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Mi Sheberach

A Focus on Healing

may the One who BLESSED our ANCESTORS,
ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND JACOB,
RACHEL AND LEAH, BLESS AND
HEAL YOU.
may the Holy One in mercy
strengthen you and heal you soon, in your
body and soul

Cover Art by Irene Konig.
See About the Cover, p.3.

Editorial

Recently I listened to a video posted on the Facebook profile of Rabbi David Wolpe from Sinai Temple in Los Angeles. We have another post by him in the first page of our healing section so you can see from his biography how popular this Conservative Jewish rabbi is.

In the video about "using our pain to help us grow," Rabbi Wolpe mentions a speaking engagement long ago before a group at Alcoholics Anonymous. The first comment he received from one of the attendees was that he had started drinking at about age 17. When he stopped in his late 30s, he realized that because he had been anesthetizing himself, because for 20 years he had felt almost no pain, he had the maturity of a 17-year-old. He realized that pain is what helped him grow.

Rabbi Wolpe continues, "It's an uncomfortable truth of life, but I think everyone realizes that difficulty and challenges and pain are what grow our souls. It's not that we seek them out. It's not that we welcome them, but we can use them to make ourselves better, to grow closer to what is best in ourselves, to each other and to God."

This reminded me of a passage in one of Stephen Levine's books. I think it was, *Healing Into Life and Death*. Levine had worked in hospice, caring for people at the end of their lives. He told about the experience of sitting next to a woman who was in a great deal of pain.

In cases like that he said he used to pray for God to take the pain away. At some point he realized it was presumptuous of him to think he knows what is best for these people. Maybe God's plan and purpose for this person included the experience of pain. He decided to change his prayer to, "I pray that the highest good will come from this woman's pain."

I have had trying times in my life where I've thought about this subject daily. I also don't welcome challenges especially when I'm in the middle of one because right then it is hard to believe that any good outcome will eventually occur. Now that I have experienced growth from navigating through tough times, when life seems overwhelming, at least I have hope that new growth will be forthcoming and it helps me cope with the current difficulty.

Lately I have been thinking about this because of two families from Indianapolis who have contributed greatly and I wonder if that would be the case had they not experienced major challenges in their childhoods and early adult lives. I would never wish that on anyone but it had to be part of what made them strong and why

they were able to accomplish so much. I will write about one of them now and about the other in a future issue.

In the book, *Once Upon a Lifetime: Marilyn's Story* by Marilyn K. Glick (1922–2012), Marilyn's mother died during childbirth and her husband never came to claim his child. Her adoptive mother did not tell her this until she was an adult. Her parents could not have children and did not adopt others so she was an only child. Her adoptive father died when she was only eleven and her mother had ongoing mental health issues to the point where gradually roles reversed and Marilyn supported her emotionally and financially.

Six years after her father died, she and her mother moved from Detroit to Indianapolis where her mother was born and still had family. She was a senior in high school and had to leave all her friends. It was challenging to live on the money left by her father and she started working as soon as she finished all of her high school requirements.

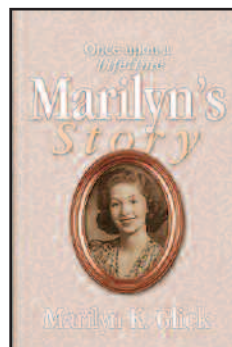
By the end of 1945 she had started dating Eugene B. Glick and he proposed one month later. He had recently been discharged from the Army where he served in World War II and his unit helped liberate Dachau. They ended up going into real estate together even before they married. They started with practically nothing.

After their marriage in 1947, they founded what would become the Gene B. Glick Company, one of the largest privately held real estate development firms in the country. They also successfully raised four daughters and had several grandchildren and great-grandchildren at the time of Marilyn's death in March.

The Glick's funded the Glick Eye Institute at the Indiana University School of Medicine, a \$30 million gift, the Glick's largest philanthropic grant to date. Other funding went to the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, the Indiana Authors Award, and a wide array of charitable projects benefiting the arts, education, public health, and aid organizations throughout Central Indiana.

Jewish causes were a particular passion for Marilyn. She served on the boards of her Temple Sisterhood, the National Council of Jewish Women, and Hadassah. She and Gene funded several projects and fellowships through the Hadassah Medical Center in Jerusalem.

Whenever I talked to Marilyn I always felt at ease because she acted as if she was no better than anyone else, but simply



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another Jewish woman who lived an active, full life.

Once big achievements have been made, it's a lot easier to look back at the struggle and pain and think they weren't that arduous, but it proves that one never knows what strengths one will gain or what one can achieve from that strength. As in this example of the Glick's, the possibilities are endless.

Jennie Cohen, June 20, 2012 ✨

Chassidic Rabbi

BY RABBI BENZION COHEN

Today I'll tell you a story from the geriatric ward of our local hospital.

For the last 20 years I've been visiting hospitals regularly. However, I started to go to the geriatrics area only a year ago. Of course it is a great *Mitzvah* to honor and learn from the elders, but I was busy doing other Mitzvahs, and the geriatric ward is also a bit off to the side. One day a fellow volunteer told me about two men there who wanted to put on *tefillin*. They have been religious all of their lives, and had put on *tefillin* regularly for 60 or 70 years, since their *bar mitzvah*. Now they were in the hospital after a stroke and couldn't put *tefillin* on by themselves.

The next day I went and helped them to put on *tefillin*. They were very grateful, and since then I visit geriatrics regularly. Gradually I got to know the staff and the patients. Soon five of them were putting on *tefillin* every day, then ten, then 15 and now I have 20 regular customers there. I also help the staff and visitors to put on *tefillin*.

Visiting geriatrics has many advantages. In the other wards, the patients usually stay only a few days. Geriatric patients can stay for years. You get to know them and their families.

About half a year ago, I met Chanoch. One day I was going from table to table, helping my geriatric friends to put on *tefillin*. He came up to me and asked me if he could also put on *tefillin*. I said, "Sure". I was a little surprised, because Chanoch looked quite religious. He had a full beard and was wearing a hat. Maybe for some reason he hadn't been able to put on *tefillin* that day.

After he finished I asked him what happened, and he told me his story. He pointed to his sister, one of the patients, and said that he had come to visit her. For a long time he hasn't put on *tefillin*. Now, while he watched the other men pray, he was inspired to pray himself.

Now I was really curious. I asked him why he had stopped putting on *tefillin*. He told me that when he was young he had been abused by an uncle, and as a result had never married. He really loves children, and it hurt him that he didn't have any of his own. He stopped praying because he was upset with *Hashem*.

What could I say? How could I help him? I closed my eyes and silently asked *Hashem* for inspiration. An idea came to me. I looked him in the eye and told him that it's true that he has missed some important relationships. But what is *the* most important relationship? Our

About the Cover

"Tallit Healing"

BY IRENE KONIG



This print was created as part of a series to honor my father. I did this by bringing the image of his old, worn *tallit* into my own artwork as a background for all 14 of my *tallit* prints. Seven were done with calligraphy in English, and seven in Spanish. All have prayers, poetry, blessings or a song in them.

My father was a very kind and quiet, and also a religious man. He would have liked these. Unfortunately, I lost him when I was only 22 years old, so he never saw my artwork. In creating these pieces, my hope was not only to honor my father, but also to bring love and healing to people when times were challenging for them. I believe that this prayer is a strong one, and should be part of a healing process.

When we are ill or misfortune seems to sit on our doorstep, it is often very hard to have the vision of getting well again or of at least maintaining, once again, a peaceful place in our minds. We call upon a Higher Power to help us to repair ourselves, to strengthen us, to have our bodies successfully overcome whatever



connection with *Hashem*, our Father, our Creator, our Merciful King, the Source of everything. That relationship he can and must have. Everything else is secondary. I encouraged him to start praying every day, and he promised to try.

Since then we have met many times, and *Baruch Hashem*, he is doing much better. For a few months whenever we met he would put on *tefillin*, and I would encourage him to start putting them on himself. Then he started to put *tefillin* on every day by himself. I then encouraged him to try to help others on his *kibbutz* to put on *tefillin*. Recently we met and he was happy to tell me about a small *tefillin* stand that he makes regularly, and people that he helps to put on *tefillin*.

What can we learn from this story? Abuse can seriously affect a person's life until he gets help. Unfortunately for many reasons people don't get help. They may try to deny what happened, and so forth. If you were abused, get help. It's true that your life has been damaged, but you can be healed. Try to get help. There are many paths to healing. Find *Hashem* and bring Him into your life. He is the Source of all healing, the Source of everything. If you know someone who was abused, try to help them. When you help yourself, when

(see Chassidic Rabbi, page 8)

plagues us. Often, we don't have the energy or will to do this on our own and we tap into a Force greater than ourselves.

Although in the past two years I have slowed down some on creating new art works using my calligraphy and design, I have continued to create, tapping into the wisdom and other spiritual resources that I felt would bring more meaning to people through the medium of my artwork. I am blessed that people see my artwork as a blessing in and of itself, and many want to give it as gifts to friends or for their own homes.

About the Artist: Konig has created many works with Jewish themes ranging from calligraphy and design prints for weddings to comforting works for those in mourning, inspirational quotes, excerpts from the Song of Songs, other Psalms, quotations from some of the greats in Jewish history, home and personal blessings, and many more.

In addition to this large collection of Jewish inspired art, Konig has also created many other art pieces, which encompass a wide range of feelings, thoughts, and experiences – all heartfelt. All master prints are made up by hand, and then prints are made from this master print. All in all, there are close to 300 prints, all available in modest prices, all made on request, and all matted for gifting, or for the individual, and enclosed in a crystal-clear envelope. Categories on her website serve to help in the search for the perfect piece. Konig will be glad to work with you to find what would be the best print, and gift certificates are available, if needed, in case you can't decide.

Konig likes to use interesting materials and incorporate them into the master print. She has used leaves and berries, ribbons, fabric, flowers of all kinds, jewelry, masks and other assorted objects. Often she puts into calligraphy her own words, expressing a sentiment that she could not find elsewhere as a quotation. Her works adorn many homes in the central Texas area and in other parts of the country. In addition, she has donated some of her artwork to the Jewish Community Center in Havana, Cuba, and to a hospital in Israel, Shaare Zedek.

Konig holds a bachelor's degree in fine arts from the City College of New York, as well as a master's degree in psychology from the New School for Social Research in New York. Over half of her life has been spent in Austin, Texas, where she currently resides. Her other years were spent in New York. She is the mother of two young adult daughters.

Konig may be contacted at by email: pleasure-to-behold@juno.com, by phone: 512-835-2165. To see more of her artwork go to: www.artoflife.us. ★



Addictions Counselor

BY RABBI STEVEN M. LEAPMAN

The power to bless

As I write these words, *Shavuot* has just departed. Our civil year stretches towards July's Independence Day. This year our calendars (both, Jewish and American) merit mention. On civil time we duly honored those who lost their lives for freedom and this great nation. As Jews we have shared *yizkor*, one of four times in the year where our families and their history as Jews is recalled within the People of Israel. As Jews and as Americans, we are shown and hopefully learn, that to forsake memory is to surrender values and cast asunder valor.

We do not abandon either grand covenants, one of the soul, another of our nation. We do not sanction cowardice before the demands of liberty, the precious duties implied by free society. Both our Jewish religion and our American citizenship require us to live meaningfully, sacrificing for a greater whole, contributing at times beyond the apparent call of duty. Being a Jew and an American are complimentary, identities not in conflict. Often, American Jews have identified with causes and goals to the left-of-center-of-mainstream society and while this tendency is a right and privilege of democratic society, it is only worthy of true lament when one feels awkward or ashamed to celebrate flag, patriotism, and pride in what the U.S. represents.

There is no contrast between being a liberal or a conservative and a Jew and a patriot! None! If we are to continue to have a relevant voice in the American dream, it is important to put to hurried rest a knee-jerk dismissal and derision of things and themes patriotic that shall mark us to sorry and despicable disadvantage. Too many Jewish patriots have served or shed blood to disregard the significance of our flag and its inspirations. Too many Jewish Americans, who never wore the uniform have nonetheless contributed to our society and civilization for any of us demean what it means to be openly, outwardly, patriotic.

What then do Judaism and our patriotism share? Both our faith and our citizenship center on the dignity of the individual. *Shavuot*, the festival that begins this article, is a reminder that God made a bond with humanity, providing a way of life, a teaching and instruction through which the worth and sanctity of

the person, and by extension, all creation, are affirmed. As a Reform Jew and Reform rabbi, I believe in a progressive view of faith and spirituality, one which constantly unfolds to the betterment of individual glory despite vagaries of personality or pitfalls of history. Thus, as both a Jew and an American, I pay careful attention to the Torah portion, *Naso*, which contains a profound blessing: *May God bless you and keep you, may God's Divine Glory shine upon you and be gracious to you, May God lift up Divine Countenance towards you, and grant you peace!*

These words know countless settings and situations, rendered in triumph and travail, celebration and sorrow. They are motivating and soothing, quieting yet quickening the heart, conscience, and community of those who attend with the admonition that a greater Presence is in play, that a prevailing Spirit can and will make sense of momentary struggle, of situational chaos. Yet they are important not only for who may hear them, but who may pronounce them.

One might think these statements are for rabbi and priest, chaplain or clergy alone! I argue otherwise, despite origins in a time where Aaronic priests set and sealed the form of faith, modern Judaism and democratic ideals underscore a new understanding, one where each person has the power, indeed an obligation to confer blessing. These Scriptural passages, recalled across numerous scenes, recited in an array of environs, bespeak a lesson modern life and democracy's creed know well. The ability to bless is God given. The duty to do so preserves free society.

After all the destruction from Hitler to homicide bombers (stop saying "suicide" bombers!), from battles for equal rights for all Americans, gay or straight, both genders and all colors, we acclaim, uphold, and affirm the value and responsibilities of the individual. Democracy and freedom remind me what my ancestral, yet always evolving faith underscores, each may be a vehicle for transcendence. If we truly live our values, not only when Glory is present, or when the odds favor, but even when it is unpopular or politically incorrect, we grant the same abundance of blessing once consigned to clergy or royal custom. Divine Countenance shines through us and within us, thus let us offer it freely to one another. These are rights and responsibilities!

Rabbi Steven M. Leapman, LMHC, LCAC is licensed as a clinical addictions and mental health counselor in the State of Indiana. He is a former US Navy / USMC chaplain who currently serves a staff therapist at Samaritan Counseling Center in South Bend, Ind. He is interested in pastoral and general counseling, bereavement and loss, interfaith relations, and creative writing. ★

Jewish, Latino communities share bond of diversity



BY RABBI DENNIS C. SASSO

A unique event took place recently in Indianapolis, as leadership from the Latino and Jewish communities, gathered May 3 for the first "Latinos and Jews in Dialogue" at the Indiana Historical Society. The event was sponsored by the Ellen Lorch Leadership Development Fund of the Jewish Community Relations Council. As one who is both a Jew and a Latino (born and raised in Panama), I was doubly pleased to be part of this dialogue.

Keynote presentations by Allert Brown-Gort of the Institute for Latino Studies at Notre Dame University and Steven Windmueller, professor of Jewish Communal Service at the Hebrew Union College, Jewish Institute of Religion in Los Angeles, set the tone for an evening of interaction, discovery and mutual interest in pursuing dialogue and cooperation between two distinct and yet, in many ways, similar communities.

Both groups see themselves as Diaspora communities. Both have histories of immigration, discrimination and negative stereotyping. Both place high value on family, education and religio-cultural traditions. Both communities are diverse within themselves, and both have histories that make them among the oldest and the newest population groups in the United States.

The event was peppered with surprising scholarly statistics and colored with personal anecdotal narratives that highlighted the commonalities and distinctiveness of each cultural group. There was a deeply felt desire among attendees to continue the dialogue and build upon the new partnership with concrete agendas and purposeful tasks.

Brown-Gort defined Latinos as "U.S. residents – of any race – who trace their roots to Spain, Mexico and the Spanish-speaking nations of Central America, South America and the Caribbean. (They constitute) a pan-ethnic identity that encompasses a variety of national-origin groups."

Interestingly, the first organized Jewish community in North America consisted of Iberian (Spanish-Portuguese) Jews escaping the Inquisition, who in 1654 settled in New Amsterdam (later, New York). The earliest Jews in the Americas were Hispanic (Sephardim) and their roots go back to the beginnings of the European discovery of the new continent.

(see Sasso, page 9)



The Roads from Babel

BY SETH BEN-MORDECAI

Origin of the Tanach

In a recent email, an eminent British scholar claimed that the text of the Hebrew Bible (the *Tanach*) was “cobbled together” by Sephardic Jews in medieval Spain under Moslem rule and is useless for linguistic analysis, while the best text of the Tanach is the Greek translation known as the Septuagint. The scholar’s statements are foolish on their face. The uniformity of the copies of the Tanach in Jewish communities from Baghdad to Barcelona cannot be explained by a theory of Sephardic cobblers.

Unlike the Church of England, which burned dissidents and disagreeable books, Sephardic Jews could not impose uniformity and foist a “cobbled together” Tanach on all Jews. The simplest explanation for the uniformity is that the scribes who recopied the texts over generations began with a “mother text” that existed in Israel before the Romans expelled the Jews, nearly 1,000 years before Moslems conquered Spain. Wherever Jews went, they took copies of that text with them.

The standard text of the Tanach is called the Masoretic text. The scribes who collated information about the text are called Masoretes. The Masoretes began their work in Israel, Egypt and Iraq as early as the 6th century – 200 years before the Arabs occupied Spain. The Masoretic text consists of Hebrew words, punctuation and vowel marks, and margin notes describing variations the Masoretes encountered.

Many Masoretes were Karaites, adherents of a variety of Judaism that arose in 8th century Mesopotamia and Egypt. Unlike normative Jews, Karaites reject the Oral Law (the *Talmud*) and rabbinic authority, and would have rejected any attempt by Sephardic Jews to foist a cobbled-Tanach onto them. Yet the Karaites also use the Masoretic text. Clearly, the Karaites did not get the Tanach from Sephardic cobblers. Nor did the Samaritans, a mixture of Israelite natives and foreigners whom the Assyrians settled in Israel after conquering the Northern Kingdom.

From 560 BCE, Samaritans and Jews have made rival claims to be the true People of Israel. Until the Arabs nearly wiped out the Samaritans in Israel in the 1900s, both sets of “Israelites” viewed each other with suspicion. To this day, Samaritans reject Jewish religious rulings and texts, and use their own version of the Torah.



Shabbat Shalom

BY RABBI JON ADLAND

June 15, 2012, *Sh'lach L'chah*
Num. 13:1–15:41, 25 Sivan 5772

Before I begin my message, let me just note that I appreciate all the kind words people have expressed to me for my weekly messages. I wouldn’t keep doing this if it weren’t bringing joy or contemplation into your lives. My greatest hopes are that these words may encourage you to celebrate *Shabbat* in some meaningful way and to help make the world a better place for all people.

As some of you know, the house Sandy and I bought when we moved to Canton has a small goldfish pond in the backyard. It was built by the previous owners. The pond has a waterfall, lily pads that flower, maybe 16 fish (they are hard to count as they don’t hold still), and a few frogs. At night, when we are able to leave the window open, we can hear the peaceful, calming sound of the waterfall. During the day, one can sit by the pond and look at the gorgeous flowers or watch the little fish swim around. Some people meditate, some people do yoga, and some people read or walk. The sound of a babbling brook and the simplicity of fish bring that sense of peace to me. It isn’t the only way, but it is sure one of the ways and it was a huge bonus with this house.

Another of those spiritual and blessed moments is Shabbat. As our children were growing up, we would come dressed for temple to our Shabbat table and our



The main differences between the Samaritan and Jewish texts are in spelling and the place to worship G-d. Written in an archaic Hebrew alphabet, the Samaritan Torah uses vowel-letters (*yod*, *waw*, and *heh*) far more often than the standard Torah and identifies Mt. Gerizim as the Temple site. Otherwise, the two texts are nearly identical, suggesting that both descend from a common source that pre-existed the schism in 560 BCE. Further, some copies of the Samaritan Torah may be 20 centuries old, preceding the Arab occupation of Spain by 1,200 years. So if Sephardic Jews invented the Tanach as the English scholar suggests, they must also have invented time travel.

Although the oldest existing copy of the Hebrew Bible, the Aleppo Codex, which was transcribed in the Middle East (not

(see Ben-Mordecai, page 11)

rituals would begin. The sound of the *shofar* would say to us it is time for Shabbat. The coins in the *tzedakah* box would remind us that “Happy are those who remember the poor.” We would sing a song, then the Shabbat candles would be lit – two for Shabbat and one each for the children. *Kiddush* would be chanted with each of us holding our own Kiddush cup. After blessings of our children and Sandy and I blessing each other, the moment we all waited for was here. The *challah* cover was removed, the blessing sung, the bread distributed, and smiles all around.

The children aren’t around so much anymore, but the traditions remain. For a few moments, the world beyond the dining room is closed and the Shabbat rituals take center stage. It is Sandy and me, the candles, *tzedakah* box, Kiddush cup, and *challah*. As our ancestors did, so do we. We acknowledge the blessing of Shabbat. It is an opportunity for rest and renewal, study and prayer. I didn’t grow up with the presence of Shabbat. Youth group conclaves introduced me to Shabbat as well as a few Shabbat dinners I went to at temple. My junior year in Israel with some wonderful friends gave me the taste of Shabbat that has stayed and grown with me over the years. I remember my first Shabbat with Sandy and I thank God for each and every one since.

I know we live busy lives and taking time to celebrate Shabbat doesn’t always work into that hectic pace, but I can only encourage you to think about what adding Shabbat, in some form, to your life would mean. Maybe taking just a moment to light Shabbat candles and exchange words of blessing with family or a friend. Maybe it is a Shabbat meal. Maybe it is joining with community at Erev Shabbat services or Shabbat morning study and prayer. Maybe it is taking time to make this day different from the other days of the week. Regardless of how you choose to celebrate Shabbat, I know that it will make a difference in your life.

When you light your Shabbat candles this evening, light one for the opportunity God has given us each week to rest and re-energize ourselves through the beauty and blessing of this holy day. Light the other candle and think about how this simple tradition and its rituals have been passed down for generations and how we can continue to keep the beauty of this day alive.

Rabbi Adland has been a Reform rabbi for more than 25 years with pulpits in Lexington, Ky., Indianapolis, Ind., and currently at Temple Israel in Canton, Ohio. He may be reached at j.adland@gmail.com. The Temple Israel “Journey to Israel” trip is Feb 4-17, 2013. Contact him if you are interested in going. ✨



Jewish America

BY HOWARD W. KARSH

Interest in new Israeli government absent

I've just returned from a family visit to Israel; three weeks, a wedding, visiting children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. As you can imagine, we danced, ate, held babies and caught up face-to-face with our large and engaging family. In my spare time, I tried to find people who were interested and wanted to talk about the agenda for the newly merged, majority government in Israel.

It isn't that they don't know. Israelis are news junkies. So why so little interest? They seem unwilling to take the Israeli government seriously. Regardless of the new majority, they are aware that the country is evenly divided on almost every issue, and simply because there is a theoretical majority, it does not mean – at least to the people I spoke to – that they think the votes for change will be there.

The issues are simply too dividing – universal military service for all Israeli citizens, and a realistic plan with the Palestinians to end the 64 year old stalemate. The issues are difficult and divisive. In the former, no one seems to know how to manage eliminating the entitlement of deferment for religious men and women, and in the latter, with no united front in the Palestinian governments, who would they be negotiating with, and what serious commitment can be made that the settlement, when made, will have a chance?

Thankfully, Israel works without major decision making, or at least it seems that way. The "as is" seems to many to be more attractive than the "what might come." Left alone, the parties to all the issues seem to find ways to make it work, and they are also comfortable with allowing all the political rhetoric without changes that most Israelis believe need to be made.

Further, while there is no major movement to unseat Prime Minister Netanyahu, neither is there any real belief that he will be the man to solve these major interests. Because the issues are so endemic, one comes away thinking that if it is not completely broken, maybe it should be left alone.

I rode the new Jerusalem train. It was crowded but it works, that is if you can



Opinion

BY PROFESSOR ARNOLD AGES

Encyclopedia Judaica obscures truth about Armenian genocide

In the wake of the infamous flotilla assault against Israel two years ago the Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan broke up a televised press conference meeting in which President Shimon Peres was involved, by shouting out the phrase "Thou shall not kill" in order to condemn Israel's response to knife wielding activist-thugs on the boat, nine of whom were killed.

That was a surprising bit of sermonizing from the leader of the country that, according to Turkish scholar (and professor at Clark University) Taner Akçam, initiated the first genocide of the 20th century in the slaughter of more than one million Armenians in 1915.

For his pains in excavating the remaining archival sources relating to the massacre and in publishing the shocking revelations



Taner Akçam

coax the ticket machines to issue you a ticket. The stores are full. Tourists seem to be everywhere. There is a construction phenomenon. Everywhere we went, they are building, and the prices are going up as is the demand for housing.

Young married couples rent 480 sq. ft. apartments, and feel fortunate to find them. Everyone talks about how expensive everything is, and then becomes part of the active market.

I have been going to Israel for almost 40 years, more than 30 trips to visit 2 married children with 20 grandchildren and more than a dozen great-grandchildren. I have written about Israel for all these years, and still feel like a beginner. No one has ever been able to help me understand why it works, but it does, and it is they who have to live life on a tightrope.

Surrounded by change, Democratic Israel just chugs along like "The Little Train that Could."

Howard W. Karsh lives and writes in Milwaukee, Wisc., and can be reached at hkarsh@gmail.com. He has recently been named as a community columnist for the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel. This column was submitted on June 13, 2012. ★

in those documents, Akçam has, as he indicates in his lengthy preface to his new book – *The Young Turks' Crime Against Humanity: The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire*, Princeton University Press. (Princeton, N.J. 2012) – joined a hit list, as of 2009, of those targeted even today by elements of an ultranationalist Turkish terror group. He is in good company; Orhan Panuk the Nobel laureate is also on the list of "Traitors to National Security."

That is not the only surprise encountered in considering Akçam's explosive inventory of the ethnic cleansing, forced deportations and wanton murder of Christians (and others) systematically carried out by Turkey in the second decade of the last century. The other surprise is that the venerable Encyclopedia Judaica, published in the early 1970s, which contains a massive entry on the Holocaust, does not, in its article on Turkey, have anything to say about the era's first Holocaust and its Armenian and other victims. In fact the Judaica article on Turkey begins after the end of the First World War and explores only cursorily the history of the Jewish community there, its demography and its institutions after that period.

How does one explain this omission? The editors of the Encyclopedia were doubtless aware of the close political relationship between Israel and Muslim Turkey and didn't want to rock the boat by discussing what official Turkish government policy had consistently denied about allegations of genocide against the Armenians.

In this case the dictum that discretion is the better part of valour was sadly mistaken because even if all the facts which Akçam's reveals in his new book were not known, accounts of the Armenian tragedy at the hands of the Turks were generally known from Armenian responses and other reactions. In 1915 Turkey was universally condemned for its genocide despite the fact that its government denied what had really occurred. (This reviewer has not had an opportunity to consult the more recent edition of the Judaica to ascertain whether the entry on Turkey has been re-edited)

Professor Akçam is scrupulously honest in his voluminously documented inquiry – with a footnote apparatus that links every assertion of Turkish complicity in genocide to official archival materials. His inquiry even expatiates on the history of the relevant archives themselves; how, in some cases, they were destroyed, how in others, they were doctored and how many have simply disappeared.

In his reconstruction of that terrible period Akçam makes several important (see Ages, page 11)



Jewish Theater

REVIEWED BY IRENE BACKALENICK

Three reviews for four plays

Jerry Herman's *Mame*

Jerry Herman is right up there, high among the firmament of Jewish-American composers (and lyricists). He holds his own with the Gershwins, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin and others. Somewhere in the world there is surely a production of *Hello, Dolly!* or *La Cage aux Folles*, or *Mame* – or his early show *Milk and Honey*, which celebrated the founding of Israel. To offer a cliché, the sun never sets on a Jerry Herman show.

At the moment Connecticut theatergoers (and travelers from New York City and elsewhere) are treated to a production of *Mame* – at Goodspeed Musicals.

Though a two-hour drive from Manhattan, one finds the trek to Goodspeed well worth the effort. For starters, the show is housed in a fairy-tale setting. The theatre (erected in the 19th century) looks like a three-tiered wedding cake, clinging to the hillside and overlooking the Connecticut River. Whether sipping drinks on the terrace or ensconced within the ornate theater with its pocket-size stage, one moves to another world.

This time around, this Jerry Herman musical has its strengths and its weaknesses. On the plus side are the jazzy stage sets and costumes, which glorify the Art Deco era and later decades. And of course there are the memorable Herman tunes – among them, “If He Walked into My Life,” “We Need a Little Christmas,” and the title song. While performers are a mixed bag, the Jerry Herman touch carries the day.



Mame (center), portrayed by Louise Pitre, in *Mame* by Jerry Herman. Photo by Frank Vlastnik.

What is *Mame* all about? Originally a novel by Patrick Dennis, it relates the experience of a young orphaned boy who comes to live with his flamboyant Auntie Mame. She, with enough money to indulge her credo, is the very essence of the Jazz Age. “Life is a banquet,” she intones, “...so live, live, live!” She offers Patrick freedom, a new awareness of the world, and unlimited love. Who could ask for anything more?

This particular production offers a cartoony version of the classic. Given more subtlety would add depth and poignancy to the piece. Instead, everyone works too hard, going over the top in all roles....except perhaps *Mame* herself, portrayed by Louise Pitre. Although Pitre has a fine husky voice, perfect for a Broadway musical, she gives only a serviceable rendition of the role, haunted by such predecessors as Angela Lansbury and Rosalind Russell. She just does not have the larger-than-life persona of such earlier players. Yet her chemistry with her little nephew Patrick is sweet, lovable, and believable. As for that nephew, young Eli Baker works the stage like a pro. He sings, dances, interacts with others, and never misses a beat. Even better (if that is possible) is Charles Hagerty as the grown-up Patrick, who offers a mellow voice and a fine open style. And one must acknowledge Kirsten Wyatt who runs away with the comic role of Agnes Gooch, injecting the show with moments of humor.

While this production gets a mixed review, one must always give four stars to the Goodspeed Theatre – and of course to Jerry Herman himself.

Into the Woods

In the above review of *Mame* we lauded composer/lyricist Jerry Herman, placing him among the greats of his Jewish-American colleagues – Rodgers and Hammerstein, Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin and others.

But how could we have overlooked Stephen Sondheim, whose contributions to the modern musical are incalculable! Sondheim, in fact, has changed the tone and style of the genre, moving in a new direction and sounding the right note for our time.

So now, fortunately, we have the opportunity to right that wrong, as we review a current production of Sondheim's *Into the Woods*. The show is enjoying an excellent production at the Westport Country Playhouse (in Westport, Conn., a New York commuter town).

Since every Sondheim show is different in material, locale, and mood, it is difficult to make an overall evaluation. But one thing is certain: any Sondheim piece will have a bittersweet quality, stressing a



Lauren Kennedy as the Witch in *Into the Woods*. Photo by T. Charles Erickson.

darker side to life and happiness. And even though Sondheim focuses on Grimm's fairy tales in *Into the Woods*, you can be sure that this piece will not end happily ever after.

What is the show about? Sondheim and book writer James Lapine have combined several fairy tales, including Jack and the Beanstalk, Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, Rapunzel. They have added a conniving Witch and a Baker and his wife, who give focus to the story. The Baker and his wife long for a child, but have been cursed by the Witch. Only by entering the woods to gain four items demanded by the Witch can they lift the curse. There in the woods they encounter the other fairy tale characters, each of whom seeks a different goal.

The metaphor of the woods (where people grow in self-awareness and maturity) has interested other writers, including Shakespeare (who uses it to good effect in *Midsummer Night's Dream*). This time around *Into the Woods* also has a happy ending – but only at the end of the first act. At the matinee we attended, some theatergoers actually left, thinking the show was over. Wrong! The second act moves on, not only into the woods, but into darker, dangerous – and clearly Sondheim – territory. The Baker and his wife are less than thrilled with the new baby (who takes over their lives), Red Riding Hood has grown cynical, and Cinderella's marriage is less than idyllic. Furthermore, every one is threatened by Jack's giant, who comes to earth to wreak havoc.

But let's not give away the denouement, except to say that this particular *Into the Woods* is in excellent hands. The fine cast brings the cut-out characters to life – particularly Dana Steingold as Little Red Ridinghood. It is a tricky business to stand out among excellent peers, but Steingold is a memorable, distinctive Ridinghood. And Justin Scott Brown's Jack stands out (see Backalenick, page 8)

BACKALENICK

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as both oafish and sweetly innocent. But Lauren Kennedy as the Witch and Danielle Ferland as the Baker's Wife are also right on target. These and others of the 15-member cast create a beautiful ensemble under Mark Lamos' impeccable direction.

In short, it's time to head for the woods and meet all the fairy-tale characters of our childhood!

Old Jews Telling Jokes and A Modest Suggestion

Two shows have just surfaced off-Broadway, offering striking contrasts in style, delivery, and mood. But the underlying message is the same – namely, that we Jews use humor to meet adversity. This has long been a survival tool in Europe. For 2,000 years, anti-Semitism was part of the package. But Jewish humor – sometimes wry, sometimes bitter, sometimes resigned – yet always in reserve, lay ready to be tapped.

Old Jews Telling Jokes, a 90-minute revue at the Westside Theatre, pays tribute to this history by skillfully interweaving a familiar bundle of one-liners, culled from the days of Catskill comics. The legacy of European survival techniques had evolved into Borsht Belt humor. Henny Youngman, Buddy Hackett, Don Rickles come to mind. Typical, as we recall, is this one-liner. Three women get together in Miami, and the conversation follows: "Oy...Oy!... Oy, Gevalt!!...I thought we weren't going to talk about the children."



(L-R) Audrey Lynn Weston, Marilyn Sokol, Lenny Wolpe, Todd Susman, and Bill Army in *Old Jews Telling Jokes*. Photo credit: © Joan Marcus, 2012.

Created by Peter Gethers and Daniel Okrent and under the able direction of Marc Bruni, "*Old Jews* is a slick easy-to-take show." The jokes are time-worn – at least most of them. But that is just the point. It's a chance to honor our earlier days in this country, corny though it is. Five able performers move smoothly on and off stage, offering songs and commentaries mixing with the jokes. (A singing highlight is "I'm spending Hanukkah in Santa Monica.") The jokes (often coarse, ribald,

and scatological) are organized into categories – doctors, sex, marriage, business, money, assimilation, religion. Vintage players are Marilyn Sokol, Todd Susman, Lenny Wolpe, with youngsters Bill Army and Audrey Lynn Weston. It is a series of staccato, fast-paced scenes, with the stage quickly reset each time.

Audiences attending this show (probably mostly Jewish) responded with warm support – applauding enthusiastically at show's end. Our only disappointment was that the show offered no fresh ideas or unexpected twists. It's all very predictable. But that's the idea. The show "is what it is," as one viewer commented on leaving the theater.

In contrast is *A Modest Suggestion*, (now on Theatre Row at the Studio Theatre). This provocative satire (written by Israeli playwright Ken Kaissar) offers startlingly unexpected moves at every line. It poses the outrageous question – should we kill all the Jews? It is absurdist theater in the extreme (or perhaps not absurdist, when one considers recent Jewish history). Nonetheless, it is hard to laugh at this satire, which cuts too close to the bone.

Four men are seated around a boardroom table. Ostensibly they are corporate executives, judging by their well-tailored dark suits, neat shirts and ties. The agenda is on the table. They have already voted on earlier items, such as global warming and airport security. Should security devices reveal one's "private parts"? Should they ban pizza in public school cafeterias?

Now they are prepared to decide whether they should kill all the Jews. That the four men are idiots does not prevent them from going through corporate procedures, complete with the right lingo. They ponder the question. What would we gain? What are the cost benefits? Will this genocide make them feel good? But how do they find and identify Jews? What are the traits of a Jew? If a man eats bacon, can he be Jewish?

Finally they decide to do one test case – that is, kill one Jew (if he can be identified). They bring in a young man, bound and gagged, and proceed to question him. Does he eat bagel and lox? Does he celebrate Christmas? Since he proves to be a non-practicing Jew, or perhaps a non-Jew, they are thrown into confusion. Ultimately, they kidnap an Orthodox Jew, with much clearer results.

Cast members – corporate execs Jeff Auer, Bob Greenberg, Russell Jordan, Jonathan Marball – are right on target. And though Ethan Hova and Robert W. Smith turn in appealing performances as captive Jews, they are rather miscast. Smith – blue-eyed and fair-skinned – looks more like an Amish farmer than an Orthodox Jew, while the swarthy Hova seems more a Middle-Easterner than an

CHASSIDIC RABBI

(continued from 3)

you help someone else, you are helping the entire world. Each of us is a small, but really important, part of our world. When we heal ourselves, when we heal others, we are actually healing all of the world.

When even one part of the body is sick, then to different degrees the entire body is sick. Every part of the body is significant. If that part is healed, the entire body benefits. And not just the human race is affected by the state of every individual, but all of the animals, plants, and even angels are affected. Even the *Shechinah*, the Divine Presence, is suffering in exile. It's up to us to help and heal ourselves, and others, to learn more Torah and do more Mitzvahs, and to help others to do Mitzvahs to bring healing and redemption to the world.

The Torah tells us that in the end of days we will return to Hashem, and then He will redeem us. This is what is happening now. It's up to each of us to do our part. We want *Moshiach* now!

Rabbi Cohen lives in K'far Chabad, Israel. He can be reached by email at bzcohen@orange.net.il. Rabbi Cohen's youngest child is getting married so he did not have time to write a new column. This is reprinted from Jan. 13, 2010 and from our last Indiana edition. ★



(L-R) Jeff Auer, Jonathan Marballi, Robert W. Smith, Russell Jordan, and Bob Greenberg in *A Modest Suggestion*. Photo by Allison Taylor.

all-American non-observant Jew.

The denouement, not to be revealed here, is unexpected and confusing, tumbling downward at the close. One would hope that Kaissar would rework the ending. Nonetheless, under Walter Hoffman's firm direction, the play captivates, forcing viewers to examine that endless question: what is a Jew?

Theater critic Irene Backalenick covers theater for national and regional publications. She has a Ph.D. in theater criticism from City University Graduate Center. Her book *East Side Story – Ten Years with the Jewish Repertory Theatre won a first-place national book award in history*. She welcomes comments at IreneBack@sbcglobal.net and invites you to visit her website: nytheater.scene.com or at: jewish-theatre.com. ★



A FOCUS ON HEALING



Jewish Educator

BY AMY HIRSHBERG LEDERMAN

Witnessing death: A lesson in living

I sat beside her bed, watching her breathe. She looked so tiny, wrapped in mounds of bedcovers, her head softly resting on an oversized pillow. She no longer recognized me, or so I was told by her caregivers, but that didn't stop me from speaking continuously to her as I stroked her hairless head. It made me smile to think that just a few months earlier she had been vain enough to insist that we color her hair, so that no one would see her graying roots.

I placed a tape deck next to her bed and played all of her old favorites, trying to keep her connected to this world. Everyone who was part of the hospice team confirmed what I intuitively knew: that even in her unconscious state, she could hear the sounds around her and feel us as we stroked her arm or caressed her face. Sound and touch, two amazing senses, were what kept us tethered to each other now.

I loved my Aunt Gen, who was my 'sometimes mother', but more often my friend and confidante. It was hard to believe that in days, perhaps hours, I would no longer be able to pick up the phone and call her for a quick chat, a bit of advice, or a family recipe my kids had come to love.

I had never witnessed death up close before and to be honest, I was terribly afraid. There were so many unknowns that I didn't want to even think about, let alone witness. How does death look? How does it sound? What if she is in pain? How can I help her be at peace after all of the months she fought so valiantly as a warrior against cancer?

Slowly, hour by hour, something began to happen to me. The more time I spent with Gen, quietly watching the changes in her body as her life ebbed away, the more I grew comfortable with my fears. And with the process of dying itself. I watched her like a new mother watches a sleeping infant - with wonder, amazement and awe. I studied her every change - a slight loss of color in her right hand, a pause or hiccup in her breathing, a fluttering

behind her eyelids - each time realizing that this is what death looks like. I didn't realize then what I know now - that I was lucky to be able to view her death as a natural process. Like waves in an outgoing tide, her life force was drawn away from us as her body relinquished resistance and her soul found its way home.

Towards the end, I would get annoyed when visitors came and acted like they knew what to do. "Turn up the music," a friend would counsel. "Try to make her eat," another would coach. Each person meant well, but only those of us who surrounded her daily could see that she no longer wanted to be drawn into the chaos of life. She had transitioned into a place of existence that no longer beckoned to us. What was hardest on me was the realization that inevitably, we would all be left without her.

My thoughts during those final days were sharper and more focused than I would have expected. All of the errands that I had left undone and the work that was piling up on my desk seemed irrelevant now. What mattered most was being close, not just to Gen but to those of us who loved and cared for her. Being, not doing, was the only thing that seemed to make sense in that time and space. And in those long hours of being, I experienced an intimacy with family, within myself and with God that I had never known before.

There is clarity of purpose that emerges when someone we love is dying. It helps us focus on what is truly important in our life and let go of things that no longer serve us. It makes us aware of the impermanence of our days and that there is no time better than the present to say the things we need to say to those we love. It forces us to recognize that we, too, will die and inspires us to make every day count.

Soon after Gen died, I felt an urgency to set things right with a family member whom I had not been able to talk to in a while. Something had happened between us and we just couldn't break through our discomfort. Gen's death not only gave me permission, it acted as a mandate to speak what was in my heart. The conversation we had not only cleared things up between us but helped me see another gift that Gen had given me. That it is not death, our own or others, that we should fear, but a life not lived fully and honestly which is the greater loss.

Lederman is an award winning author, Jewish educator, public speaker and attorney who lives in Tucson. Visit her website at amyhirshberglederman.com. ★



Why Faith Matters

BY RABBI DAVID WOLPE

The act of caring

My father's father died when my father was 11. His mother was a widow at 34, and he - an only child - bore much of his grief alone. In accordance with traditional practice of saying *Kaddish* for one year, he began to walk very early to synagogue each morning to say prayers in his father's memory.

At the end of his first week, he noticed that the ritual director of the synagogue, Mr. Einstein, walked past his home just as he left to walk to synagogue. Mr. Einstein, already advanced in years explained, "Your home is on the way to the synagogue. I thought it might be fun to have some company. That way, I don't have to walk alone."

For a year my father and Mr. Einstein walked through the New England seasons, the humidity of summer and the snow of winter. They talked about life and loss and, for a while, my father was not so alone.

After my parents married and my oldest brother was born, my father called Mr. Einstein - now well into his 90s - and asked him if he would meet his new wife and son. Mr. Einstein agreed, but said that in view of his age my father would have to come to him.

My father writes: "The journey was long and complicated. His home, by car, was fully 20 minutes away. I drove in tears as I realized what he had done. He had walked for an hour to my home so that I would not have to be alone each morning. ...By the simplest of gestures, the act of caring, he took a frightened child and he led him with confidence and with faith back into life."

Voted #1 rabbi in America by Newsweek (2012) and named one of the 50 most influential Jews in the world by The Jerusalem Post (2012), Rabbi David Wolpe is the senior rabbi of Sinai Temple in Los Angeles and author of several books including Why Faith Matters. This story was posted on his Facebook profile on June 14, 2012: www.facebook.com/RabbiWolpe.

(see Wolpe, page Focus 2)



Rabbi Gerald I. Wolpe



Wiener's Wisdom

BY RABBI IRWIN WIENER, D.D.

"For you are with me..."

...Your staff is there to support me." These words written by King David during a very trying time in his life indicates his faith and devotion to the salvation offered by God in times of distress. He was fleeing for his life from the threats of King Saul. Feeling nothing but despair, he turns to God and eloquently describes his understanding of the blessings associated with the gift of life.

David finds the courage to turn his unfortunate despondency into a vision of collective redemption. He inspires himself and in turn all Israel with the remembrance of the goodness and mercy of God as the Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 years. How can such a God abandon him? After all, he too is wandering aimlessly in the wilderness of hopelessness.

These thoughts come to mind whenever I read the 23rd Psalm whether during times of grief or times of sorrowful news. Unfortunately, life is filled with tragedies that often overshadow the wonderful moments of happiness. Memories somehow travel to unfortunate incidents and shade the glory of marvelous experiences. Further, we seem to dwell on the bad and relegate the good to the shadows of anguish.

People live and people die, but what happens in between can be daunting. Hearing news that illness has taken hold and has us trapped in a cycle of pain. The news is not so good and the outcome so predictable. Once there was vibrancy, gaiety, now pain, and misery as we wait for the final curtain to come down on our lives and our hopes and dreams.

Where is God? Why is this happening? Where are the days filled with laughter and celebration? We search for answers and realize that there are none. There is illness and sometimes recovery. Such is not the case now. The news is all bad – no hope – just the realization of finality.

People will constantly ask me these very questions and I search for answers that will comfort and console. I cannot show frustration nor can I give up. I see pain on the faces of those afflicted and those standing close with no ability to heal or respond to the anticipated emptiness.

God is there to provide a certain balance in life. On the one hand, He extends His hand to lift the spirit, as the other hand understands the affliction. It is hard to describe this to

WOLPE

(continued from Focus 1)

David's father, Rabbi Gerald I. Wolpe (1927-2009), was known for his compassionate leadership of Philadelphia's Har Zion Temple from 1969-'99, and for his many contributions to bioethics, caregiving, and medical education. ★

someone who is going through the ordeal. It is even harder to comprehend the belief that God affords us the opportunity to receive comfort even while He cannot prevent the drama from unfolding.

The Prophet Isaiah reminds us that God will comfort us giving us the ability to cope. We tend to forget the goodness and kindness that we encountered as we moved through the journey of life. We become so engrossed in our distress that we cannot recall the beauty of the steps we took as we moved from episode to contentment.

No words can suffice to bring solace to the prospect of death and no actions taken by others will give us the ability to forget the anger and frustration. It is up to us to return to the center of life through reliance on ourselves, our family, our friends, and our appreciation of God who is there to take our hand as we are guided on the path of release – the release of all our burdens.

I look at the sick and infirmed and I realize that my function is to hold a hand, or kiss a brow, or listen to their cries for help. I cannot cure the aching body but I can deepen their understanding of reaching out to receive an extended hand in friendship and understanding.

Where is God? God is everywhere we want Him to be and even places where we would least expect. In the Book of Kings, we read that God is not in the wind, not in the earthquake, not in fire, but in a still small voice. That voice is ours reaching out to walk with God in our hour of need because He will hear and He does see and He does comfort.

Spinoza, the father of Reform Judaism taught that *eternity* is the very core of God. There is no end. There is continuation of life. There is immortality. There is life after death. There is grace and there is forgiveness. God made all things both good and not so good and it is up to us to glean the good from among all that there is so that we can enjoy life and expect connection at death.

Watching people go through the pangs of torment can be unnerving but I remember the final words of the Psalm 23, "AND I WILL DWELL IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD FOREVER."

Rabbi Irwin Wiener is spiritual leader of the Sun Lakes Jewish Congregation. Comments to ravyitz@cox.net. His new book, *Living with Faith*, will be published in January, 2013. ★



Wellness & Healing

BY MELINDA RIBNER

10 suggestions to promote wellness and healing

1. Do not worry. Worry does not help the person who is sick, rather it makes a person contract, and not be available for healing. Cultivate faith in G-d's ability to heal you and others. There is some hidden good in everything that is happening. Find the good.

2. Choose to live in the present. Do not waste energy thinking too much about what was or what will be. We have only the present moment. When we are aware and present in the moment, we are open to the Divine Presence. Celebrate the gift of life in each moment as fully as you can. Take deep calming breaths throughout the day.

3. Do something each day to promote healing for yourself and others. Be good to yourself. Be good to others.

4. Count your blessings each day. Being grateful opens the heart so one can receive healing. Today was a day when I _____. Write in your journal what you received and learned each day.

5. Eliminate feelings of guilt and shame. Guilt is the feeling that you did something wrong. Shame is the feeling that you are inadequate. Healing is blocked by feelings of shame and guilt. You are a beautiful being, created in the image of the divine. Affirm that about yourself. If you feel regret or guilt over something you have done, forgive yourself and forgive others. Punishing yourself is not helpful. Affirm to do better in the future. Ask for forgiveness and make amends if you hurt someone.

6. Meditate and repeat affirmations for five minutes or more each day; "Blessed is God the true Healer", "God is healing me right now". Visualize yourself surrounded by God's light and love each day. Speak lovingly to the body part that is hurting. Give that body part special love and attention.

7. Pray for healing each day. You need God's help to heal. You may even have gotten ill just so you would reach the point of calling out to God in a sincere way. Pray for the healing of others as well. Make a prayer list of people who need healing, need livelihood, a soul mate, and so forth. When you stand in prayer with a list of needs of others, it is more powerful than

(see Ribner, page Focus 3)



Musings from Shiloh

BY BATYA MEDAD

Who said it's hard to eat healthy?

Too many people use the "it's too hard" or "too much work" excuse to make healthy food. I got 15 kilo (30 lbs) off over three years ago by switching to eating lots of cooked vegetables and almost no carbohydrates. The weight has stayed off. And a year and a half ago my husband was told to lose weight, too. He lost even more than I did and has kept it off. I don't call it a diet; I call what we did a "change in how we eat."



I cook and we eat lots of vegetables. I even take them to work. And I found that most restaurants will gladly substitute salads and vegetables for the rice or potatoes on their set menus. They want our business (\$) and if they must make some accommodations, they're happy to do it.

You can do so much with all sorts of vegetables when baking them. These baked vegetables are very impressive when entertaining or bringing as "house gifts" when you're invited out. My friends expect vegetables from me. When I bring trays of baked vegetables I know that I'll have something to eat.

The trick is to experiment to see what cooks the easiest and what you like. I always dribble a bit of oil on top. You can add whatever seasonings you like. I don't add salt. Baked vegetables don't lose their flavor. I bake them in a conventional oven. They aren't waterlogged.

Batya Medad is a veteran American olah, immigrant in Israel. She and her husband made aliyah in 1970 and have been in Shiloh since 1981. She has two active blogs, <http://shilohmusings.blogspot.com> and <http://me-ander.blogspot.com>, besides having established the Kosher Cooking Carnival; details on me-ander. You can contact her at shilohmuse@yahoo.com. ★

RIBNER

(continued from Focus 2)

when you make requests just for yourself. You receive more spiritually. Even if you yourself are sick, pray for others.

8. Do meditations with God's name – Yud, Hay, and Vav and Hay. Place the divine name in your body. (See book *New Age Judaism* or my CD, *Arousal from Below* for meditation guidance. If you do not know the letters of the Divine Name, and even if you do, visualize yourself in a Jewish star filled with divine light.

9. Nourish yourself physically by eating natural food, drinking pure water, exercising, and spending time in the sun each day. Eliminate negative eating, drinking or other destructive behaviors to the body. Seek alternative approaches like acupuncture, spiritual energy healing to support healing. Your body wants to heal.

10. Make an effort to reach out to others to uplift them. Say kind words to others. Do not speak *loshen hara*, speak badly about others. Hug as many people as you can each day. We all need more hugging. Give charity. It opens the gates for healing. Even if you are poor, it will be helpful to give charity.

May we each heal on a personal level. May the whole world heal and be brought to a greater wellbeing and wholeness.

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Maimonides Prayer for the Physician



EXALTED G-d — Before I begin the

holy work of healing the creations of your hands, I place my entreaty before the throne of your glory that you grant strength of spirit and fortitude to faithfully execute my work. Let not desire for wealth or benefit blind me from seeing truth. Deem me worthy of seeing in the sufferer who seeks my advice - a person - neither rich nor poor. Friend or foe, good man or bad, of a man in distress, show me only the man.

If doctors wiser than me seek to help me understand, grant me the desire to learn from them, for the knowledge of healing is boundless. But when fools deride me, give me fortitude! Let my love for my profession strengthen my resolve to withstand the derision even of men of high station. Illuminate the way for me, for any lapse in my knowledge can bring illness and death upon your creations. I beseech you, merciful and gracious G-d, strengthen me in body and soul, and instill within me a perfect spirit.

ל עליין קודם שאני מתחיל בעבודתי הקדושה. לרפא את צירי כפידי אני מניח את תחיתתי לפני כסא כבודך, שתרצן לי אמוץ רוח ויחזק רב לעשות את עבודתי באמונה. וזה שאני פה: לצבור הון או טוב לא תעוור את עיני. כר איות נכוחה. וזכני להביק על סובל הבא לשאול בעצתי כעל אדם בלי הבדל בין עשיר ועני. ידיד ושונא, איש קוב ורע. את האדם בצר לו. הראני רק את האדם. אם רופאים נבונים מני רוצים ללמדני בינה, תן לי הרצון ללמוד מהם, כי תורת הרפואה אין ערוך לה. אבל כאשר כסילים יבזוני, אחלי! אהבתי להקציע תחזק את רוחי כלי. להחזק עם זקנות המלעים ובעודם, רק האמת תהיה נר להגילי. כי כל ויתור במקצועי יכול להביא כליון ויחלה ליציר כפידי. אנא: רחום וחזון חזקני ואמציני בנפשי ובנפשי, ורוח שלם תקע בקרבי:

תפלה הרופא



Book Excerpt

By ROBYN MICHELE LEVY

Ladies in Waning

These days, everyone is worried about me, even strangers – particularly impatient strangers at the grocery store, waiting in line behind me at the express checkout counter. Sometimes they are so worried that their eyeballs roll right out of their sockets as I slowly fumble through my purse to pay the clerk.

I'm worried too. Unsettling thoughts of drooling, diapers, and wheelchairs loom large. And so does death (hopefully before diapers). But these fears seem rather futile to fret about now, considering I'm just in the early stage of Parkinson's. This means I can focus my anxiety on concerns I face every day. For starters, there is my deteriorating walk, which I am very self-conscious about – particularly at the dog park. Let off leash,

Nellie runs like the wind, as far away from me as possible. Then she conducts "canine crop circle" research, eventually marking the perfect celestial spot with a down-to-earth turd. Which I must find and dispose of, in front of everyone. I lumber awkwardly across the grass, dodging dogs chasing tennis balls and squeaky toys, my left leg dragging behind, my crooked left arm frozen at my side, torso tilting too far forward, right arm swinging back and forth, back and forth, like a doggie poop divining rod, searching until I strike gold.

My many other concerns are not as public. I'm having difficulty flossing my teeth, folding the laundry, chopping vegetables, vacuuming the floors, putting on my shoes, doing up zippers, typing on the keyboard. Little things only Bergen and Naomi notice when we're at home. And while they don't say it out loud, I know they both worry about me a lot. Most of the time, I appreciate all this concern from everybody. But sometimes I find it difficult being the center of apprehension and long to escape the scrutiny.

That's where Nellie comes in handy. As far as I can tell, my dog hasn't the foggiest idea that I have a degenerative

brain disease – or that I have a brain to degenerate. In her eyes, I'm just this omnipresent creature she adores, who fills her food bowl, takes her for walks, picks up her poop, scratches her belly, and reluctantly removes sticks protruding from her bum – the very sticks I am always telling her not to eat. And while she isn't the brightest dog in town, her ignorance often brings me bliss – rare moments when I forget that I have Parkinson's and that people worry about me.

Warning: Habits may be habit forming. Habits may also be hilarious. Sometimes they can be both. Such as the habit I have of marching around inside my house, like a soldier in basic training. Every day. Rain or shine. Hup, two, three, four. Back and forth between the kitchen and the living room – with gusto. According to my physiotherapist, this marching drill should help my rigid left arm swing back and forth and my limping left leg lift up and down, in smooth rhythmic motions that would make a sergeant major proud. That's what it should do. But I march to the beat of a disabled drummer. And no matter how hard I try, I lurch to the right like a spastic soldier – perky but jerky. I'd make a sergeant major cry.

The first time Naomi saw me marching, she laughed and then squealed, "I arrived just in time for the show!" I was flattered – teenagers are notoriously hard to impress.

"Welcome to *Cirque d'Oy Vey*," I said, putting more schlep into my step.

Luckily for her, I was at the beginning of my workout routine, cobbled together from physio, Pilates, and yoga exercises I'd learned over the years. There was plenty still to come. Leg kicks and figure eights. Arm flexing. Knee tapping. Stretches and lunges. Postural poses. And the showstopper: tripping over Nellie while walking backwards.

Naomi was entertained. She even got into the act by coaxing my left arm into positions it can no longer find on its own. She still occasionally does this, without hesitation or awkwardness and without the slightest indication that I embarrass her – even in front of her friends. I find this remarkable because I consider my body an embarrassment of glitches, which I'd do anything to fix.

Unfortunately, fixing things isn't my forte; I'm better at breaking things. Casualties include the garburator, the clothes dryer, the dishwasher, and, of course, the computer. I'm lucky that Bergen can fix almost anything – he's a handyman with a workshop full of tools and spare parts and an eclectic collection of you-never-know-when-this-might-come-in-handly junk. Which somehow always comes in handy for something,

somewhere, sometime.

I'm secretly hoping someday he'll emerge from his workshop with "The Lazarus" – a custom-built contraption that resurrects dead dopamine brain cells and cures Parkinson's. Of course, I'll bravely volunteer to be the first guinea pig to test it out. And I'll try not to flinch, even if he attaches a modified Ham radio with guitar-pick electrodes to my head. I realize there's bound to be some kinks to work out in the beginning, so I'll brace myself for possible side effects – nausea, chills, headache, double vision, multiple orgasms – I can handle almost anything if it leads to a fix.

Meanwhile, I'm collecting facts – searching the web, borrowing library books, learning the lingo. Apparently, so is Naomi. When I go to tuck her into bed tonight, I have to choke back my tears. Probably every kid in the world is reading the latest Harry Potter book, but not my daughter. She is flipping through the pages of an illustrated neurology textbook.

"Are you sure you want to read that stuff before bed?" I ask.

"Yeah. Look at these brains. This one is healthy. This other one has Parkinson's. And did you know that smoking may somehow protect the brain from getting Parkinson's disease?"

"I wish I'd known that years ago – I'd have started smoking."

Naomi asks, "Do you want to cuddle?"

"Of course I do. Move over," I say, squeezing in beside her. I wrap my arms around my girl while she leans her head on my shoulder. We hear Nellie jingling her way into the room and jumping up onto the bed. I'm in her spot, she whimpers. My head is on her pillow, she woofs.

"Don't go," Naomi whispers. "Stay."

So I stay, forcing Nellie to cancel her pillow reservations and curl up at Naomi's feet. The three of us close our eyes, but only the dog falls fast asleep. Together, Naomi and I luxuriate in this shared end-of-day stillness. Neither of us can remember the last time we cuddled like this, but our bodies remember. Tentatively, our legs entwine and our arms overlap – reviving the affection I thought we'd lost, collateral damage from the Bad Old Days. Naomi yawns, pulls the covers close, and rests her head on my shoulder. We are tired, but we continue talking about brains and dogs, while invisible threads of trust begin mending our tattered love.

Excerpted from Most of Me: Surviving My Medical Meltdown. By Robyn Michele Levy. Greystone Books, an imprint of D&M Publishers. 2011. Reprinted with permission of the publisher. ★



The Victor Center – screening and prevention of Jewish genetic diseases

Simple blood test can identify carriers of 19 preventable disorders

In the not-too-distant past, prospective parents had no way of knowing whether they were carriers of a genetic disease that could threaten the health and life of their children – until it was too late and a child became sick. For Jewish individuals of Central and Eastern European descent from countries such as Poland, Russia, Germany, Austria, and Lithuania, the potential danger is particularly great, since it is now known that one in five Ashkenazi Jews is a carrier for at least one of 19 different genetic diseases, many of which strike in childhood and can lead to an early death. Furthermore, with 50% of interfaith marriages in the US and the Irish, French Canadian and Cajun populations being at high risk for Tay-Sachs disease, there is a greater need for screening in the non-Jewish populations as well.

Today, with advances in the field of genetics, scientists have identified the gene mutations that cause these inherited diseases, enabling individuals who are screened before each pregnancy to know whether their children will be at risk. Making screening widely available to potential carriers is the mission of The Victor Center for the Prevention of Jewish Genetic Diseases, an organization dedicated to preventing Jewish genetic diseases through high-quality and accessible education, screening, and counseling.

The Victor Center was founded by Lois Victor, who herself lost two children to a Jewish genetic disease and was determined to help spare other families the same heartbreak. Just as a grass-roots community campaign for Tay-Sachs disease has been successful in reducing the incidence of that disease by 90 percent in the Ashkenazi Jewish population through public education and screening, Ms. Victor's goal was to advocate screening for all the Jewish genetic diseases, raising public awareness that a simple blood test could prevent a family tragedy.

Ms. Victor established the first center in 2002 at Einstein Medical Center in Philadelphia. To expand the reach of the program, a second location was established in 2005 at Tufts New England Medical Center Floating Hospital for Children in Boston, and a third Victor Center was launched in 2007 in

partnership with the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. An Atlanta Jewish Gene Screen community-wide partnership offering genetic counseling, education and screening was created in Atlanta with funding from The Marcus Foundation in partnership with Emory University School of Medicine. For those in other cities, the Victor Center's Web site provides information, resources and referrals of doctors, genetic counselors and labs offering this screening throughout the country and help couples assess their risk.



"I started the Victor Center because I was looking for a way to spare others what we went through with our two daughters, one of whom died at the age of 8 and the other at 35, both from Familial Dysautonomia – a Jewish genetic disease that is preventable but that has no cure," Ms. Victor states. "There was no genetic screening when I had my daughters; today, there is no reason that any child should be born with these genetic diseases. My vision, through the Victor Center, is that all Jews of childbearing age will be tested as a matter of course, that rabbis will counsel young couples on testing before marriage, and that physicians, family members, and community leaders will promote testing. With one simple blood test, you can take responsibility for your life. I didn't have that choice."

Individuals of every ethnic group are potential carriers for genetic diseases, with no way of knowing since their own health is not affected. Ashkenazi Jews, however, have a significantly higher risk for certain diseases, primarily because the Jewish communities in Europe were small and isolated, and members tended to marry within their communities, enabling the gene mutations to become more prevalent in future generations. These diseases range from the more familiar Tay-Sachs disease to lesser-known diseases such as Walker-Warburg Syndrome and Nema-line Myopathy. These diseases have no cures with often only limited treatment, and many result in a severely limited lifespan.

Before the Victor Center began its program, few physicians were informed of the range of diseases for which their Ashkenazi Jewish patients should be screened; and many did not fully understand the importance of screening both partners in a couple for the same diseases, or of screening before every pregnancy so that newly identifiable

SASSO

(continued from 4)

Even as the Latino community is ethnically and culturally heterogeneous, the Jewish community in the United States grew to include Jews from central and eastern Europe (Ashkenazim) as well as from North Africa and the Middle East.

Numerically, the Latino community in the United States is significantly larger than the Jewish. Latinos constitute 16 percent of the U.S. population. Jews are about 2 percent of the nation's population.

The Latino participants expressed interest in the Jewish community's successful system of communal organization and active engagement in the civic and political life. The Jewish participants learned of the diversity of the Latino populations in our state and their interest in issues that are at the core of the Jewish public agenda.

At a time when our nation is increasingly fragmented, when stereotyping and circling the wagons are easier options than dialogue and cooperation, it is important for diverse constituencies to know one another, to help each other succeed and to advance a common good that transcends partisan and ethnic identity politics. The Latino-Jewish dialogue is born from a concern for an America that is hospitable and welcoming of diversity, an America grounded in core values and traditions and yet open to innovation and change. As minorities, both communities uphold an America where the particular and the universal coexist, where there is respect and understanding and where the vision of our national motto, "E pluribus unum" ("From the many, One"), will yet be realized.

Sasso and his wife Rabbi Sandy Eisenberg Sasso have been senior rabbis at Congregation Beth-El Zedeck in Indianapolis for 34 years. Reprinted with permission from The Indianapolis Star, May 29, 2012. ★



genetic mutations could be detected. Through the Victor Center and its work around the country, all at-risk individuals are now able to be screened for 19 specific diseases – and with advances in testing, that list is constantly being expanded based on factors including the carrier frequency of a disease, its severity, and the sensitivity of the testing.

What all these genetic diseases have in common is that the carriers themselves are healthy and have no prior family history of the disease. That is because the diseases are inherited in an autosomal recessive manner, meaning a child can only be born with the disease if both parents are carriers for the same disease

(see Victor Center, page 14)



Media Watch

By RABBI ELLIOT B. GERTEL

The Good Wife

CBS's popular *The Good Wife* exploited Muslim-Jewish tensions on campus for the first episode of the 2011–2012 season. A student at a Chicago polytech college, Simon Greenberg, is found murdered in his dorm room, stabbed numerous times, with a swastika written in blood, backwards. This occurred at the same time as a campus brawl involving a dozen Jewish and Muslim students during a rally by Jewish students against the Palestinian terrorist group, Hamas.

A Muslim leader with access to a \$10 million charitable account, a commodities trader by profession, engages the law firm at which Alicia Florrick (Julianna Margulies), betrayed wife of prosecutor Peter Florrick (Chris North), is vying for a partnership. A Muslim student has been arrested for punching a Jewish student, and faces conviction for a hate crime, with a mandatory seven year sentence. The Muslim student, Jimal (Naifeh Satya Bhabha), is likable and sympathetic. He insists that he was not at the rally, but at the library. He says that he is ashamed even to have been arrested and does not want his parents to be called. The implication is that his parents are good and law-abiding people, and would be appalled by his arrest.

Alicia confronts the young prosecutor, a former rival in her law firm and now a puppet of her estranged husband. (It seems that everything in this series is personal.) She protests that Jimal's arrest was a desperate act of authorities unable to find who stabbed a Jewish student to death and therefore go after the nearest Muslim student for brawling. She implies that prosecutor husband Peter is seeking to firm up his campaign contributions with money from grateful Jews. Peter, seeking a bigger political office after falling from grace by cheating on Alicia with prostitutes, and anxious to win the respect of the public, instructs his staff to accept no plea bargains.

A video camera recorded Jimal's car far away from the site of the brawl. Hearing this and hoping to be freed, Jimal decides that he might as well say that he was driving his car, though he had all along insisted otherwise. Then he is told that the car was photographed near the murder scene, enabling the prosecutors to charge Jimal with killing Greenberg. Yet his two

roommates, both Muslim, had use of the car. So in order to avert one false conviction, Jimal unwittingly tumbles into another.

Alicia's firm blames her for getting Jimal into that situation, and reminds her that if Jimal is convicted, the firm will lose a lucrative Muslim client. All the while, she must contend with Peter's efforts to make her look bad in court. The latter resents her independence and her refusal to support him after she discovered that his infidelities extended to a tryst with her dear friend.

The executor of the Muslim anti-defamation charity is appalled by revelations in court that Jimal played a video game in which he donned a bomb vest and blew up a Jewish school filled with children, and that he got into an online fight with the slain Greenberg, perhaps over that video.

While the trial is being played out, writers Robert King and Michelle King and Meredith Merrill (story) introduce, in raid succession, and, seemingly, just for the fun of it, a few unflattering vignettes of Jewish men.

First, there is Judge Alan Karpman, played by Fred Melamed, now forever associated with the Coen brothers film, *A Serious Man*. When first told about the fist fight, Karpman seems impressed that there was a fight and nostalgic about fighting, in a nerdy way, of course. (In this theme, the writers borrowed a page of David E. Kelley's shows.) Later, the judge tries to rush the proceedings because he is "late for the gym." He also admires the "cool guns" in the video game – also in a nerdy sort of way.

As a ploy to get another judge, Alicia decides to challenge the impartiality of the Jewish judge. "My Jewish background is completely irrelevant in this case," he says, indignantly. But Alicia points out that the judge has donated money to an organization that supports settlements in Israel. (At least the writers acknowledged that the settlements are in Israel, until negotiations with the Palestinians decide otherwise.) Alicia's ploy does not work, anyway. The judge remains on the case, and the prosecutors accuse her of purposely stalling the case through Rosh Hashanah, the next day, when Jewish judges (with strong commitment to Judaism and to the Jewish People) would not be present for new assignments. That Alicia knew about Rosh Hashanah is not so clear, as is why this Jewish holiday is mentioned at all, though it could be that the prosecution is trying to prejudice the judge against Alicia, and stoops so low as to make such use of a Jewish religious holiday.

Such buffoonization of the judge seems to emerge from the writers' desire to soup



Cast of A Good Wife: (L-R) Archie Panjabi (Kalinda), Matt Czuchy (Cary), Christine Baranski (Diane), Julianna Margulies (Alicia), Josh Charles (Will), Chris Noth (Peter), and Alan Cumming (Eli). © CBS Interactive.

up the plot with every possible quirk and complication of all the kinds of Jews that might become involved in such a trial. In addition to the judge, there is a professor named Noah Fineman (Larry Bryggman), who uses his political science courses to label Israel as a "criminal regime" and employs the witness stand to promote his book, *Zionist Occupation*. Clearly, Fineman represents Jews who hate Israel and who blame Israel at every opportunity for the hatred of the West by Muslim fanatics. Yet he is all too willing to claim Jimal as a disciple and thus to implicate him as an advocate of Israel-bashing and, by implication, of Jew-bashing, literally. The problem is that Fineman has only lectured to the class twice, leaving most sessions in the hands of teaching assistants, and did not know that one of Jimal's roommates signed him in and was the one who showed interest. So it is left open whether Fineman will do anything to claim a disciple out of ego or because he wants to believe that his lectures are effective enough to inflame Muslims (megalomania) to act upon a hatred and bigotry that he may think they cannot resist (racism).

And then there is Eli Gold, the persistent Jewish character in this series. Gold was first introduced as a practicing Jew, although it has not always been clear exactly what he practices. There was some suggestion that he is religiously observant, but mostly he plays out certain Jewish stereotypes in order to amuse the audience and to reveal the hang-ups of Jewish and non-Jewish characters alike. (Here, too, the writers seem to borrow a page from David E. Kelley's depiction of Jews, particularly in the roles that he wrote for Feivush Finkel.)

In the context of this particular episode, the episodes involving the Gold character are discombobulated vignettes through which the writers poke at what they

(see Gertel, page 15)



As I Heard It

REVIEWED BY MORTON GOLD

Bencher (Grace After Meals)

This month I received a publication released by United Synagogue Youth (USY) with the title *B'kol Echad: In One Voice*. The handsome volume is edited by Cantor Jeffrey Shiovitz with this revised edition edited by Amy Dorsch. This revised edition was published in 2010, and the Library of Congress catalogue number is: 85-62598.



The contents include the following: Shabbat and Festival Blessings, *Z'mirot* for Shabbat, and Songs of Israel. The Hebrew text has both translations as well as transliterations of the text. All of the preceding is admirable and laudatory. (My readers should sense that unlike *Dayenu*, this is not enough!)

What is troubling to me is that with the *Z'mirot* as well as the Songs of Israel, there is not one note of music. One has to assume that there is but one setting of each text. No composer of any of the *Z'mirot* is identified, let alone the author of the text used. On page 82 there is the Yiddish song "*Az Ich vel Singen (Chiri Bim)*". If one didn't know Hebrew, one wouldn't know that the text was not in Hebrew or that it was a Yiddish song. Does the song "*Dodi Li*" (p. 84) have a composer, and if so who? Ditto for "*Lo Yisa Goy*" (p. 95). As for "*Tov L'hodot*" (p. 101) I am certain that they do not mean the setting by Schubert commissioned by Solomon Sulzer!

The editor is meticulous in citing the source of every text but nary is one composer cited in the *Z'mirot* section. One should add however that in the section of songs by Israeli composers each composer as well as lyricist is identified. Is it too much to hope for that the music for the melody for the Chanukah blessings or Maoz Tsur be printed? By the way, the composer for *Hatikvah* was Naftuli Hersh Imber. Unlike the melody for *The Star Spangled Banner* which was taken from a German drinking song, (Key merely wrote the words), *Hatikvah* does have a composer.

BEN-MORDECAI
(continued from 5)

Spain) dates only to about 940 CE, its relative youthfulness is not surprising. Parchment deteriorates. Ancient texts were recopied regularly to preserve them. And when Jews fled en masse from a city and had to choose between saving a brittle ancient copy of the Tanach or a new copy on strong parchment, refugees would choose the new one.

German scholars in the early 1800s naively claimed the ability to assign different authors or editors to phrases and even individual words in the Tanach. The Germans' "documentary theory," while not dead, has lost currency in recent decades in part because it is not well supported by linguistic analysis. Although we do not yet have good external evidence as to when each book of the Tanach was first put on parchment or who first did so, we do know that the Tanach is very ancient, not a mishmash cobbled together in the middle ages.

Our oldest copies are 1100 years old, but earlier copies must have existed and crumbled to dust. Although our copies of the *Iliad* are similarly newish, honest scholars don't spout *bubbe meises* about the origins of the *Iliad*. The evidence suggests that the text of the standard Tanach is of great antiquity and integrity – which may be more than can be said for English scholarship.

An attorney and Semitic linguist with degrees from Brandeis, Stanford and Univ. of Calif., Seth Watkins (pen name, Ben-Mordecai) merges linguistic analysis with legal sleuthing to uncover lost meanings of ancient texts. His Exodus Haggadah uniquely includes the full story of the Exodus in an accessible format. Email: Seth@VayomerPublishing.com. ★

One realizes that the origin of the first part was taken from a Czech folk song and used in an orchestral tone poem (MaVlast) by Smetana. However, the first phrase notwithstanding, he did write the rest of it and should receive credit for doing so. What I am getting at (at last!) is that what interests the editor are the words. (But too often the children are ignorant of the melody. And should they be familiar with the melody, the rendition of the same often leaves a lot to be desired!)

The words (texts of the various prayers) are what is important to those who fashioned this book. Everyone ought to be familiar with the music and who cares who wrote the music, especially when it comes to the service or even to songs to prayers sung after eating. The Chasidim solved this problem long ago by

AGES

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observations. The first is that Turkey, reeling from the fear that its empire was being dismantled by both internal and external forces, was fanatically determined to preserve the integrity of its state and empire and believed that its Christian components were intent upon accelerating the decomposition of Turkey. The second is that while the Armenian Christians became the prime target for Turkey's genocidal fury, others, including Muslims such as the Kurds also felt the wrath of Turkey's attempt to homogenize its population to represent only ethnic Turkish Muslims.

After detailing with an intimidating thoroughness the stages pursued by the various Turkish military units in eradicating and/or expelling the Armenian population, Akçam assiduously examines the justifications offered by some Turkish representatives to defend what happened – without acquiescing to the charge of genocide. According to this rationale "under certain conditions (state security) a government or state can resort to actions such as 'forcible deportation' even if they result in the deaths of its own citizens, and there are no moral or legal grounds upon which such actions can be faulted."

For obvious reasons Akçam cannot accept this rationalization and asserts that "*the Turkish government's refusal to face its recent past, and the difficulties in coming to terms with its own history, are very thought provoking and very troubling. The reaction of state and society suggest that they might again resort to similar actions, and this is a truly frightening prospect.*" (italics mine)

Arnold Ages is "Distinguished Emeritus Professor," University of Waterloo, Ontario Canada. ★

encouraging the creation of wordless melodies thus putting the horse before the cart. Words will only be remembered or reinforced if supported by a meaningful melody. These melodic inventions did not spring up out of thin air; someone had to create them. Thus we find melodies by Rabbi so-and-so, and so on.

While I have nothing but praise for the layout of the book, the inclusion of translations, transliterations as well as sources for the texts, a major fault is the omission of the printed music that underlies each text and that makes each meaningful as well as memorable. Yes, I will admit the fact that I am a composer lies at the root of these remarks! I try to tell it "Like" it is.

Dr. Gold is a composer/conductor as well as arts reviewer and can be reached at: drmortongold@yahoo.com. ★



Book Review

REVIEWED BY RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN

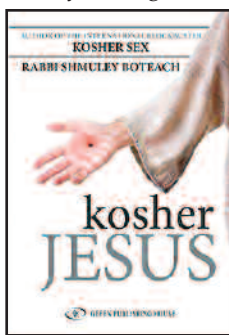
Mutual respect without compromising one's uniqueness

Kosher Jesus. By Rabbi Shmuley Boteach. Gefen Publishing House. 2012. 263 Pages. \$26.00.

Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, dubbed by *Newsweek* magazine as "the most famous rabbi" in America, has already distinguished himself through his 26 books that were translated into 18 languages, as well as his national visibility with his media programs. An Orthodox rabbi, Boteach, to his credit, does not shy from tackling sensitive and controversial subjects. With his previous book, *Kosher Sex*, he received wide acclaim. This unorthodox Orthodox rabbi seeks to apply traditional Judaism to our changing contemporary world in an engaging and relevant way.

In his latest book, *Kosher Jesus*, the author pursues the laudable goal of getting Christians and Jews closer to each other following a historical gap of estrangement and enmity, in face of the giant strides in recent decades toward rapprochement and healing. Boteach offers a well-written scholarly volume that is far from dry and is accessible to all, one that both honors and is critical of the two sides. It is bound to further the sacred cause of interfaith dialogue, leading toward mutual respect and growth without compromising one's uniqueness. This book is a resource suited for study by members of the respective faith groups and hopefully also in mixed settings.

It is no wonder that the author chooses to focus on Jesus, the central and divine symbol of Christianity, who for two millennia was an enigmatic figure for the Jews, representing a Church bent on converting them by force if necessary. Relying upon Jewish and Christian sources, Boteach relays that Jesus' Jewishness as a rabbi and devoted son of his people Israel is beyond doubt. He was a courageous patriot who, like his Jewish contemporaries, sought to rid his occupied



Book Review

REVIEWED BY BATYA MEDAD

Cancer Chronicle

I was amazed at how quickly I read *Soul to Soul* by Deborah Masel. Actually, I'm even more amazed that I had managed to read it to the end. There are certain types of books I just don't have the *kishkes* to get through. Okay. Call me weak, chicken, whatever you think appropriate. A few years ago, I bought a book a friend had written about her son who had been killed in battle. I just couldn't get through it. It was well-written, but the problem was within me. I couldn't deal with the subject of a mother writing about her dead son. I can handle those conversations in person, but not that story in a book.

Soul to Soul was written while the author knew that she had incurable cancer. She chronicles her story. Masel's written words are so strong, so compelling that I have no doubt that she was an amazingly charismatic person. Yes, as I had mentioned earlier, on me-ander, she very much reminds me of Coffee and Chemo's Rivka, who also died of cancer.



homeland of the physical and spiritual menacing presence of the Roman legions whose ruthlessness meant to impose tight control. Pontius Pilate's outlandish brute conduct prompted his extraordinary recall summons by Emperor Tiberius in 36 C.E. "He cared little about due process or justice. He was a tyrant who represented the deadly authoritarianism from which the Jews sought relief. The truth is that Pilate was nothing less than the Hitler of his time..." (p. 82).

Thus, concludes Boteach, the sole responsibility for Jesus' trial and death falls on the Romans and Pilate who regarded Jesus as a dangerous rebel. Execution by excruciatingly painful crucifixion was reserved to political prisoners and Jesus was deemed to be one. If fellow rabbis wanted to hurt Jesus, they could have done it earlier by turning him over to King Herod. The charge of deicide (the killing of God), leveled against the Jews by the

(see Zoberman, page 14)

In real life, I'm the type who can't "say goodbye" to a dying friend. At least so far I've failed to do it. A couple of years ago, when a friend was dying, word went out that she wanted visitors. I did visit, but I could barely speak. Words failed me. We looked in each other's eyes and it seemed that we were communicating. Yes, she spoke to others, but our communication avoided voicing the crucial issue... that it was most possibly the last time we'd meet in *Olam HaZeh*, This World.

Deborah Masel writes with such honesty, she blew my usual phobias away, at least when it came to facing cancer on the written page.

Today, with all the modern testing, all sorts of cancers are discovered on people which in the past must have had remained hidden. Statistically, it seems there's hardly anyone who will escape at least some sort of cancer. Breast cancer alone is now diagnosed in 12% of women. Of course, most women survive it, but that still means that more than one in ten women will have some sort of surgery and/or treatment for breast cancer. That's an amazingly high number, and that isn't the only cancer any of us can get.

Rivka was very upfront and honest about her treatments, symptoms and worries. Masel is the same in her book. It seemed like once women discussed varicose veins, wrinkles and graying hair. Now they discuss chemo, radiation and breast prosthesis. Some women I know have also chosen not to wear them, explaining that the discomfort outweighs the aesthetic advantage. I've seen this also with friends who have been treated for cancer.

Deborah Masel was a teacher, a teacher of Jewish subjects. She had many followers which doesn't surprise me. She found great comfort in her Judaism and Jewish studies. She had a loving family, many friends and followers. May G-d give good health, strength and a multitude of blessings to Masel's family and loved ones. *HaMakom yenachem*, may G-d comfort them. *Soul to Soul* is an amazing book. I definitely recommend it.

Batya Medad is a veteran American olah, immigrant in Israel. She and her husband made aliyah in 1970 and have been in Shiloh since 1981. She's a wife, mother, grandmother, EFL Teacher, writer and photographer. Besides her articles and photographs we've been featuring in this publication for a number of years, Batya is very involved in the international cyber community as a Jewish blogger. She has two active blogs, <http://shilohmusings.blogspot.com> and <http://me-ander.blogspot.com>, besides having established the Kosher Cooking Carnival; details on me-ander. You can contact her at shilohmuse@yahoo.com. ★

Book Reviews

REVIEWED BY MORTON I. TEICHER

Prohibition and tribulation of Jewish immigrants

Jews and Booze. By Marni Davis. New York: New York University Press, 2012. 261 Pages. \$32.

New Yorker Marni Davis moved to Atlanta, Ga., to work for her doctorate in American Jewish history at Emory University. Her dissertation is the basis for this book. She is now on the faculty of Georgia State University.

The amusing title of Davis's book does not reflect its serious and scholarly approach. Nor does the similarity of the title to *Alcohol and the Jews* by Charles R. Snyder, based on a 1950s study in New Haven, indicate any connection between the two books. Surprisingly, Davis makes no mention of Snyder's finding that the rate of alcoholism among Jews increases steadily along the continuum from Orthodox to Conservative to Reform to Secular. Although Davis is interested in history and Snyder was interested in psychology, she might have mentioned his pioneering work as a different approach to a similar topic.

Davis begins with a focus on Jewish immigrants to the United States in the late 19th century and their strife over alcohol with well-established, native Protestant Americans. At a time when the movement to ban the manufacture and sale of liquor was gaining momentum in the United States, a number of Jews were involved in manufacturing and selling alcohol. The conflict between Jews and advocates of prohibition was inflamed by anti-Semitism and reflected in the name of a leading organization working for prohibition – the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Another powerful supporter of the ban on alcohol was Henry Ford who was then a notorious anti-Semite. Opponents of immigration also lined up against Jews and joined with the advocates of prohibition.

From 1920 to 1933, when the 18th Amendment to the Constitution was in force, some Jews evaded the prohibition on alcohol and worked for its repeal, finally achieved in 1933. The 13 years of prohibition were trying times in America

with gangsters, including Jews, circumventing the ban on alcohol. Advocates of prohibition intensified their anti-Semitic attitudes as they attributed to Jews responsibility for the manufacture and sale of alcohol. Davis infers that the politics of prohibition went far beyond issues related to the consumption of alcohol.

The book includes an interesting discussion of the attitudes of Jewish leaders to prohibition. Louis Marshall of the American Jewish Committee, along with jurists Felix Frankfurter and Louis Brandeis, was unenthusiastic about the Eighteenth Amendment, but argued for its enforcement and for everyone to follow it. Rabbi Stephen Wise was a vigorous supporter of prohibition but his friend, Lillian Ward of the Lower East Side's Henry Street Settlement, had what Davis calls an "inconsistent" attitude. The Jewish governors of Idaho and Utah supported prohibition. Davis speculates that these pro-prohibition attitudes may have been designed to combat the hatred towards immigrants who were largely opposed to prohibition and who were visibly engaged in the alcohol trade. The demise of prohibition in 1933 brought relief to the Jewish leaders.

Davis concludes that the variable attitudes of American Jews to prohibition contributed to "the challenges Jews faced in the process of becoming American." Also, she has demonstrated that the politics of prohibition went beyond the use of alcohol. While focusing on one aspect of American Jewish history, Davis has succeeded in depicting the trials and tribulations of many Jewish immigrants as they adapted to life in the United States.

Story of Satmar Hasids

I Am Forbidden. By Anouk Markovits. New York: Hogarth, Crown Publishing Group, 2012, 306 Pages. \$25.

This remarkable novel tells the story of some members of the isolated Satmar Hasidic group, beginning in Transylvania in 1939, continuing in Paris, and moving to present-day Williamsburg in Brooklyn. It includes actual people such as the Satmar rebbe, Joel Teitelbaum, and it makes reference to a factual controversial issue, the Kastner train.

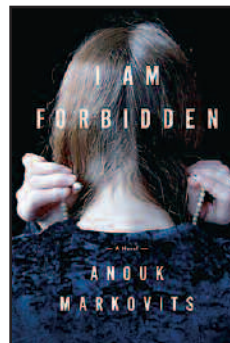
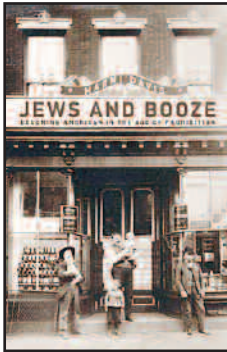
Josef was only five years old when his family was viciously killed by the

Romanian Iron Guard. When he was ten, after being saved and raised by a non-Jewish maid, he rescued Mila Heller, a five-year old girl whose parents died after trying unsuccessfully to board the Kastner train. It was named for Rudolf Kastner who struck a bargain with Adolf Eichmann to free a number of Jews in exchange for cash, gold, and diamonds. More than 1,600 Hungarian Jews, including the Satmar rebbe and his entire court, were on the train that eventually took them to Switzerland. After the war, Kastner settled in Israel where his action to save some Jews, while keeping silent about the transport of most Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz, was severely condemned, leading to his assassination.

With Josef's help, Mila is placed in the home of Zalman Stern, a brilliant student of the Satmar rebbe, where she becomes a "sister" to Atara Stern who is the same age as Mila. When the war ends, Zalman arranges for Josef to go to the new Satmar community in America. The Stern family, including Mila, settles in Paris and, eventually, Zalman sends Mila to America to marry Josef in Williamsburg. By this time, the close relationship between Mila and her "sister," Atara, has deteriorated as Mila became intensely observant while Atara began to abandon her religiosity. The story now takes a melodramatic turn as Mila is unable to become pregnant after ten years of marriage to Josef. Her solution to the problem creates many more difficulties as she struggles to remain an ultra-religious Jew. The contrast with Atara is highlighted, providing a sharp differentiation between modernity and fundamentalism.

Author Anouk Markovits writes out of personal experience. She was born in Israel but raised in France in a Satmar Hasidic family, one of two such families in her town. At the age of 19, she left home in order to avoid an arranged marriage. She came to the United States where she earned a bachelor's degree at Columbia, a master's in architecture from Harvard, and a doctorate in Romance studies at Cornell. Her first novel was written in French and has not yet been translated. *I Am Forbidden* is her second novel and the first in English. She is clearly a skilled author with a fine style and we look forward to seeing her future work.

Dr. Morton I. Teicher is the Founding Dean, Wurzweiler School of Social Work, Yeshiva University and Dean Emeritus, School of Social Work, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. ★





My Kosher Kitchen

BY SYBIL KAPLAN

All from summer fruit

Whether I am in Indiana or Kansas or Jerusalem, summer fruit is really coming into the markets at full force. I won't make my readers jealous when I tell you how inexpensive the fruits are in the *Machaneh Yehudah* produce market where I lead my weekly walks. Cherries (regular and Rainier), apricots, and peaches are beautiful and of course our local loquats are plentiful – including the packed full tree outside my office window whose fruit I cannot reach! Here are some recipes to try this summer.

Fruit Sorbet (4 cups)

6 cups berries or cut-up fruit
2/3 to 1-2/3 cups syrup
2 Tbsp. lemon juice
Syrup:
1-1/2 cups sugar or sugar substitute
1 cup water

Place sugar or sugar substitute and water in a saucepan. Boil 30 seconds. Transfer to bowl, cool then chill. Puree fruit, distributing 2/3 cup syrup with batches as you puree. Place in a bowl. Add lemon juice and additional syrup to taste. Transfer to freezer container and freeze.

Spiced Fruit

6 peaches, nectarines, pears,
or combination of fruits
1/2 cup red wine
2 Tbsp. sugar or sugar substitute
dash cloves
1/8 tsp. cinnamon
dash cardamom
3/4 tsp. grated orange peel

Combine spices, wine and sugar or sugar substitute in a large saucepan. Add fruit and cook 15–20 minutes. Pour into a bowl and chill.

My Favorite Year-round Clafouti (6–8 servings)

I make this dessert all winter with winter fruits like apples, bananas and pears and all summer with strawberries, cherries, nectarines, peaches and plums.

1 cup non-dairy creamer
1/3 cup sugar or sugar substitute
4 large eggs

ZOBERMAN

(continued from page 12)

Church, held them collectively responsible for all time for Jesus' death and caused them much suffering for so long. It took a Holocaust for the Church to reconsider, along with the enlightened leadership of Pope John XXIII during the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s to remove the deadly decide charge. The Polish Pope John Paul II, who fought the Nazis, took further historical steps of reaching in love and appreciation to the Jewish people. He was the first Pope to visit a synagogue, recognizing the State of Israel in 1994.

My own synagogue of Beth Chaverim was the only one to meet from 1985–1995 in a Catholic facility, the most gracious Church of the Ascension in Virginia Beach.

It is the author's assessment that the Gospels do not reflect the political Jesus but the spiritual one in order not to upset the Roman authorities. In the process, the Church began distancing itself from its very Jewish roots toward Roman acceptance of the nascent Church. Colorfully stated, "In the formative years of Christianity the Church fathers went to great lengths to rip fetal Christianity away from the Jewish womb in which it had been nourished. After they had done so, they transplanted it into a Roman surrogate." (p.126)

Boteach, admiring Jesus the rabbi and political activist, urges his fellow Jews to reclaim Jesus (Making him *Kosher*, "fit") as a great son though not divine, while imploring Christians to reclaim Jesus in his Jewish humaneness. The author most ably builds a common bridge of harmonious new beginnings. Let us walk it together.

Dr. Israel Zoberman is the founding rabbi of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach. He grew up in Haifa, Israel. ★



1 Tbsp. vanilla
1/2 cup flour
2–3 cups cut-up fruit

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a baking dish. Place non-dairy creamer, sugar or sugar substitute, eggs, vanilla and flour in a blender and blend until smooth.

Place fruit in baking dish. Pour batter on top. Bake in pre-heated oven 30–40 minutes.

Clafouti has a tendency to come out of the oven puffed up and to sink when removed from oven but it still tastes great. Serve warm at room temperature. Add whipped cream on top.

Sybil Kaplan is a journalist, food and feature writer, and author of nine kosher cookbooks. She leads "Shuk Walks" in Jerusalem produce market, Machaneh Yehudah. ★

VICTOR CENTER

(continued from page 9)

and each passes down the gene mutation to the child.

According to Adele Schneider, MD, Medical Director of the Victor Center, "Every hereditary trait in a child – from eye color to height – is influenced by the genes that are passed from parent to child. The altered genes that cause Jewish genetic diseases are recessive, meaning that if a child receives the gene mutation from just one parent, he or she will be a carrier, just like the parent – but receiving the mutated gene for the same disease from both parents means the child will be born with the disease," explains Dr. Schneider. "If both parents are carriers, there is a 25 percent chance with each pregnancy for this to occur."

Anyone with one Jewish grandparent, should be screened. These Jewish genes are being passed along to non-Jewish populations as well including the Irish, Cajun and French Canadian populations. A simple blood test is all that is necessary for screening for the entire Jewish genetic disease panel. Ideally, individuals should be screened prior to pregnancy, in order to determine whether both parents are carriers of a mutation in same gene. If that is the case, Victor Center's genetic counselors are able to discuss the reproductive options that are available to the couple to maximize the chance of having a child without that Jewish genetic disease. Interfaith couples also need to be tested with the Jewish partner being tested first.

The Victor Center is working with insurance companies and laboratories to make the cost of screening more affordable.

Additional information on the Victor Center and its services is available at: www.victorcenters.org, or by calling: 877-401-1093 or emailing: info@victorcenters.org. For further information on Jewish genetic diseases and how they can be prevented, individuals can also visit: www.jewishgeneticanswers.org. ★



KAPLAN/ISRAEL

(continued from page 16)

After the wedding date is set – in Israel

When we attended our first Israeli wedding, we understood that many traditional ideas and customs about weddings are very different in Israel than what we were used to. The same is true for brides.

Jerusalem-born Orli Zedek grew up with her mother having a beauty salon and being a dressmaker. "From the age of



Orli Zedek with favorite gown.

four, I slept under wedding gowns, and I wasn't allowed to touch them!" exclaims the 37-year-old mother of four, sitting in her own bridal shop in Jerusalem.

The fantasy remained and after she completed the army and was ready to get married, she made her own wedding gown. When she was 28, her father died and she realized, "I was already grown up. I decided to take my profession and start a career."

First she started to do hairdressing as a main profession. Then brides came and asked her to do their hair and makeup for their weddings, although they were buying their wedding dresses elsewhere.

Eight years ago, Orli started to design wedding dresses on order from her house. "Suddenly I realized I enjoyed this very much. My husband bought me a sewing machine, and I enrolled at Shenkar College of Engineering Design and Art where fashion design is taught."

After a semester, she realized she had more experience than the other students, and she left. Living in a Jewish community in Judea/Samaria, brides found it hard to get to Orli, so two years ago May, she opened her own shop. Brides come to Orli because she sees the whole concept and she has different taste and different styles. The real competition is from Tel Aviv because brides often don't know as many as 30 such bridal shops exist in Jerusalem.

Approximately 40% of Orli's clients are secular; 30% are religious; and 30% are Arab.

A "package" includes gown, hair, nails and makeup and ranges from 6000-12,000 NIS (\$1,595-\$3,191); prices differ whether it is a used, readymade or new gown; whether it is a simple or complicated design; and the type of material used.

For the entire package, a client usually comes to Orli three months before the wedding where she tries to determine what style gown the bride wants and she takes her measurements. If the bride wants an original design, Orli starts to make sketches.

From start to finish, the bride may come between two and six times; in between Orli does potential styling of her hair and makeup. On the wedding day, the bride is welcomed with music and some food. First her nails are done, then she is served

breakfast. Hair styling is next and can take one to three hours. This is followed by makeup.

When the bride gets dressed, a photographer comes, then the groom comes. They then go by car to wherever they want more photos taken before returning to the shop for makeup and hair touch up. They then drive to the place where the wedding will be held.

Orli has designed six collections since 2005; she gets her ideas – "from emotions. Every collection has a different influence from a different source," she says.

Her first collection was the "childhood" collection and the gowns were based on fairy tales like Cinderella and Snow White. Another collection was based on sexy women of the 30s and 40s from cinema.

Walking into a dressing room where a rack holds a large collection of ready-made gowns, Orli says, "Every gown is my pride for the moment. Every time I make a dress, I fall in love with it!"

Orli Zedek is located at 51 Derech Hebron in Jerusalem, 02 650 6512 and has a web site – agass.mitchatnim.co.il.

Sybil Kaplan is a journalist who writes features on a wide variety of subjects in Israel. ★

GERTEL

(continued from page 10)

consider overstated concerns of the American Jewish community.

The Muslim leader wants Eli Gold, the quintessential Jewish political strategist, for "crisis management." Eli predictably asks, "Are you hiring me because I'm good or because I'm Jewish." Just as predictably, the commodities trader responds with another question, "Can't it be both?"

Even more predictably, Michael (Peter Jacobson), a Jewish friend of Eli's (if the conniving and contentious and acerbic Jews on this show can have friends), the head of some Jewish organization who is also a novelist, barges into Eli's law firm office to accuse him of running a "Pro-Palestinian campaign." Michael points out that the American media never give Israelis credit for the good things that they do.

Eli responds only by taking Michael to task for bringing the somewhat more lucrative "Jewish campaign" to his competitor. Michael sighs, "Four thousand years and we are always our own worst enemies." Is this true of the writers of this episode? Are they analyzing what they regard as Jewish obsessions, or embodying them here? What is the goal of their characterizations?

In the end, Eli pulls the plug on the Muslim campaign. He has been trying to get the Jews to worry enough about the possible success of the Muslim campaign

to offer him the Jewish one. It seems that Eli has been cynical all along about comparing the "Arab Spring" to the American Revolution. ("Arab Spring," Eli says. "It's like Irish Spring, but with Arabs.") Yet Eli gets the "Jewish League" to bring their money his way, and insists, to boot, that they assume the costs he spent on the Arab campaign. "Now I'm your son of a bitch," he boasts.

The impression left is that Eli is most moved by money and by playing the power broker. He is patently two faced, even in his "mediations" between the good wife and her estranged husband, who has been one of Eli's main clients. The Muslim community leader comes across as genuinely concerned about the killing in the Middle East. Eli does not.

The writers do take enough rest from their obsession with Eli to resolve the murder and thus bring closure to the requisite trial sequences. Which of Jimal's roommates is the killer? Is it the more religious roommate who prays five times a day and rails against Zionism? Or is it the more secular roommate of Middle East origin?

The writers choose the latter. They decide that a Jewish college student was not the victim of anti-Semitic hatred but of the passionate anger of a homosexual lover. In order to disguise a crime of passion as a hate crime, the Muslim lover drew a swastika, but – the writers tell us – a backwards one, because the killer did not really know how to be anti-Semitic. Do they really want to say that Muslim students are so uneducated in the Holocaust and so ignorant of history? Or do they envision a world in which anti-Semitism would be unnecessary?

I dare say that, embedded in the writers' expose of the secular roommate, there is a secular vision – namely, that the world would be more rational or manageable if people killed one another over matters of homosexual or heterosexual love. The writers imply that once religious strictures are removed, the possibilities of coupling would be unlimited, though passions unbridled might occasionally prove violent. But, in good New Age fashion, they suggest that people might be able to control their passions better, in the long run, without the violence that comes from religion and ethnicity. It is a messianic vision that only an Epicurean could love.

Rabbi Gertel has been spiritual leader of Conservative Congregation Rodfei Zedek in Chicago since 1988. He is the author of two books, What Jews Know About Salvation and Over the Top Judaism: Precedents and Trends in the Depiction of Jewish Beliefs and Observances in Film and Television. He has been media critic for The National Jewish Post & Opinion since 1979. ★



Seen on the Israel Scene

BY SYBIL KAPLAN

The Jewish Post & Opinion

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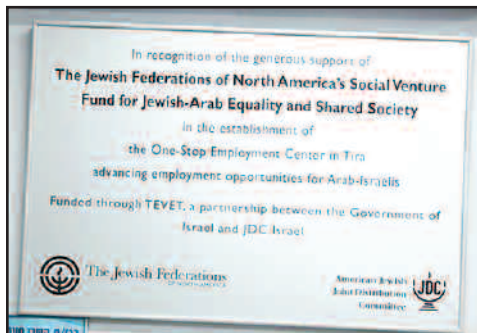
Israel develops the Arab sector

In 2007, Israel established the Authority for the Economic Development of the Arab, Druze* and Circassian** sectors, within the Prime Minister's Office, to maximize the economic potential of these populations, increase economic development and improve and strengthen economic engines, accelerate innovation and business communities, and integrate the minority populations into the national economic expansion.

Today, 20.6% of the Israeli population is Arabs. In an effort to inform the press about the work of the Authority, the Government Press Office organized a tour to two of the Arab towns on which the economic plan is focused.

Tira

Tira is in the center of Israel, north of the Jewish city of Kfar Saba, both of which are on the Israel side of the "Green line," the area between Israel and the areas liberated during the Six-Day War. Tira is a community of 22,000 Sunni Muslim Arab citizens of Israel. At the brand-new Career Guidance Center, proudly displayed is a plaque attributing the building to the Joint Distribution Center Israel and the Jewish Federations of North America Social Venture Fund for Jewish-Arab Equality and Shared Society.



Tira Career Guidance Center plaque.

Ibrahim Habib, Director of the Authority of Regional Development, provides background information; Tira Mayor Mamoun Abd Alhaim esq. adds comments; and Nibras Taha, Career guidance Center Director conducts a tour of the center.

Thirteen minority cities are being funded 778 million shekels (\$203 million) for employment and continuing

education programs, infrastructure, security, transportation and housing.

This pilot project employment center, with a staff of six, is the first of its kind in Israel. It opened a few months ago and already has 130 participants listed. The center is able to offer courses in Hebrew, computer basics, empowerment, and building CVs; they are also checking businesses to see whether they can make business plans or create positions for the participants.

Kfar Qassem

Kfar Qassem is next to the Jewish city of Rosh Haayin and is a city (so declared in 2008) with a population of 21,000 (of which 5,000 are immigrants, most Bedouin). The city spokesman gave a short bus tour of the city before stopping at the three-and-a-half-year old community center for a talk by Mayor Nadir Sarsur.

Later, Yosef Marcom, advisor to Kfar Qassem, explained the progress of Kfar Qassem's industrial area, opened two years ago, on a north-south and east-west highway hub. There are approximately 400 employees (half Jewish, half Arab) offices, and 15-20 commercial businesses in seven buildings. Among the Nationally known businesses are Fed Ex, SuperPharm, Orian (a Fed Ex competitor), and Rami Levi (a discount super market chain). The ground floors of the buildings are retail stores or outlets (a number of these Arab owned); the second floors are offices; and the back parts are the logistic areas.

Next year double the amount of buildings will be built with businesses which give employment priority to people of Kfar Qassem; a large mall is also planned nearby. Financing is primarily government with some private funding.

*Druze split from a sect of Islam in the 11th century and have a monotheistic secretive religion.

**Circassians are Sunni Muslims with their own language and culture who came to Israel from the Balkans in 1880.



Kfar Qassem Industrial Area, Arab-owned stores. Photos by Barry A. Kaplan/Jerusalem.

Both Druze and Circassian men serve in the Israel defense Forces.

(see Kaplan/Israel, page 14)



May 30, 2012 – Rabbi Israel Zoberman (JPO columnist) with Leslie Meyers of the Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity at the White House reception in honor of Jewish American Heritage Month. When Rabbi Zoberman shook hands with President Obama, he told him, "Please save innocent lives in Syria, Mr. President."