

Chukat–Balak: Love in the End

Chukat begins with the law of the red heifer, traditionally acknowledged as the most arcane of all rituals in the Torah. It ends on just as inscrutable a note:

“Therefore the Book of the Wars of GOD speaks of ‘... *Vahev in Sufah*, and the wadis ...” (Numbers 21:14).

If you’re confused, you’re in good company; the JPS translation notes that both the text and its meaning “are uncertain.” That didn’t stop the rabbis of the Talmud from making meaning of it, albeit out of context:

“Even a father and his son, or a rabbi and his student, who are engaged in Torah become enemies with each other due to the intensity of their studies. But they do not leave until they love each other, as it is stated: ‘*Vahev in Sufah*’ [meaning] that there is love in the end (*ahavah b’sofah*).”

The interpretation is a fanciful play on words, but the message is a serious one. Disagreement is a fact of life (especially of Jewish life). We can even disagree ferociously—so long as we remember our common humanity. Defective debate turns friends into enemies; effective debate turns enemies into friends. “Argument for the sake of Heaven,” as we learned last week, begins from and ends in a place of love.

Our goal as Americans and as Jews, whatever our political and religious persuasions, need not and should not be unanimous agreement—but better disagreement. We’ll know we’ve succeeded when there is love in the end. If there isn’t yet love, then it isn’t yet the end.

Shabbat Shalom.
Rabbi Moe Howard

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 Gavriella Kornsgold

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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Mehrzad Roshan, Sinai Temple President



MISSION STATEMENT

Sinai Temple is dedicated to providing a welcoming and caring community for its members, devoted to Jewish learning and support for Israel and the Jewish people, and committed to improving ourselves and the world through a growing relationship with God from generation to generation. We are committed to the principles and values of Conservative Judaism and we welcome Jews of all backgrounds and affiliations to observe life cycle events, and pursue our mission through prayer, rituals, learning, music and the other gifts God has given us.

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.

Sunday morning at 8:30 am

Sunday-Friday evenings at 5:45 pm

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

Please consult the website for holiday locations and times.



SINAI TEMPLE

12 TAMMUZ 5786 | 27 JUNE 2026



PARASHOT CHUKAT-BALAK | חקת-בלק

Torah reading begins: Numbers 19:1 (page 880)

Maftir: Numbers 21:16-20 (page 890)

Haftarah: Micah 5:6-6:8 (page 915)

“Bilaam, The Ancient AI”- Sermon by Rabbi David Wolpe

SHABBAT SERVICE

in Ziegler Sanctuary at 9:00 a.m.

“Bilaam, The Ancient AI”- Sermon by Rabbi David Wolpe

Also available to watch on [YouTube](#)

TORAH AT THE TABLE

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

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

For my last pew bulletin message, I share with you the inspiring words of Rabbi Israel Chodos, who served as Sinai Temple’s spiritual leader from 1953–1963.

“Man is a builder, and as a builder is the noblest of God’s creation. ... He adds love to a house and calls it a home. He adds learning to a pile of bricks and calls it a school. He adds compassion to a city and calls it a community, and he adds religion to the edifice and calls it a sanctuary. He adds brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God, and this is the ultimate path of his ideal vision. Man may never complete what he builds, but the collective building by his fellow men completes the edifice. The builder of today builds unaware into the temple of the future.”

This year, we are celebrating 120 years in the life of Sinai Temple. I’m grateful for the opportunity to have served as President for the past two years, and I look forward to continuing to build Sinai Temple together with you into the future.

With gratitude and blessings.

TEMPLE EVENTS

Sinai Speaks: The Struggle for the Soul of Israel and the Jewish People with Alex Sinclair and Rabbi Kornsgold
Wednesday, July 1, 2026 | 7:00 PM | Online

Join us for an engaging and thought-provoking conversation with renowned educator Alex Sinclair and Rabbi Kornsgold as they explore the moral, spiritual, and political questions shaping Israel and the global Jewish community today.

Sinai Speaks: *Rabbi on the Sidelines* with Heather Karatz
Wednesday, July 8, 2026 | 7:00 PM

Join us for an inspiring conversation with Co-Senior Rabbi Erez Sherman and Heather Karatz, CEO of Hexcel and Owner of Angel City FC, as they explore the intersection of sports, leadership, faith, philanthropy, and the role of Jewish values in shaping the next generation of leaders.

Sinai Speaks: Re-Release of Navigating Jewish Life on Campus in 2026
Wednesday, July 15, 2026 | 7:00 PM | Online

Join Rabbi David Wolpe, UCLA Chancellor Julio Frenk, and Dr. Felicia Knaul for a timely conversation marking the re-release of Navigating Jewish Life on Campus. This special event will explore Jewish student life, campus culture, and the future of inclusive, thoughtful university communities.

Sinai Speaks: Religious Responses to Technology
Wednesday, July 29, 2026 | 7:00 PM | Online

As AI transforms society, religious communities are working to develop thoughtful responses and formal policies. Join Dr. David Zvi Kalman and Co-Senior Rabbi Erez Sherman for a conversation on the challenges of applying ancient wisdom to modern technology, exploring key ethical questions, points of tension, and paths forward.

A Wonderful Start to Jewish Learning

Give your 4-year-old the gift of joyful Jewish learning with Sinai Temple STARS Religious School’s Transitional Kindergarten (TK) Class. Through baking challah, singing Israeli music, celebrating Jewish holidays, and engaging in hands-on activities, children build friendships, explore Jewish traditions, and grow as part of a caring community. Classes meet Sundays from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., with special introductory membership rates available for families brand new to Sinai Temple.

Contact us at (310)-481-3271 or sprovost@sinaitemple.org.

Calling All Young Voices!

Sinai Temple children **ages 8 to 11** have an exciting new opportunity to lead our congregation in prayer. Every Shabbat morning, students are invited to arrive early at **8:30 a.m.** to meet in Cantor Feldman’s office and receive a solo for that day’s service.

Whether it is singing *Romemu*, *Baruch Sheamar*, *Ashrei*, or *Yotzer Or*, just show up and the solo is yours! Family and friends can proudly watch in person or via our livestream. As an added bonus, participants will receive a special assortment of sweet treats.

No RSVP is needed. Step into your Jewish roots, enjoy some baked goods, and let your voice be heard in the Ziegler Sanctuary!

L’Shalom,

Cantor Marcus Feldman and Benjamin Fingerhut

Expand Your Mind with the Community Scholar Program

Learning doesn’t stop. It evolves, deepens, and inspires. Sinai Temple is proud to partner with the Community Scholar Program (CSP), now in its 24th year, to bring members dynamic online learning with renowned scholars, authors, and thought leaders exploring Jewish history, culture, and ideas that resonate today. With engaging programs for late June, there is something for everyone to learn, connect, and be inspired.

Explore upcoming programs and register at www.sinaitemple.org/adult-education-classes-2025-26/

David and Angella Nazarian Youth Leadership Program

The David and Angella Nazarian Youth Leadership Program empowers 9th and 10th graders to grow as Jewish leaders through meaningful conversations, mentorship, immersive travel opportunities, and connections with leading Zionist organizations. Fellows build leadership skills, deepen their Jewish identity, and join a vibrant community of engaged teens.

To join, contact Atara Rush at arush@sinaitemple.org.

Beren Scholars Fellowship

The Beren Scholars Fellowship is a selective leadership program for rising 11th and 12th graders who want to deepen their understanding of Israel, strengthen their Jewish identity, and develop the confidence to navigate today’s complex conversations. Through engaging seminars, expert speakers, and a national cohort of peers, students gain the knowledge and skills to become thoughtful Jewish leaders.

To join, contact Tori Greene at tgreene@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 from the bimah on Shabbat.

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