

Ha'azinu: The Miscategorization of Holiness

Why do we say a blessing upon reading from the Torah? Asks (and answers) the Talmud:

“From where do we derive that we recite a blessing over the Torah before reading it? As it is stated: ‘When I proclaim the Lord’s name, give glory to our God’ (Deuteronomy 32:3).”

So important is this blessing, we are told, that our people was cast into exile for its neglect. To be sure, it wasn’t the study of Torah that fell by the wayside; it was the sanctity of that study. Explains Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook:

“If one inclines only towards the benefit of the knowledge and minimizes the uniqueness of the Torah, then one is like those who did not make a blessing before [studying] Torah, whom the Sages blamed for the loss of the Land.”

Whether we read the Torah as a primary source text, a literary masterpiece, or a glorified self-help book, appreciating only its instrumental value depreciates its inestimable worth. We make a category error, says Rabbi Noa Kushner, when we mistake what is useful, interesting, or impressive for what is holy—including each other.

The same goes for Shabbat. It is surely a welcome opportunity to set screen and routine aside. Yet if that’s all it is, if it has only “measurable value,” to quote Dr. Yehuda Kurtzer, then it’s merely a vacation. Unless we hold it of infinite value, it’s a worthwhile practice—but it’s not Shabbat.

Zakhor et yom ha-Shabbat l’kadsho, “Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy.” We’ve heeded the first. Let’s not forget the second.

Shabbat Shalom.
Rabbi Moe Howard

SINAI TEMPLE CLERGY

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

- Jessica Green - Executive Director
- Jay Harwitt - Ritual Director
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- Cantor Keith Miller - Cantorial Support & B’nai Mitzvah Mentor
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SINAI TEMPLE



8 TISHREI 5787 | 19 SEPTEMBER 2026



PARASHAT HA'AZINU | האזינו
SHABBAT SHUVAH
THE BAT MITZVAH OF KATELYN SHAYE
Torah reading begins: Deuteronomy 32:1 (page 1185)
Maftir: Deuteronomy 32:48-52 (page 1194)
Haftarah: Hosea 14:2-10
Micah: 7:18-20 (page 1235)
“The Silent Shofar”: Sermon by Rabbi Nicole Guzik

Yom Kippur at Sinai Temple
*Join us **this Sunday night, September 20**, at 6:00 PM for Kol Nidre, and continue with us on **Monday, September 21 for Yom Kippur**. Experience a meaningful day of prayer, reflection, remembrance, and community, with services and programming for all ages throughout the day, including **Yizkor on Monday, September 21, at approximately 12:30 PM**, and **Neilah beginning at 5:45 PM**. To learn more and view the full schedule, visit <https://www.sinaitemple.org/high-holy-days/>*

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



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

SHABBAT SERVICE
in Ziegler Sanctuary at 9:00 a.m.
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 Jordan Pouladian

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.

TEMPLE EVENTS

Feit Family Live: Shabbat Dinner in the Sukkah
Friday, September 25, 2026 | 5:45 PM
Join us for a special evening of Shabbat, delicious food, and community at Sinai Temple! Enjoy services with our clergy, a dinner by Western Kosher, children's entertainment, and the opportunity to fulfill the mitzvah of dining in one of our sukkot.

Enhanced Kiddush with Ofir Ovadia
Saturday, September 26, 2026 | 12:00 PM | Immediately after services
Join us for an Enhanced Kiddush with Ofir Ovadia of Magen David Adom, who will share firsthand experiences as a senior medic, ambulance driver, instructor, and MDA reserve commander. Hear about his lifesaving work responding to emergencies throughout the war, the volunteers who make it possible, and his personal connection to MDA.

ROCK Wednesday: Magen David Adom
Wednesday, September 30, 2026 | 6:00 PM
Join American Friends of Magen David Adom for ROCK Wednesday as we come together to create care packages and heartfelt cards to support those in need in Israel. Join us for an evening of meaningful action, community, and support.

Sinai Speaks: October 7 and the Courage to Defend Israel
Wednesday, September 30, 2026 | 7:00 PM | Online only
Join Co-Senior Rabbi Erez Sherman for a meaningful conversation with Daniel Elbaum, Executive Director of IDF Widows and Orphans USA, and Revital Djaoui Ben Yaakov about October 7, the courage to defend Israel, and the enduring impact on those who serve and their families. Revital's husband, Master Sergeant Lior Ben Yaakov (z"l), was killed defending his community on October 7.

Order Your Lulav and Etrog Set for Sukkot
Reserve your lulav and etrog set today and prepare to welcome Sukkot, beginning Friday evening, September 25.

\$50.00 per set. Order deadline: Tuesday, September 22. Visit sinaitemple.org to place your order.

Questions? Call Jay: (310) 481-3201 or email jharwitt@sinaitemple.org.



SINAI TEMPLE
Sinai Temple, 10400 Wilshire Blvd.,
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310-474-1518 | www.sinaitemple.org
Affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism



Miller Introduction to Judaism

Join the Miller Introduction to Judaism Program at Sinai Temple for an engaging, in-person learning experience open to everyone, regardless of background or prior Jewish knowledge. Classes meet Tuesdays, November 3 through March 16, from 6:30–8:30 PM, with weekly topics including Shabbat, Torah, prayer, holidays, Israel, and more.

Early Bird: Individual \$300 through October 6
After October 6: Individual \$360 | Couple \$540
Additional family/friend: \$180

Questions or interested? Contact Gabriel at gprunty@sinaitemple.org or 310-481-3200.

Help Israel This Sukkot: Blood Drive

Join us on **Wednesday, September 30 from 11:30 AM–5:30 PM** at Sinai Temple. This blood drive, hosted in partnership with American Friends of Magen David Adom, helps ensure lifesaving blood is available to Magen David Adom, Israel's emergency medical service, whenever it is needed.

Appointments are encouraged, with walk-ins available for Sinai Temple members only. Donors will receive a limited-edition T-shirt and their choice of an Amazon or Target gift card.

Interested in donating? Visit donatebloodcedars.org and use group code STMP.

Team Sinai Temple: Sharsheret West Coast Dash

Join Team Sinai Temple on **Sunday, October 25 at 8:00 AM** for Sharsheret's 5th Annual West Coast Dash, featuring a 5K, 10K, and Family Fun Race. Come together with our community to support Sharsheret and its incredible work improving the lives of those affected by breast and ovarian cancer. Register or donate and help Team Sinai Temple make a difference.

Register or donate: runsignup.com/sinaitemple
Family Fun Race begins at 9:15 AM.



MOUNT SINAI
MEMORIAL PARKS AND MORTUARIES
323-469-6000 | <https://mountsinaiparks.org>



Your Yom Kippur Guide Is Here

With **Yom Kippur beginning Sunday evening, September 20, and continuing through Monday, September 21**, find every service, venue, and meaningful experience clearly detailed in one place on our website.

Explore services in **Ziegler Sanctuary and Barad Hall, Torah in the Round, the Traditional Family Minyan**, as well as programming for children, teens, families, and the entire Sinai Temple community.

Please Visit: sinaitemple.org/high-holy-days/

SINAI TEMPLE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

High Holy Days Children's Programming

Make the High Holy Days meaningful and engaging for your children with Sinai Temple's Children's Programming. On Yom Kippur, Kol Nidre, and Neilah, children can participate in age-appropriate programming designed to help them connect with the holidays, community, and traditions.

See full details at sinaitemple.org/high-holy-days/

SINAI AKIBA ACADEMY

Save the Date: SAA Shabbat with Sinai Temple

Join us for SAA Shabbat with Sinai Temple on **October 31, 2026, and April 3, 2027**, led by **Rabbi Avi Taff**. Enjoy a spirited Shabbat experience bringing our school and temple communities together through services, singing in the sanctuary, and lunch together.

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 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



SINAI AKIBA
ACADEMY
Sinai Akiba Academy, 10400 Wilshire Blvd.,
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Sinai Temple
STARS
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