

Bereshit: Seeing Is Deceiving

What was the sin of Adam and Eve? The answer seems apparent: they ate from the Tree of Knowledge of good and bad that they were explicitly commanded against. But a moment’s reflection raises troublesome questions. Why was such knowledge verboten? Wouldn’t God want humanity to discern good from bad? And if the human being had been created “in the image of God,” much less expected to know that obeying God is the right thing to do, musn’t he (and she) already have this knowledge in the first place?

Appearances can be deceiving—which is precisely the point. The story of the first sin is all about the world as seen by the eye. Eve had heard the word of God but is enticed by the sight of the Tree:

“When the woman saw that the tree was good for eating and a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable as a source of wisdom, she took of its fruit and ate.” (Genesis 3:6)

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks explains that, where wisdom in the Western conception is a form of seeing (we have insight, we hold a view, we say “I see”), in Judaism it is a matter of listening. The word shema that we recite to ourselves twice each day means both hear and heed, listen and understand. Ironically, Adam and Eve “heard the sound of God moving about in the garden” and hid from God’s sight. They confused hearing with seeing; they gained not forbidden knowledge, but the wrong kind of knowledge. That was their sin.

We too often make the same mistake. We judge with our eyes rather than our ears, without taking care to truly listen. As we begin the Torah anew, we have an opportunity—like the first man and woman—to hear God’s words speaking to us. Shema, Yisrael: let us listen with open ears, minds, and hearts. Shabbat shalom.

- Rabbi Moe Howard



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Affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

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Special thanks to the staff and lay leaders who make Shabbat services exceptional:

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Ritual Director – Jay Harwitt
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Shabbat Daycare

- Upper Traub | 9:45-11:45 a.m.

Potty Trained- 5 yrs old

12 kids max

Shabbat Lounge

- Youth Lounge| 9:45-11:45 a.m.

Ages 6-10

MINCHA & KABBALAT SHABBAT

in Kohn Chapel

Every Friday at 5:45

Also available to watch on YouTube

DAILY MINYAN

in Kohn Chapel

Monday–Friday at 7:30 a.m. and
5:45 p.m. (in person)

Saturday 9:00 p.m. (online only)

Sunday (and National Holidays, when
held in-person) 8:30 a.m.



SINAI TEMPLE

26 TISHREI 5786 | 18 OCTOBER 2025



SHABBAT M’VAR’CHIM HACHODESH CHESHVAN |

שבת מברכים חודש חשוון

Torah reading begins: Genesis 1:1 (page 3)

Maftir: Genesis 2:1-3 (page 11)

Haftarah: Isaiah 43:1-10 (page 39)

“May We Be Worthy:” Sermon by Rabbi David Wolpe

SHABBAT SERVICE

in Ziegler Sanctuary at 9:00 a.m.

The Bar Mitzvah of Noah Rabbanian

Also available to watch on YouTube

TORAH AT THE TABLE

in CC Library Classroom at 9:00 a.m.

TORAH IN THE ROUND

In Kohn Chapel at 9:30 a.m.

The Bat Mitzvah of Noa Y. Harari

Honor or remember someone special with a meaningful gift to Sinai Temple. Scan this QR code to make a contribution in their name and create a lasting tribute.



Find us on YouTube at www.youtube.com/@SinaiTemplePresents

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT MEHRZAD ROSHAN

KOL NIDREI APPEAL

The annual Kol Nidrei Appeal allows us to continue providing innovative programs, meaningful worship experiences, and opportunities that strengthen our community.

We are grateful to you for making it a priority again this year.

Thank you in advance for helping us realize our vision and aspirations for Sinai Temple.

If you have not yet made your gift, you can mail a check or contact our Development Director,

Jackie Ahdout, at 310-481-3225 or email her at Jahdout@sinaitemple.org

On behalf of our leadership, thank you for your partnership and generosity.

Chag Sameach

Building Our Future, Together

Dear Sinai Members,

As was mentioned during Yom Kippur services, our lay leaders have created a Strategic Planning Committee to explore how our clergy and leadership can better serve the needs of our entire membership to ensure the future health of the Sinai Temple community.

We very much want to hear your thoughts about how we can create a warmer environment of welcome, provide engaging programs and events that reflect your interests, and in general become a more important part of your religious and social life.

In short, we want to learn what would you most like to see improved. We hope you will take a few minutes to scan the QR code and complete the survey, as your response will be invaluable in fulfilling the mission of the Strategic Planning Committee and the future of Sinai Temple.

L'Shalom,

Rabbi Nicole Guzik

Rabbi Erez Sherman

Mehrzhad Roshan, President



A Single Ember

By *Jennifer Malvin*

One member,
A single ember,
Years to spend its light,
Making the world a bit more bright,
Welding together what needs repair,
Illuminating words of prayer,
Warming grief's cold embrace,
And revealing hidden acts of grace.

A beacon for Kiddush, Kaddish, and community,
Am Yisrael Chai, simchas, and unity,
You are, each and every one, a single Ner Yachid,
But, together, we become a Ner Tamid.

TEMPLE EVENTS

Shabbat Lunch and Learn for Krovi Mishpacha with Rabbi Wolpe

Saturday, October 18 · Immediately Following Services

Join Emeritus Rabbi David Wolpe for a thoughtful conversation exploring the origins of antisemitism and its impact on our community today. This program is curated for Sinai Temple members aged 50–70 and will take place over a warm and engaging Shabbat lunch.

Sinai Speaks: A Hollywood Ending

Wednesday, October 22 · 7:00 – 9:00 pm PDT

Join Co-Senior Rabbi Erez Sherman, author Yaron Weitzman, and ESPN NBA Insider & Senior Writer Ramona Shelburne for an engaging in-person conversation about Weitzman's new book on the LeBron-era Lakers. Hear behind-the-scenes stories of the Lakers, LeBron, and the making of a modern basketball dynasty.

Sinai Speaks: What's Eating Us? with Author Cole Kazdin

Wednesday, October 29 · 7:00 – 9:00 pm PDT

Join four-time Emmy Award-winning journalist Cole Kazdin and Carolyn Hoffman, Director of the Sinai Temple Mental Health Center, for an engaging conversation exploring how both adults and adolescents experience complex relationships with food.

Weekly Parsha Class

Every Thursday at 8:30 a.m. starting Aug. 7th

Join us as Sinai Temple's rotating clergy lead an in-depth exploration of the weekly Parsha. This class is offered exclusively online.

Siddur Project

Share your personal prayers, art, or music for a new Sinai Temple Siddur created by and for our community. Submit your original works to inspire others and enrich our collective prayer experience. Submissions are sent to siddurproject@sinaitemple.org.

WANT TO PLAN AN EVENT

Host your next event at Sinai Temple, where exquisite catering meets a stunning setting to create unforgettable experiences. Let our expert caterers transform your special occasion into a celebration filled with flavor, elegance, and impeccable service. For more information, please contact Judy Begin at jbegin@sinaitemple.org or 310-481-3222.

SPONSOR AN ONEG SHABBAT



Honor a simcha or yahrzeit by sponsoring an oneg! Your sponsorship will be featured in the Shabbat bulletin and announced

To sponsor, contact Judy Begin at jbegin@sinaitemple.org or 310-481-3222.



Scan the QR code to RSVP and to learn about more events.

For more information contact Amanda Harrison at aharrison@sinaitemple.org or 310-481-3246