

Vayeira: You Be the Judge

Why was Abraham chosen? It's not apparent when God appears to him at the beginning of last week's parsha. But it becomes clear early on in this one when God vows to annihilate the city of Sodom and its people for their wickedness—and Abraham protests on behalf of the innocent. Citing God's own commitment to justice, he confronts the Almighty directly: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?" It's this *chutzpah klapei shemaya*, "audacity towards heaven," which Abraham demonstrates that proves his worthiness to be the forefather of the chosen people. He is the world's first moral hero, at least for three chapters.

As quickly as he challenges God's pledge to destroy Sodom does he acquiesce to God's command to sacrifice his own son, Isaac. Abraham wakes up "early the next morning" to carry out the task, without so much as a word in the meanwhile. The lack of protest is striking. How can the same man who leapt to the rescue of strangers abandon his son whom he professed to love? How can a defender of the hypothetically innocent fail to defend the truly innocent in his own family?

The same question can be asked of Abraham's descendants today who defend the cause of the questionably innocent but not that of the unquestionably victimized among their own people, who speak up loudly on behalf of unknown faces while staying silent on those whose faces and names are impossible to ignore. In their passion for universal justice—at the expense of love and loyalty, in particular—they follow in Abraham's footsteps.

But there is a critical difference: Abraham had God to intervene, to smite the wicked despite his protest, and spare the blameless despite his passivity. Now, it's on us to be the judge, whether we choose to or not. Will we prove ourselves worthy?

Shabbat Shalom.

- Rabbi Moe Howard



Sinai Temple, 10400 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90024
310-474-1518 | www.sinaitemple.org

Affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

SINAI TEMPLE CLERGY

Rabbi Nicole Guzik and Rabbi Erez Sherman

Senior Rabbis

Gary Fayman

Senior Clergy Administrator

gfoyman@sinaitemple.org | 310-481-3234

Rabbi Avi Taff

Rabbi

Rabbi Gavriella Kornsgold

Rabbi

Gabriel Prunty

Administrative Clergy Asst. for Rabbis Taff & Kornsgold

gprunty@sinaitemple.org | 310-481-3200

Cantor Marcus Feldman

Senior Cantor

Ashley Soltys

Cantor's Office Assistant and B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator

cantorsoffice@sinaitemple.org | 310-481-3235

Rabbi David Wolpe

Max Webb Emeritus Rabbi

Moe Howard

Rabbinic Intern

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

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SINAI TEMPLE

17 CHESHVAN 5786 | 8 NOVEMBER 2025



PARASHAT VAYEIRA | וִירָא

Torah reading begins: Genesis 18:1 (page 99)

Maftir: Genesis 18:31-33 (page 104)

Haftarah: II Kings 4:1-7 (page 124)

"The Vision of President Herzog" — A Conversation Between Rabbi Sherman and Shirel Dagan, CEO of President Herzog's Voice of the People

SHABBAT SERVICE

in Ziegler Sanctuary at 9:00 a.m.

The Bar Mitzvah of Ethan Slotkin

Also available to watch on [YouTube](#)

TORAH AT THE TABLE

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

TORAH IN THE ROUND

in Kohn Chapel at 9:30 a.m.

The Bar Mitzvah of Eitan L. Stern

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

MINCHA & KABBALAT SHABBAT

in Kohn Chapel

Every Friday at 5:45 PM

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.

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT MEHRZAD ROSHAN

One of the greatest blessings of Sinai Temple is knowing that we are part of a community where everyone is welcomed and valued.

In a world that often feels fast-paced and uncertain, Sinai remains a place of comfort, safety, and connection.

Whether through prayer, learning, or simply showing up for one another, we remind ourselves that true strength comes from community.

May we continue to build a space where every member feels supported, valued, and at home.

Shabbat Shalom

Jewish Day Schools: Shaping the Leaders of Tomorrow

We are proud to share the article below written by Eszter Neuman, Chair of Sinai Akiba Academy. Eszter's thoughtful piece was recently published in *eJewish Philanthropy* and highlights the important role that Jewish Day Schools play in shaping our Jewish leaders.

Check out the article: <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com>

Sinai Temple Sisterhood

Sinai Temple Sisterhood enriches members' lives through programs, classes, and volunteer opportunities. We run the Gift Shop and cater luncheons, with proceeds supporting Sinai Temple, its schools, partial Jewish camp scholarships for members' families, and the wider community. Classes include Mah Jongg, Arts & Crafts, Balance, Calligraphy, and Needlepoint.

For more information, contact Marilyn Stern at marilynstern1@yahoo.com or visit sinaitemple.org/sisterhood. To receive our monthly newsletter, email Natalia Rojas at nrojas@sinaitemple.org.



TEMPLE EVENTS

Sinai Temple Attends a Clippers Game! Monday, November 10 | 7:10 PM | Intuit Dome

Sinai Temple is heading to the new Intuit Dome to cheer on our favorite team, the Clippers, as they take on the Atlanta Hawks. Early access to the game! Arrive at 5:30 PM to watch your Clippers warm up. Game starts at 7:10 PM.

Sinai Speaks: Unpacking Israeli History Roadshow Wednesday, November 12 | 7:30 PM

Join us for a special live edition of *Unpacking Israeli History* as host Dr. Noam Weissman sits down with intelligence expert Ronen Bergman for a riveting conversation on the hidden stories, triumphs, and turning points that shaped Israel's modern history.

Mental Health and Wellness Event Thursday, November 13, 2025 | 10:30AM – 12:30PM

You are invited to join us for lunch and engaging conversation as we discuss the novel *My Friends*, by Fredrik Backman. We will explore together how intense friendships evolve and impact us over time as we confront difficult life circumstances, artistic expression, and grief.

Shabbat Lunch & Learn: *Don't Feed the Lion* Saturday, November 15 | Immediately Following Services

Award-winning journalist and CNN Anchor Bianna Golodryga joins us at Sinai Temple for a riveting conversation on combating antisemitism through books. \$20 for members \$25 for nonmember. Each ticket comes with a copy of *Don't Feed the Lion* and a lite lunch.

Taking Charge of Your Finances: What Everyone Needs to Know

Tuesday, November 18 | 9:15 AM

Join moderator Adam Bakhsh and a panel of financial experts — Jessica L. Sibony, Randy Schwab, and Roxana Maddahi — for Taking Charge of Your Finances: What Everyone Needs to Know, an informative morning at Sinai Temple designed to help you navigate financial planning with confidence.

Enhanced Kiddush with Rabbi Wolpe & Shmuel Rosner

Saturday, November 22 | Immediately following services

Join Max Webb Emeritus Rabbi David Wolpe and Shmuel Rosner for a thought-provoking conversation on Jewish identity, community, and contemporary challenges, featuring insights from Rosner's new book, *Why I Am a Jew*.

Siddur Project

Share your personal prayers, art, or music for a new Sinai Temple Siddur created by and for our community. Enrich our collective prayer experience. Submit your original works 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 yearzeit 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