailto:museum@kkjsm.org) to order your copy today!



---

On September 15<sup>th</sup>, we were fascinated by Stewart Nachmias' demonstration of how he creates his art work.



## Past Events in New York

### Opening Reception for the Exhibit at the Greek Consulate



---

For those in the **Sacramento California area**, our Museum Director, Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos, was chosen to present at the bi-annual Modern Greek Studies Association Symposium from November 7-10. The Symposium will take place at The University of California, Sacramento and Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos will be presenting her most recent research on Jews detained in British Camps on the island of Cyprus on Friday morning. Registration is necessary. Contact [museum@kkjsm.org](mailto:museum@kkjsm.org) for more information.



Jewish children held at the British Military Camp in Cyprus



Jewish refugees detained

## News from Jewish Greece

### Ioannina

On August 30<sup>th</sup>, our own Moisis Eliasaf, President of the Jewish Community of Ioannina, was sworn in as Mayor of the city. As he addressed the dignitaries and the audience, among the many statements he made, the following are most meaningful: "We will not be the lords to decide as we want. We will be the delegates to decide in the name of the town. The Guide of our decisions must be their will. This is our debt. We do not hold the scepter of power to negotiate it in a regime of non-military transactions with selected members of the citizen body. Instead we will be prepared to restore justice." And "it is obvious that only if we undertake overall lords and we are able to communicate with each other through our commitment to common values, only then we open a crack of hope towards our well-being. Instead of running behind nonexistent saviors let's seek salvation on our own responsibility. So that, with the proportional participation of all we can achieve a political culture, the only thing that will help us cross the abyss of the problems that threaten our democracy. In coexistence there is an axiom. Nothing moves if we ourselves don't put it in motion."

Among the changes he proposed are the following:

- open doors of the services of the municipality so that residents can be served without the mediation of the mayor or the aldermen.
- the development of Ioannina as a "Smart City" by expanding electronic communication and using digital technology.
- reorganization of services and exploitation of all human resources.
- improving everyday starting with cleanliness.
- upgrading of common spaces, parks, children's parks, squares and the main square of the city.
- complete proposal for an open-air park for sports and culture, a park to be adopted by the citizens.
- re-reorganization of water in order to reduce the price of water.
- planned openness of the city with a view to increasing the tourism current which means strengthening the local economy.
- support entrepreneurship with incentives for young entrepreneurs.
- drawing up a program of flexible projects.
- cooperation with all to protect the lake.



## Athens

### Bat Mitzvah Ceremony

"On Sunday, June 30th, ten of our girls celebrated their Bat-Mitzvah at Beth Shalom Synagogue. In Greece the custom is for the girls to celebrate their Bat-Mitzvah as a group instead of individually. The girls under the guidance of our Rabbi Gabriel Negrin for over 6 months prepared their Bat-Mitzvah and were taught songs and prayers. Together with their parents they prepared and celebrated this day with a beautiful ceremony. This year the theme of the Bat Mitzvoth was Jewish Women that united and together changed the world. The girls prepared a speech on the Jewish Women or Organizations of their choice such as Yoheved and Miriam, JWI, NCJW, ICJW, WIZO, JWPR, and Lean in etc. The guests enjoyed every moment of the ceremony."



### Lauder School

The end of the year ceremony of the Lauder Athens Jewish Community primary school was a huge celebration as grandparents, parents and friends watched a theatrical show prepared by the children and their teachers called "A Trip to Israel." Children of all grades participated in the performance, entertained with their songs and dances and impressed the gathering with their excellent drama skills. It was an unforgettable evening. This year those attending wished farewell to the Jewish history teacher, Mrs. Lina Errera, who has been a teacher in the school for the last 40 years. We wish her all the best as she enters retirement.



## Veroia

On September 22<sup>nd</sup> a march was held through the streets of Veroia in memory of 460 Jewish students who were rounded up by the Germans and taken to their deaths at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Leading the march were two survivors, Russell Daniel and Reuven Emmanuel. Carrying signs with the names of the 460 Jewish students were 460 students from the city of Veroia.



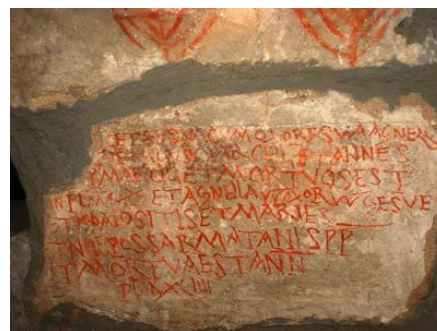
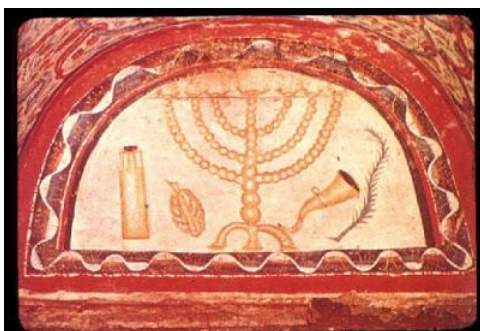
---

## News of Interest about Italian Jews

"Italy: More details on the ancient Jewish catacombs in Venosa" from Jewish Heritage Europe article [here](#)

Back in July, we published an extensive report on the ancient Jewish catacombs and other ancient Jewish heritage in the town of Venosa in southern Italy, following a visit there by JHE Director Ruth Ellen Gruber.

Ruth's brother, the architectural historian Samuel D. Gruber, accompanied her on the trip, and he has now published a more detailed description of the catacombs on his Jewish art and monuments blog.



The Jewish catacombs, he notes, lie beneath the surface of what amounts to "a vast cemetery hill, riddled with Jewish and Christian catacombs and other burial chambers created and used from the 4th through 6th centuries of the Common Era." There are thousands of known burial places under the hill — and probably many more than have not yet been discovered.

He quotes some of the Jewish inscriptions and reports on research by scholars including Margaret Williams, who has been able to link many of these inscriptions together to create a "stemma" of family connections that extend over seven generations and chart " how a single family changed economically, socially and culturally in

the course of two centuries.” So we do know that certain sections [of the catacombs] did indeed contain the remains of related family members, and that theirs often spanned decades. (See Margaret Williams, “The Jews of Early Byzantine Venusia: The family of Faustinus I, the Father,” *Journal of Jewish Studies*, Vol 50:1 (spring, 1999).

Among those identified are the apparently prominent family of the chairman of the synagogal board and chief medical officer of the town. The inscriptions on their places of burial, as well as those of others, bear witness to the thriving Jewish community that live in Venosa in late antiquity.

As we noted in our previous article on Venosa, excavations revealed around 75 inscriptions in the catacombs, written in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, as well as depictions of Jewish symbols such as the Menorah, Lulav, Esrog, and Shofar.

The Naples-based scholar Giancarlo Lacerenza has just published an extensive new article on these inscriptions: “Painted Inscriptions and Graffiti in the Jewish Catacombs of Venosa: An Annotated Inventory.” (In *Annali Sezione Orientale* vol 79, 1-2 (2019) pp 275–305.)

---

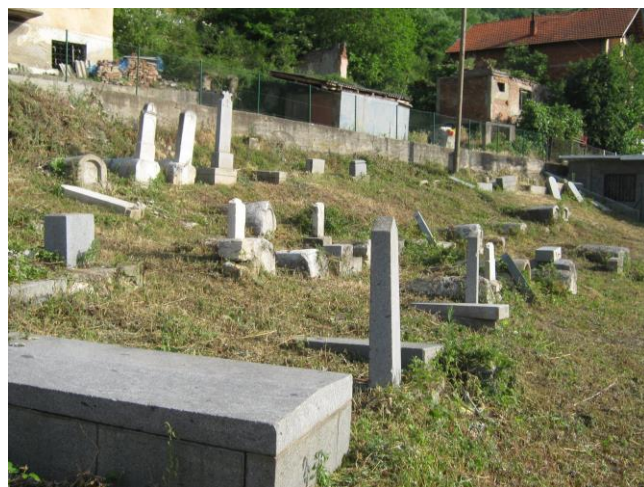
### **Jews of Bosnia-Herzegovina**

“Bosnia-Herzegovina: Jewish cemetery in Zvornik given state protection as endangered national monument” article from Jewish Heritage Europe [here](#)

The Jewish cemetery in the town of Zvornik, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, has been put on the list of national monuments — and also declared an Endangered Monument.

News reports say that the Commission to Preserve National Monuments took the decision during its meeting in Sarajevo August 31.

Local media quoted a statement from the Commission saying it had decided to place the cemetery on the List of Endangered Monuments “because the cemetery is devastated and tombstones are in extremely poor condition.”



Zvornik is on the Drina river, on the border between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia.

The cemetery, located by the river bank below a wooded slope outside town, was founded in 1890. It has several dozen gravestones, many of them toppled or broken, and is surrounded by a wall with a gate.

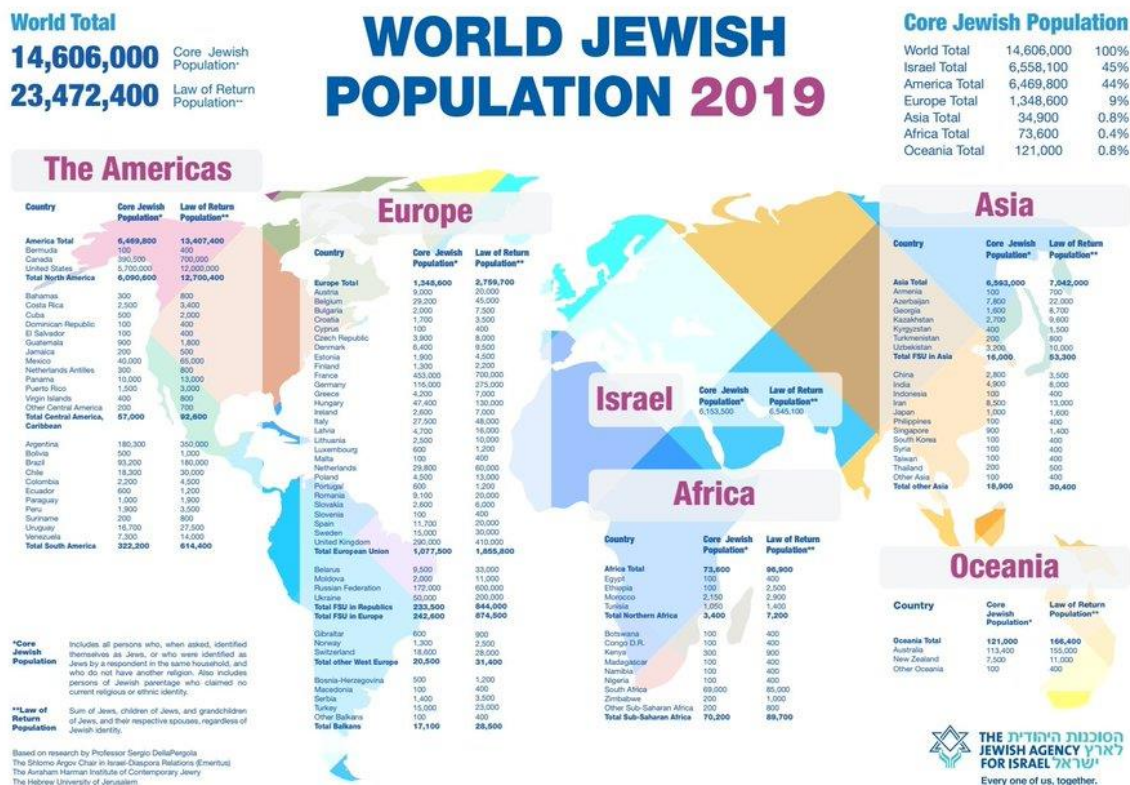
There is also a memorial plaque, erected by the city in 2008, commemorating Zvornik Jews killed in a fascist pogrom in 1941.

Serbian Jewish activist Jasna Ciric, who wrote a book about Zvornik’s Jewish history and who was active in the campaign to get the cemetery listed, told JHE that there had been a form of protection for the cemetery since 1995, but the August 31 decision made it official.

The zvono.media.rs news site said that with the decision to name it an endangered national monument, it was expected that rehabilitation work could get under way.

It said that the cemetery already did receive some clean-up work each year, including by a pensioners' volunteer organization.

## News of Interest for Everyone



1. Israel: 6,153,500 (grew 10.2%)
2. United States: 5,700,000 (grew 5.1%)
3. France: 453,000 (shrank 5.6%)
4. Canada: 395,000 (grew 5.3%)
5. United Kingdom: 290,000 (shrank 0.3%)
6. Argentina: 180,300 (shrank 0.8%)
7. Russia: 172,000 (shrank 11.3%)
8. Germany: 116,000 (shrank 2.5%)
9. Australia: 113,400 (grew 1.3%)
10. Brazil: 93,200 (shrank 2.2%)

South Africa, Ukraine, Hungary, Mexico, the Netherlands, Belgium and Italy also had core Jewish populations of 25,000 or more.

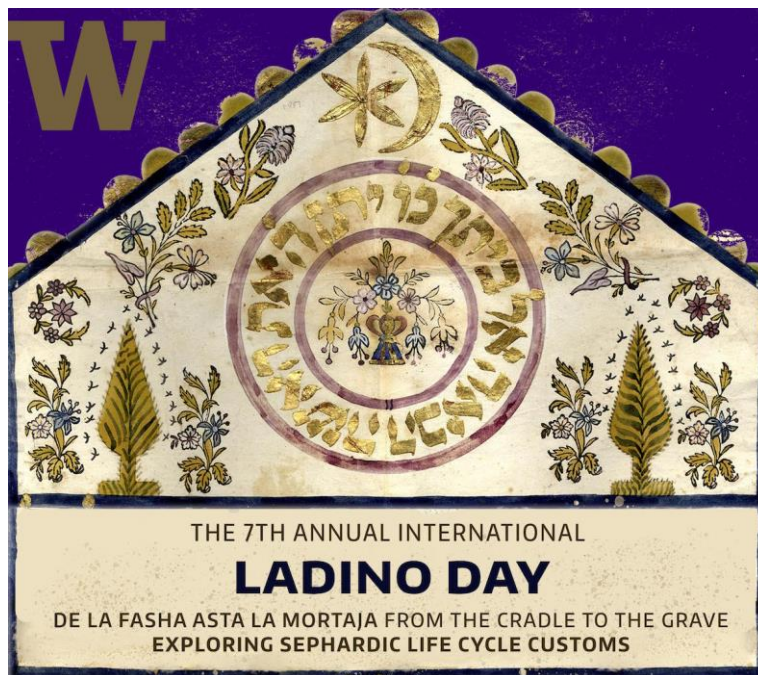
## Seattle International Ladino Day

# Celebrate the 7th annual International Ladino Day

Thursday, December 5, 2019 7 PM  
UW HUB Lyceum

Join the Sephardic Studies Program for our annual International Ladino Day Celebration on the University of Washington campus! This year's program will explore the Sephardic life cycle customs unique to Ottoman Jews and how those traditions transformed as the communities migrated to the Pacific Northwest. The program will feature a multimedia presentation by Professor Devin Naar and a performance by Seattle's Ladineros.

**Free and open to the public.**  
**Kosher Sephardic reception following the program.**



## We Welcome Back Rabbi Gershon Harris

Gershon Harris  
Hatzor Haglilit, Israel



One of the most popular and well-known Jewish holidays is "*Simhat Torah*", celebrated on October 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> in Israel and the Diaspora respectively. Through the best and worst times, and under persecution or freedom, Jews of every type and affiliation (or even lack thereof) have publicly rejoiced with Torah scrolls in hand, whether as a defiant and proud demonstration of Jewish identity, a religious celebration of our love of the Torah and our joy that it was given to the Jewish nation by God himself, or just as a way to connect with the Jewish community and people.

Yet ironically, the holiday we call "*Simhat Torah*" and its distinct customs and celebration as we know them, are not mentioned in the Torah, or even the entire Bible. Rather, the origins of the holiday lie in how Jewish communities originally divided the weekly Shabbat Torah readings and completed the entire Torah. The ancient custom in the Land of Israel was to divide the Torah into 150 "*parshiot*" [portions/segments], and complete the cycle in three to three-and-a-half years, while the Babylonian Jewish custom, which began during the first sojourn of Jews in Babylonia after the destruction of the First Temple, was to divide the Torah into 54 *parshiot*, and complete the cycle in one year. For various reasons, not the least of which being the loss of Jewish sovereignty and exile in and from the Land of Israel, the Babylonian Talmud and custom in virtually every sphere of Jewish became the "governing law" all of the world, including in the Land of Israel, including taking on the one-year Torah reading cycle. Nonetheless, there is recorded evidence, like the chronicles of the Jewish traveler, Benjamin of Tudela, that describe Egyptian Jewish communities still using the three-year cycle as late as the early middle ages.

Furthermore, the specific separate day called "*Simhat Torah*" is really the second day of the "*Shmini Atzeret*" holiday, which like all other festivals, is only observed in the Diaspora. As such, while in the Land of Israel (including today) *Shmini Atzeret* and *Simhat Torah* and completion of the Torah reading cycle are celebrated on the same day, the two-day festival outside of Israel allowed communities to "split" the celebrations, observing *Shmini Atzeret* alone, and moving the completion of the Torah and corresponding celebrations to the second day, distinctly named "*Simhat Torah*".

Though historical records are scarce, it does appear that until the one-year cycle took over, in the Land of Israel any celebration of completion of the Torah reading cycle occurred only every three or three-and-a-half years. In the Diaspora, however, again originating in Babylonia, the annual completion of the Torah reading cycle was originally celebrated by removing the Torah scrolls from the Ark and circle around the "bimah" [pulpit] while reciting special prayers to God for salvation called "*Hoshano*" – based on the final word of each one, "*Hoshana*" – Save us!. This was soon supplemented by joyous dancing and singing in celebration of the completion of the Torah and its significance and exclusivity to the Jewish people.

Further impetus for the lively celebrations in support and love of Torah came over the centuries from major persecutions, expulsions, blood libels and the Crusades, which were of course aimed, among other reasons, to persecute, degrade, ghettoize and even slaughter Jews as the price for refusing to forsake the Torah and the commandments. The mutual and irrevocable relationship between God and the Jewish people symbolized by His giving the Torah to His 'Chosen People', led to further joyous and unbridled celebrations in many forms, including the symbolic "wedding" between God and Israel, and the celebration of the eternal bond between

us. Finally, a custom developed already in 12<sup>th</sup> century European Jewish communities to not only complete the Torah on *Simhat Torah*, but also to begin it anew, by reading the first verses of the Book of Genesis, from another Torah scroll, or, as was also customary, from a Bible.

Be that as it may, though not Biblical in origin, the celebrations of *Simhat Torah* have become one of Judaism's most important events. Indeed, no less than in ancient times, and perhaps even more, this unique holiday constitutes one of the greatest and most significant symbols of our eternal connection with both God and the Torah, which cannot, nor will it ever, be severed. *Hag Sameah!*

---

**Rabbi Nissim Elnecavé**  
**Sephardic Jewish Brotherhood of America**



**Parashah of the Week – Nissavim: Keeping the Goal in Mind**

In our Parashah, Moshe speaks to the Jewish people of the Misvah, that is not far away from us. He says that this commandment is not high on the heavens, neither far on the other side of the sea, but rather he states, "This very thing is very close to you, in your mouth, and in your heart, so that you may do it. (Devarim 30:14) Yet, we ask, what is the Misvah that Moshe is referring to? Don Yishak Abravanel (1) in his commentary to the Torah writes that Moshe is specifically referring to the concept of "Teshuva", repentance. He explains that we were created with the freedom to choose and even after one has failed a number of times, Teshuva, and the opportunity to mend our ways is always within our grasp.

Don Yishak Abravanel offers three different approaches to these verses; he first states that repentance can immediately and easily be acquired. Teshuvah is the cure to all ills and the realigning of all crooked matters. As the pasuk states, "it is very close to you". If man was able to recognize all its many benefits, people would make ladders to go up to the heavens to attain it. What is the same, if it could only be acquired beyond the seas, there would be those individuals that would build ships to travel through the seas to acquire it. We would do the impossible to obtain it. Yet, it is truly easy to achieve, true repentance is in our heart, is within us.

One should remember that the process of repentance must be genuine. Our Sages teach us that part of the process of Teshuva is recognizing what we have done wrong, which brings one to the emotion of regret. Researches tell us, that regret, like all emotions, has a function for survival. It is our brain's way of telling us to take another look at our choices; a signal that our actions may be leading to negative consequences. Regret must be followed by action and it is at this stage that we must review our behavior and our choices.

As an alternative approach to these verses he writes that one must not think that Teshuvah is dependent on some astrological sign or based on a superstitious act that will help the individual attain atonement. Moshe teaches us, "It is not in heaven". Teshuvah is up to the individual, it emanates from within, and no talisman can help you in acquiring it. Repentance is in the heart and in the mind of the individual, we can change for the better when we make up our minds to do so, but we must not think that some other outside force can influence or change our freedom of choice and take away our responsibilities.

Still, Don Abravanel gives a third way of understanding these verses, he states, at times, change appears to be far away, impossible to reach. But the reality is that the distance depends on the perspective and wisdom of the individual. Moshe Rabbenu is teaching us that repentance and change are not so distant and not impossible. A person that truly repents changes greatly, his own perspective shifts, there is a whole new paradigm. It's a process that suddenly makes us aware of the things and matters that we could not see. We come to a new understanding of our world, we see ourselves differently, and we can take a total new approach to something that appeared to be impossible. We realize that we are able and begin truly to take responsibility for our own actions.

Teshuva is within our reach.

Shabbat Shalom and Anyada Buena i Dulce!

(1) Rabbi Don Yishak Abravanel (Abarvanel) One of the oldest and most distinguished Spanish families, which traces its origin from King David. Members of this family lived at Seville, where dwelt its oldest representative, Don Judah Abravanel. Samuel Abravanel, his grandson, settled at Valencia, and Samuel's son, Judah (or perhaps he himself), left Spain for Portugal. Isaac, the son of Judah, returned to Castile, where he lived till the time of the great expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492. Then, with his three sons, Judah, Joseph, and Samuel, Isaac went to Italy. Their descendants, as well as other members of the family who arrived later from the Iberian peninsula, lived in Holland, England, Turkey, and elsewhere during and since the sixteenth century. Statesman and Bible commentator, son of the Portuguese treasurer, Dom Judah, was born in the year 1437 at Lisbon, and died at Venice in 1508. He was buried in Padua. Abravanel received a careful education and was a pupil of Joseph Hayyim, rabbi of Lisbon. Well versed in Talmudic literature and in the learning of his time, endowed with a clear and keen mind, and full of enthusiasm for Judaism, he devoted his early years to the study of Jewish religious philosophy and when scarcely twenty years old wrote on the original form of the natural elements, on the most vital religious questions, on prophecy, etc. His political abilities also attracted attention while he was still young. He entered the service of King Alfonso V. of Portugal as treasurer, and soon won the confidence of his master. Notwithstanding his high position and the great wealth he had inherited from his father, his love for his afflicted brethren was unabated. When Arzila, in Morocco, was taken by the Moors, and the Jewish captives were sold as slaves, he contributed largely to the funds needed to manumit them, and personally arranged for collections throughout Portugal. He also wrote to his learned and wealthy friend Jehiel, of Pisa, in behalf of the captives.

After the death of Alfonso he was obliged to relinquish his office, having been accused by King John II. of connivance with the duke of Bragança, who had been executed on the charge of conspiracy. Abravanel, warned in time, saved himself by a hasty flight to Castile (1483). His large fortune was confiscated by royal decree. At Toledo, his new home, he occupied himself at first with Biblical studies, and in the course of six months produced an extensive commentary on the books of Joshua, Judges, and Samuel. But shortly afterward he entered the service of the house of Castile. Together with his friend, the influential Don Abraham Senior, of Segovia, he undertook to farm the revenues and to supply provisions for the royal army, contracts that he carried out to the entire satisfaction of Queen Isabella. During the Moorish war Abravanel advanced considerable sums of money to the government. When the banishment of the Jews from Spain was decreed, he left nothing undone to induce the king to revoke the edict. In vain did he offer him 30,000 ducats (\$68,400, nominal value). With his brethren in faith he left Spain and went to Naples, where, soon after, he entered the service of the king. For a short time he lived in peace undisturbed; but when the city was taken by the French, bereft of all his possessions, he followed the young king, Ferdinand, in 1495, to Messina; then went to Corfu; and in 1496 settled in Monopoli, and lastly (1503) in Venice, where his services were employed in negotiating a commercial treaty between Portugal and the Venetian republic. Source: Jewish Encyclopedia

(2) Abravanel, Commentary to Sefer Devarim 30:14.

**Rabbi Marc D. Angel**  
**Rabbi Emeritus of Shearith Israel, Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue in NYC**  
**Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals**



Standing Before the Almighty: Thoughts on Parashat Nitsavim

Angel for Shabbat, Parashat Nitsavim

By Rabbi Marc D. Angel

"You are all standing today before the Lord your God..." (Devarim 29:9)

Moses reminds the entire people of Israel that they are each standing before God. Whether one is the head of a tribe or a water-carrier, all are ultimately judged by God. Rabbi Moshe Alsheikh, the great 16th century mystic and commentator, notes that we humans do not know how to evaluate each other properly--this is only known by God. There are people who may seem important to us--but who are deficient in the eyes of God. There are people who may seem insignificant to us--but who are highly regarded by the Almighty. Not only may we be deceived in our evaluation of others, we also may be deceived in our evaluation of our own selves. We may either over exaggerate our virtues or underestimate our good qualities. If we remind ourselves that we are standing before God, we can hope to come to a truer understanding of ourselves and others.

Rabbi Haim David Halevy, late Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv, offered a poignant insight into the season of holy days we are about to observe. A dominant symbol of Rosh HaShana is the Shofar. The law is that a Shofar must be bent. The moral lesson is that we, too, should bow ourselves in penitence and contrition. We come before the Almighty, humbly asking forgiveness for our sins and shortcomings. Indeed, the theme of the period between Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur is repentance.

Shortly after Yom Kippur, we observe the Festival of Succoth. A dominant symbol of that holiday is the Lulav. According to halakha, a Lulav must have a straight spine--if it is bent over, then it is not valid for the performance of the mitzvah. The Lulav reminds us that we must stand tall, that there are times when contrition and meekness are not appropriate. We must conduct ourselves with principled commitment to our ideas and ideals, being straight and upright in our words and deeds.

Rabbi Halevy notes that we each need to learn from the Shofar and the Lulav. We need the humility symbolized by the Shofar, and the strength symbolized by the Lulav. We need to balance these qualities to reach a realistic and proper approach to life.

As we enter the holy day season, it is important for us to remember that we each stand before the Almighty, who Alone knows the essence of who we are. The ultimate Arbiter of the value of our lives is the One to whom we are answerable. There is no point in pretending to be what we aren't, or in posturing to make ourselves more important in the eyes of others--God always knows the Truth about who we are.

So let us come before the Almighty with honesty and humility, bent over like the Shofar. Let us note our errors and weaknesses, and let us resolve to do better with our lives. But let us also come before the Almighty as a Lulav--upright and straight, strong in our commitment to the teachings of Torah. Let us neither over-estimate--nor under-estimate--who we are, and what our lives mean.

## News from the Extended Community of the Spanish and Portuguese

### Amsterdam

#### Hazzan Rodrigues Pereira to Offer Course on Kippur Melodies

For the third year in a row, Bendigamos is organizing a course to learn the tunes of Kippur so they may follow and participate in the service according to the Amsterdam Portuguese tradition. The first of four sessions attracted 25 people. The next sessions will take place on these dates: Sept. 26, Oct. 2, and Oct. 6. Those in the area are invited to attend. Participation is free. Please sign up at [BendigamosNL@gmail.com](mailto:BendigamosNL@gmail.com). You can also find recordings and pronunciation guidance according to the Amsterdam Portuguese custom [here](#)



Kippur services will be led by Hazzan Nachshon Rodrigues Pereira with a group of youngsters leading the selichot.

### Florence

#### Community to Host Events for European Day of Jewish Culture

On Sept. 22, the Florence Jewish Community has prepared a rich program of lectures and conferences with rabbis, professors, writers led by the synagogue's Rabbi Amedeo Spagnoletto. The program is part of the European Day of Jewish Culture taking place across the continent. In addition, there will be tastings of traditional food at the synagogue's popular Balagan Café as well as guided tours of its magnificent synagogue. Full program [here](https://www.sandpcentral.org/florence). Additionally, on Oct. 6 the synagogue will welcome the Chief Rabbi of Rome Riccardo Di Segni. For more on the community: <https://www.sandpcentral.org/florence>



### Shearith Israel – New York

#### Shearith Israel Culminates Year-Long Celebration with Special Program

To cap off a series of year-long events marking the synagogue's 365<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Congregation Shearith Israel held a special evening in early September, which included the display of Myer Myers rimonim, the rededication of a newly restored Torah, and a historic reunion between descendants of the great Sephardic Rabbi Don Isaac Abarbanel and Portugal's Duke of Braganza. Rabbi Meir Soloveichik ended the evening with a keynote lecture. The restored Torah is the first of several centuries-old scrolls the synagogue has begun to restore. More about all of the past year's 365th anniversary events [here](#)



## Bayonne France

### Rabbi Valency to Lead Bayonne and Biarritz Communities

Rabbi Emmanuel Valency, who has been for seven years the religious leader of the Grande Synagogue in Bordeaux, will be leaving in November to lead the S&P congregations of Bayonne and Biarritz. The two historic communities are situated near the Spanish border, where Spanish and Portuguese Jews have been welcomed since 1525. Rabbi Valency stated that his mission will be "to reinvigorate S&P minhagim forgotten after a long time of use of North African-Moroccan liturgy." Recently, he was also in attendance as Bayonne celebrated the 330th anniversary of its cemetery. More on the ceremony [here](#)



## Montreal

### The Spanish Announces Rabbi Pinto as Its New Religious Leader

In September, the Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue in Montreal welcomed its new religious leader, Rabbi Maimon Pinto, along with his wife Gali and their three children. Born in Israel, Rabbi Pinto moved to Montreal in 1986 and studied at Hillel Montreal before continuing at a yeshiva in Morristown, New Jersey, completing his studies at the Yeshiva Shuva Yisrael in Ashdod, and receiving his rabbinical ordination at Kollel Or Yaakov in Rechovot. Rabbi Pinto has already been giving well-attended talks in Montreal and will be giving classes every Wednesday evening at the synagogue. Follow activities at The Spanish [here](#)



---

## Looking for Our Help

Jean Gold is looking for our help in finding info about her relative, Esther Albala.

"The sum total of what I know about this woman, is quite small, but I'll share in as much detail as I've been able to ascertain."

Esther Albala was probably born 1871-1874, possibly in Monastir. (Note: research by Michael Coffield has majority of Albalas born in Kastoria; WW1 draft registrations list 8 Albalas and 4 of them born in Kastoria; 12 Ellis Island records, 7 from Kastoria)

Esther married Solomon (Shlomo) Ergas. He was born about 1868 in Salonika. A copy of a list of Jews from Monasitr who donated money to build an Alliance School in Temuco, Chile (1884) included the name Salomon Jos. Ergas. This may be the same family: (1) Esther and Solomon named one of their sons Joseph, and (2) other records confirm Solomon's father's name was Joseph. This suggests my ancestors were residing in Monastir by 1884.

Esther's last place of residence before emigrating with her husband and children was Monastir.

The family departed on 28 Sep 1912 from Patras, Greece, arriving Ellis Island on 18 Oct 1912 on the SS Argentina:

Salomon, 44, m, married, coffeeman, Turkey/Hebrew

Esther (wife), 38, f, s, housewife, Turkey/Hebrew

Estrea (ch), 21, f, s, Turkey/Hebrew

Yoseph (ch), 18, m, s, Turkey/Hebrew

Annah (ch), 16, f, s, Turkey/Hebrew

Semo (ch), 16, m, s, Turkey/Hebrew

Victoria (ch), 8, f, s, Turkey/Hebrew

Beno (ch), 4, m, s, Turkey/Hebrew

their last foreign contact was brother Nahama [presumably an Ergas]

their destination was brother Moritz Ergas, 99-103 E Houston St Floor 5, c/o Rosintale (best guess)

all claim born in Monastir

My paternal grandmother: "Always wore a suit, vest, cane and a derby. Never worked. His wife worked in a factory sewing. When he thought wife could no longer support him he took off to Chile to be supported by his daughter, Tamar. He played cards, was a gambler." I don't think he abandoned her. Various passenger manifests show he traveled back and forth between Chile and NY. However, I don't think he supported her either. Their youngest daughter, also traveled back and forth as well as to virtually all relatives, no matter how far off the tree. Aunt Victoria lived with me for a while. I found she was a leech expecting everyone to take care of her smallest needs/desires regardless of cost or other factors. I suspect Victoria was a reflection of the father and maybe a mirror into the problems. She was incredibly spoiled and self-centered.

Tamar, the oldest daughter, had married a wealthy man, Salvador Cassorla. From what I've learned of the Cassorla family, they were quite generous with everyone, and not just their immediate family. I can see the lure of wanting a part of it if one wasn't inclined to work.

In any case, back to Esther. She never applied for citizenship and her alien file could not be found though ICE looked for almost 9 months. Census records showed she worked most of her life supporting her children. My grandmother described her as a bitter person, and I think she may have had just cause. She died 30 Mar 1951 at University Heights Hospital and the informant for her death records was the hospital. It looks like she also died alone, without any family.

I have found several people named Esther Albala, born about the same time/place(s), but none of them were her. I have found quite a few Albala, Cassorla, and Ergas families over the years -- all of them remember her husband, none remember her.

Esther is not only a mystery, but one for whom I feel shouldn't be lost to time. I have been trying to find her parents/siblings since the mid-1990's.

If it helps, I have a few family pictures, though none of Esther herself. Please send info to [museum@kkjsm.org](mailto:museum@kkjsm.org)

**CONGREGATION MAGEN DAVID OF MANHATTAN  
PRESENTS**

# **COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE**

**with  
Sixth Street Community Synagogue  
Stanton Street Shul  
Kehila Kedosha Janina Synagogue**

**Register as a blood donor and help us make a  
difference.**

**[Erica@MagenDavidNY.org](mailto:Erica@MagenDavidNY.org)**

**MONDAY OCTOBER 7, 2019 | 3 PM-9 PM  
177 SULLIVAN STREET NYC**

Share your good health with someone in need!  
We gratefully accept donors from  
all blood groups and blood types.



**So many of you have applauded our efforts. We thank those who have sent in contributions.**

If you would like to make a contribution to Kehila Kedosha Janina, please send your check (in US dollars) made out to *Kehila Kedosha Janina*, to us at 280 Broome Street, New York, NY 10002 (attention Marcia). Your donation will enable us to continue to hold services and preserve our special traditions and customs, and to tell our unique story through our Museum.

Some of our major donations have been generous bequests, which have enabled us to complete major work in our synagogue/museum. Do remember us in your will. Your legacy will be present in our legacy.

When you are in New York, visit us on Broome Street. We are open for services every Saturday morning at 9:30am and all major Jewish holidays and our Museum is open every Sunday from 11am-4pm and by appointment during the week.



**Kehila Kedosha Janina E-Newsletter – Number 127**

**October 2019**

**Kehila Kedosha Janina**

**280 Broome Street, New York NY 10002**

**Website: [www.kkjsm.org](http://www.kkjsm.org)**

**Email: [museum@kkjsm.org](mailto:museum@kkjsm.org)**

**Your donations enable us to continue our work. You can send donations via mail directly to 280 Broome Street, New York, NY 10002 or you can donate via our website [www.kkjsm.org](http://www.kkjsm.org)**