

# The Jewish Post & Opinion • National Edition

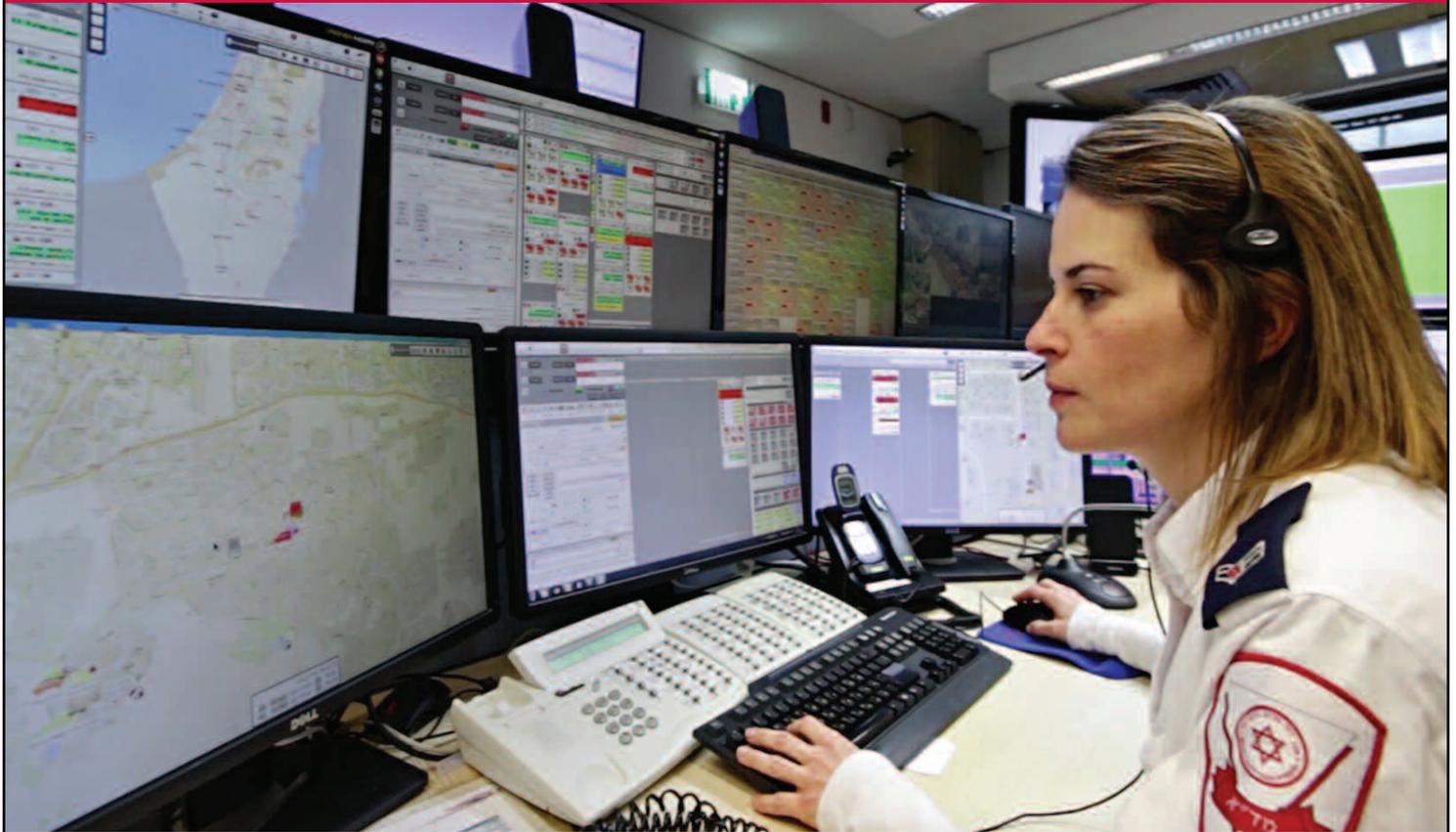
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# Editorial

What a treat to experience the talent of the band, Nefesh Mountain! (see photo p. 19.) They performed before *Selichot* services at Beth-El Zedeck in Indianapolis, Ind. on Sept. 16th. The musicians, Eric Lindberg and Doni Zasloff, a newlywed duo, have developed a special style of Jewish music. It has some similarities to Klezmer but instead of an Eastern European influence it combines Jewish lyrics (Hebrew, English and Yiddish) with American Bluegrass.

Lindberg and Zasloff are among a recent group of musicians blending their Jewish identities with their connection to traditional roots music like folk, country and bluegrass. For this evening, these two songwriters both sang, and he played the banjo and guitar. Their sweet-sounding, rhythmic melodies made this concert especially memorable as did the discussion in between the songs on “forgiveness” and other themes of the High Holiday season.

I sat next to a woman and her husband who traveled from Cincinnati to see them. This might not seem unusual but her husband is a rabbi. Even if he doesn’t have his own pulpit, who goes out of town for *Selichot* services if they are not visiting family? She told me just three days prior she had read about the group in *Hadassah Magazine*. This led her to the Nefesh Mountain website ([nefeshmountain.com](http://nefeshmountain.com)), and to listen to their music on YouTube. In their touring schedule, she saw they would be in Indianapolis, and she didn’t want to miss them.

In the September/October *Hadassah* article by Ruth Ellen Gruber, titled “Jews and Bluegrass”, it says some performers and critics dub the fusion of these two genres “Jewgrass” and another musician, Henry Sapoznik who plays the banjo and combines the two has a new album titled “Banjew”.

Three years ago before *Selichot* at Beth-El Zedeck, singer/songwriter Michael Hunter Ochs ([ochsongs.com](http://ochsongs.com)) gave a concert which included songs pertaining to this time of year about *chesbon hanefesh* (self-reflection), so we might make amends for our errors and improve in the coming year. During his performance he preceded each song with an interesting story of how he came to write it, but he also explained why music is so helpful in bridging the gap between people with differences.

“Music has a way of reaching and moving the heart before the mind realizes what’s happening. The right song, when sung from the heart, can enable us to feel compassion for someone we might even

# About the Cover

*Hanukkah, Holiday of Light*  
By Naomi Teplow

*Limited Edition Giclee Print,*  
50 units,  
7-1/2" x 9-5/8"  
(available in bigger sizes)



*Hanukka? Chanuka?* N. Teplow  
*Hanukkah?* Spell it as you may, it’s the holiday of light, warmth, songs, and good things cooked in oil in the midst of the dark, cold, wet winter. In my family, each *Chanuka* night, we turn off the electricity and fill the darkness with many candle lights. We sing songs with guitar and flute, and eat our home-made *sufganiyot* (donuts) along with spicy hot cider.

I borrowed this image of the *menorah* from a beautiful, old European manuscript, (the Cervera Bible, Spain, 1300 CE), added two lights to make it into a *Chanukiya*, changed the colors to fit the holiday of warmth and light, and included the miraculous jug and the *sevivon* (dreidle).

The Hebrew on the border says:  
(see Cover, page 19)



fear – and gives us the chance to uncover our common humanity. Once we are joined by the spirit of compassion, it becomes so much easier to talk about the tough issues on which we disagree.”

Six year ago when The Yuval Ron Ensemble was in Indianapolis for International Peace Day on Sept. 21, 2011, I wrote: “Yuval Ron commented that some people think that the way to diminish darkness is with more darkness. He believes the way to diminish the darkness is with light and that is what his group does with their music. They travel around infusing light by highlighting the commonalities of the different religions and bringing them together for a joyful and uplifting experience.”

Music has also been beneficial for elderly people with memory disorders such as Alzheimer’s disease. Some, who have not responded to other treatments, will sing along and become more responsive after hearing familiar music, especially from their youth.

To read more about, “The Power of Music,” see the book excerpt for, *Happiness the Jewish Way: A Practical Guide to Happiness through the Lens of Jewish Wisdom* by Olga Gilburd on page 15. And for the upcoming holiday of Thanksgiving, see meaningful words on, “Cultivating Gratitude” from the book excerpt for *Wise Aging: Living with Joy, Resilience, & Spirit* by Rabbi Rachel Cowan and Dr. Linda Thal on page 14.

Gandhi said “Be the change you wish to

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The Jewish  
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see in the world.” Perhaps the best way to help bridge the gap during this divisive time in our world is by doing what we Jews do during the High Holiday season – self-examination. Then we will be on more solid ground to help make changes within our own family and close friends, and then  
(see Editorial, page 5)

# Chassidic Rabbi

BY RABBI BENZION COHEN

## Good news

Here is some good news. A few weeks ago Friday night I walked to *shul* with four grandsons (ages 5–10). At one point they decided to have a race to a nearby light pole. They ran off. I said to myself “That looks like fun!” Then they decided to race again. This time I joined them. The good news?

1. I have grandchildren, *baruch Hashem*.
2. They love their grandfather, *baruch Hashem*.
3. They walk to *shul* with him Friday night, *baruch Hashem*.
4. I can still run, *baruch Hashem*.
5. My 7 and 10 year old grandsons can really run fast, *baruch Hashem*.
6. I came in third, and not last, *baruch Hashem*

The moral of the story? “Serve the Lord with joy!” Life is like a cup that is half full. If you look at the half that is full, you can always be happy. If you look at the half that is empty, you can easily get depressed. I could have said “*Oy vey*, I am getting old! My 7 and 10 year old grandchildren outran me.”

We all need happiness. I consider myself very fortunate that I found it. Until the age of 18 I lived a rather secular life. I looked hard for a good time, for happiness, but could not find it. I tried, unsuccessfully, to be popular. I tried out for sports, but did not make the teams. (Now I realize that even those who were popular and successful at sports were not much happier than me.)

I finally found true happiness 44 years ago. I looked into Lubavitch and found there happy people. I decided to try it out. I started to learn *Torah* and do *mitzvahs*. As it says in Psalm 19: “The *Torah* of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul... The precepts of the Lord are just, rejoicing the heart. The *mitzvah* of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes.”

One *mitzvah* that brings me a lot of happiness is “Love thy neighbor”. When I am able to help someone, to cheer up someone, they feel better. And I also feel much better, that I was able to help them. Now I go five days a week to the geriatric ward of our local hospital to help these people to pray, to give them hope and cheer them up. Their happiness is my happiness. And nothing makes me happier than giving one of my children or grandchildren a big loving smile, and getting an even bigger smile back.

Every *mitzvah* that we do makes the world into a better place. This is another way that doing *mitzvahs* makes me happy. I know that I am making the world better for all of us.

# Let's teach our children not to hate



BY RABBIS  
DENNIS C. AND  
SANDY E. SASSO

It is with horror that we watched the news of the white supremacists and neo-Nazis rally in Charlottesville, Va. What struck us most about the marchers was their youth. This was not an old and shrinking population but a new and growing one. We asked ourselves, “How did they learn such hatred?”

It is said that no one is born hating. Recall the song from South Pacific: “You’ve got to be taught to hate and fear. You’ve got to be taught from year to year. It’s got to be drummed in your dear little ear. You’ve got to be carefully taught.”

Psychological research teaches us otherwise. Prejudice is not acquired from birth, but child development specialists’ report that by age 3, children have ideas about gender, race and people with special needs. To make sense of the world, children think in categories: girls, boys; black, white.... They divide people into good guys and bad guys. Children do not just naturally outgrow these ideas unless these intuitive ways of seeing the world are challenged.

So, it is respect, tolerance and love that need to be “carefully taught.” For too long we have assumed that if we take a color-blind approach to society, pretend not to notice differences, all will be well. But children are not color-blind. They notice that people have different shades of skin, types of hair, facial features. They observe that people celebrate different holidays, speak different languages, wear crosses, stars, hijabs and turbans. We have naively believed that if we didn’t point out these



It is now up to each of us to do more *mitzvahs* in order to complete the job of making the world better and thus bring our complete and final redemption. Then *Moshiach* will help us to make the world completely good and wipe out all evil.

Let us start by doing the *mitzvahs* of the festival of *Chanukah*. We wish all of our readers a happy holiday. We want *Moshiach* now!

**Rabbi Cohen** lives in K’far Chabad, Israel. He can be reached by email at [bzioncohen770@gmail.com](mailto:bzioncohen770@gmail.com). Reprinted from Nov. 6, 2013. ★

distinctions, our children wouldn’t notice them. But we have been wrong. Denial and avoidance don’t work.

When parents and educators focus on our commonalities only and don’t talk about what makes us distinct, children are left to surmise that difference is somehow bad, something adults are afraid to discuss. Without adult guidance, there is none to correct these misconceptions. We need to teach that it isn’t difference that is bad, but the belief that differences imply the superiority of some and the inferiority of others. We should teach children to not only accept, but to affirm and celebrate diversity. Children who learn the value of diversity are more likely to identify and reject prejudice and discrimination.

What can we do to help our toddlers grow up into less hateful tomorrows? We must acknowledge what our children ask and tell us about race and religion and talk openly with them about difference and diversity. We must help them discern stereotypes and correct oversimplification and false characterization. We must create opportunities for families to build friendships across diverse races, cultures and religions. We teach our children not only by what we say, but by what we do. Children are good observers of our behavior.

If we want our children to have hearts of kindness, it is not enough to for them to “save the whales” while ignoring another child in the classroom or playgroup. It is important to collect canned goods for the hungry and also to invite an unpopular classmate to the cafeteria lunch table. We teach our children to correct bad grammar. We must also give them the tools to correct gossip, hate speech and slander when they hear it.

The racists who marched in Charlottesville were wrong! Attempts to draw parity between the actions of those who hate and those who stand up to bigotry, especially when coming from the president, are morally reprehensible; a terrible lesson for our children.

Rather, let us teach our young about an America, which, in the words of President George Washington, “gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance.” As President Abraham Lincoln envisioned, let us renew the tasks of building a nation, “With malice toward none, with charity towards all,... that we might achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace....” How presidential!

**Sandy Sasso** is Senior Rabbi Emerita of Congregation Beth-El Zedeck and director of the Religion, Spirituality and the Arts Initiative at Butler University. **Dennis Sasso** has been Senior Rabbi at Congregation Beth-El Zedeck in Indianapolis for 40 years. Reprinted with permission from The Indianapolis Star Aug. 31, 2017. ★

# Constitution trumps judges' religious faith

BY RABBI SANDY SASSO



Charlottesville, hurricanes, Las Vegas... we can hardly catch our breath. Focused on catastrophe, we overlook other quieter, yet compelling concerns. One pressing issue is the appointment of federal judges.

Currently, 150 federal judgeships are vacant across the nation, all lifetime appointments. The future of our courts for a generation is at stake. Several of these vacancies affect Indiana federal courts. We need vigilance.

As citizens, we have a voice in the selection of these judges. The president nominates potential judges who are then reviewed by the Senate Judiciary Committee. If the Judiciary Committee approves the candidate, the nomination goes to the full Senate. A majority vote in favor of a nominee is required before confirmation. You can let your opinion be heard by contacting members of the Senate.

On Oct. 5, by a vote of 11 to 9, the Senate Judiciary Committee approved the nomination of Notre Dame Law School Professor Amy Coney Barrett to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. The Seventh Circuit's jurisdiction includes Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin. Although Barrett's personal character, legal credentials and education are impressive, she has no previous judicial service that suggests what type of judge she will be. During her Judiciary Committee hearing, serious concerns were raised about how her strong religious beliefs might affect her judicial decisions. This accounts, in part, for the close Judiciary Committee vote.

In a 2006 speech at Notre Dame Law School graduation, Barrett told graduates that their careers were a "means to... building the kingdom of God." She has questioned the role of precedent in deciding cases, calling into question other court rulings on civil rights, including LGBTQ and reproductive rights. She took issue with former Supreme Court Justice William Brennan's statement that there "isn't any obligation of our faith superior" to the oath to uphold the law. In a scholarly article, written when she was young, Barrett wrote that she does "not defend this position as the proper response of a Catholic judge with respect to abortion or the death penalty." She has not explained whether that continues to be her view.

We want judges to be people of character with deep moral sensibility. However, specific religious belief, whether Catholic, (see Sassos, page 6)

# Jewish Educator

BY AMY HIRSHBERG LEDERMAN



## Maintaining relevancy in a dot.com world

I have a habit of calling my dad on Friday afternoons. In my mind, it's my "pre-Shabbat" ritual of connecting with him but in truth, it's due to more practical reasons. Mom is at bridge and it's the *only* time he can get a word in edgewise.

The conversation is often about the week's concerns – the fax machine that won't work, the check he can't find that he is convinced mom threw in the garbage, the challenges and limitations of approaching his 99th year. Our "go-to" topic is often the stock market. Grateful for years of investment ideas and advice, I never mind talking about puts and calls. But in between option chains and sell prices, I am often treated to a pearl from dad's treasure chest of wisdom.

Growing up, I often felt the "heavy hand" of dad as he did his best to guide me into directions he believed were in my best interest. Conversations often felt like ultimatums as we navigated the adolescent years. Thankfully, as I matured, so did my ability to accept his well-meaning advice as an act of love, not control, and we became great friends as a result.

Over the years, I have noticed a huge shift in dad's approach to our family as he has morphed from Heavy Hammer to Velvet Glove. And one Friday afternoon, I asked him about it because I really wanted to know if he had made an intentional decision to become less assertive, less inclined to offer advice, less desirous of controlling the ultimate outcome regarding the choices that his family made.

His answer surprised me. At one year shy of 100 years of age, the man I have looked up to as larger than life since I was a little girl, confessed to feeling less certain that he had the answers or even that he remained *relevant* in our fast-paced, millennial-driven world.

And it occurred to me then, that if we are inclined to look back at our life in search of our own relevancy, we may come up short by today's standards. Our worth may not lay in our past, but rather, in the future, long-term impact we can have on the people, communities and environment we love and care about.

The idea that we can have an impact on the future is found in the final chapter of

## EDITORIAL

(continued from page 3)

in our cities and states and beyond. Music can be one potent catalyst to assist us in making the positive changes we wish to see in ourselves and in our world.

We wish our dear readers a Happy Thanksgiving and a Happy *Chanukah!*

Jennie Cohen, November 8, 2017 ✨



the Book of Genesis in *V'Yechi* – which means: "And he lived." Jacob is 147 years old, on his deathbed, and calls for his son Joseph to come to his bedside. Joseph brings his two sons, Ephraim and Menashe. Jacob blesses Joseph, then his grandsons, saying that the God he has believed in all his life, who guided his father, Isaac, and his grandfather, Abraham, will bless these two boys and from them will come "teeming multitudes" to fill the earth.

After blessing his grandsons, Jacob calls each of his other 11 sons to him, one at a time, blessing them and also cautioning and guiding them about their futures. Here lies the origins of the ethical will and the idea that we can have a profound impact on future generations by the actions we take up to the moment of death.

Perhaps the best way to measure our relevancy is to ask ourselves today how we can best impact the people and things we care about once we are no longer here. What steps can we take to provide for the communities and causes about which we are most passionate? What role can we play in solving long term problems? How can we leave the world knowing that our efforts will be sustained after we are gone? Can we inspire others to do the same?

Creating a meaningful legacy is not a difficult prospect but it takes time, reflections and intention. You need not have a big bank account or estate to do so. A simple gift of a percentage of a life insurance contract, retirement or other account can serve to fund your legacy plan. The Jewish community has multiple resources and a myriad of opportunities to establish meaningful and relevant giving that will preserve a future that you can feel a part of long after you are gone.

The future is a verb, not a noun. The steps we take during our lifetime to protect and sustain the values, causes and ideals we cherish can create an ethical relevancy that will live far beyond our lifetimes.

*Amy Hirshberg Lederman is an author, Jewish educator, public speaker and attorney who lives in Tucson. Her columns in the AJP have won awards from the American Jewish Press Association, the Arizona Newspapers Association and the Arizona Press Club for excellence in commentary. Visit her website at amyhirshberglederman.com. ✨*

# Spoonful of Humor



BY TED ROBERTS

## On Chanukah, daughters dream and fathers scheme

It was the second night of *Chanukah* and the house was full of her excited grandchildren, who shrieked and wailed and chattered like the construction crew that worked on the Tower of Babel. Was it totally random, the old lady wondered, or was there a script for this bedlam. I shouldn't be so cranky, she reasoned. But twelve kids – some exultant with their gifts, some complaining – could shatter the glass in the windows.

And such lavish *Chanukah* gifts. In my day, thought Bubbe, I'd be lucky to get a piece of fruit and a silver dime.

The gifts had been distributed, the latkes consumed, and both adults and kids had taken the ceremonial peck at her cheek. So, soon it would be time for the *Chanukah* finale, the traditional "then and now" seminar with Bubbe; an old family custom. The kids clustered around her.

"Tell us how it was when you were a girl, *Bubbe*," as though they believed she had ever been anything but a short, round lady who smiled more than she talked. A Jewish Queen Victoria with a decidedly unenglish accent who they were forced to call on the phone every weekend.

Last year she told them the story of her voyage in the filthy hold of the SS Wilhelm to the glittering new world of the Lower East side. The year before, she'd left them shocked and wide-eyed over the tale of her older brother's abduction by a band of drunk Cossacks. And every word was true and every word was a lesson.

Instruction. Wasn't that Bubbe's role, like smiling and offering the drooping cheek to pursed lips? These kids should know how it was back then. Beginnings are as useful as endings. Didn't she still have a sharp mental picture of her brother and their Polish village? Didn't her mouth remember endless meals of cabbage and potatoes? And who could forget her entire family stuffed in an East side tenement that only glittered when ice silvered both sides of the window pane?

"So tell us a story, Bubbe. C'mon, c'mon," they persisted.

"OK," she agreed, "but first a cup of tea and a slice of lemon and two Sweet 'n Lo's." Quickly they obeyed. She sat at the

dining room table; they crowded around, two of the little ones to a single chair.

"I'll tell you about my best friend, Dora. She was 16, like me. We had both been in America since we were six. So we considered ourselves Americans – not Greenhorns. We even had boyfriends, not boyfriends like you mean now, but, ya know, special friends. My best girlfriend Dora had a boy downstairs in the tenement who she watched out of the corner of her eye. You know how it is. You look at him. He turns shyly away. But you hope he looks back.

"Anyhow, Dora loved Jacob Plesovsky. He was 18 and already he was peddling ladies dresses around town. Like I say, he'd never taken her out. Who had money for that – but they had talked plenty. I think they had a plan.

"Daughters dream, but fathers scheme, as they say. One day her father waits 'til everybody's out of the room and he sits Dora down across the dining room table for a talk. And he tells her she's gonna have the best second night of *Chanukah* ever; because on the second candle of *Chanukah*, little Dora is going to be a married woman.

Dora is so fetumult, so mixed up to hear this, that for a minute she thinks her papa has gone to the Plesovskys and made a deal. How did he know about her plan, which she had only revealed to her best friend? Me. Then through a fog, as though her father is shouting from a passing ship, she hears the name Adam Grossman."

"Papa, Jacob Plesovsky, that's who I want. You got the wrong boy." But daughters dream and fathers scheme.

"Listen, says Papa, "This boy you'll love in a couple of years. He has a good job in the textile district and he's handsome. Grayish blue eyes and light brown, wavy hair. No moles, no blemishes. And as the Americans say, he is high-spirited. They'll never tie him to a tailor's bench. Now, that's that! Go help your mama with the supper dishes." Dora's futile tears mixed with the dirty dish water in the sink.

Bubbe paused to let the truth sink into youthful minds. "Yes, her father had selected her husband."

At first, silence. Then a chorus of revolt. "So what happened to your friend? And what about Jacob?"

"Well, they didn't die of a broken heart. I don't know what became of Jacob. I think he ended up working in a men's clothing store in the Bronx."

The children muttered rebelliously about slipping out of bedroom windows at midnight and running off to some renegade Rabbi for a quickie. "That's what we'd do now," said two of the smaller mutineers. "And what about Dora?"

"Dora – she did OK," said the Bubbe as

## SSASSO

(continued from page 5)

Jewish or Muslim, should have no bearing on judicial rulings. In private life, a judge has every right to live life in accordance with personal religious convictions. But on the bench, personal faith cannot overrule the Constitution or judicial precedent. The Constitution was designed to be religiously neutral. Religions differ on the morality of birth control, gay marriage, abortion, the death penalty and other issues. Deciding a case based on one's own religion's beliefs rather than the Constitution is an improper use of judicial power. The Founders would have been alarmed, and so must we.

The recent Alabama Republican Senate primary won by former Justice Roy Moore serves as a warning. Moore was twice removed from his position as chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court: in 2003 after refusing a higher court order to remove the Ten Commandments Monument from his court house, and in 2016 after attempting to block the Supreme Court's ruling legalizing same-sex marriage. He proclaimed the supremacy of his Christian faith over the Constitution and the Supreme Court in his role as an Alabama Supreme Court Justice. The same philosophy has been a fundamental premise of his political campaign.

I am a rabbi. My faith is one of many that make up America. Under our Constitution, no religion takes precedence over another. If the Senate confirms Barrett, it remains to be seen how she will separate religious faith from judicial duty. The issue is a valid consideration in her or any judicial appointment. Use your voice. Let the Senate hear what you think about judicial nominees. Remind them that our country is to be guided by the Constitution and not by particular religious doctrines. This is a matter of faith – faith in our Constitution.

See *Sandy Sasso's bio on bottom of page 4. Reprinted with permission from the Indianapolis Star, Oct. 17, 2017.* ✨



her eyes wandered over a room full of twelve vibrant, high-spirited kids. Many with gray-blue eyes and wavy, light brown hair.

On this second night of *Chanukah*, it was more apparent than ever to the old lady that daughters dream and fathers scheme. Next *Chanukah* she'd tell them how Adam Grossman had softly tiptoed into her heart.

*The humor of Ted, the Scribbler on the Roof, Roberts appears in newspapers around the US, on National Public Radio, and numerous websites. Check out his Website: [www.wonderwordworks.com](http://www.wonderwordworks.com). Blogsite: [www.scribblerontheroof.typepad.com](http://www.scribblerontheroof.typepad.com).*

(see Roberts, page 7)

# Shabbat Shalom

BY RABBI JON ADLAND



Oct. 27, 2017 – *Lech L'cha*  
Genesis 12:1–17:27 – 7 *Cheshvan* 5778

Our Jewish journey begins with *parashah Lech L'cha*. "God said to Abram, 'Go forth from your native land and from your father's house to the land that I will show you.'" Now, there are lots of reasons that Abram didn't hesitate to follow this God who called him. One of the most famous *Midrash*, so famous that many think this story is in the *Torah*, is the story of Abram smashing his father Terah's idols.

A very loose telling is that Terah takes a lunch break and tells Abram to watch the idol store while he is gone. Abram, the ever-inquisitive kid, has a lot of doubts about these statues of clay. He decides to test his theory (kids – do not try this at home with your parents' stuff) by smashing all the idols but the largest one in the center of the store.

When dad comes back to the store he asks Abram what happened. Abram tells him that the largest idol decided that he wanted all the power and smashed the other ones. Terah says that idols can't do this. Abram agrees with this assessment. He gets the call from God to go forth and puts his faith in this deity that he can't see and no one else can hear. Monotheism and Judaism begin their journey together.

Sometimes people characterize Judaism as a system of rules and laws. Yes, we are guided by a structure that has *Torah* and its 613 *mitzvot* (commandments) at its core. These *mitzvot*, along with the Oral Law, or the *Mishnah*, the commentary on the *Mishnah* – the *Gemara* (*Mishnah* and *Gemara* form the *Talmud*), codes, *Midrash*, commentaries, and responsa do give us our rules and laws, but Judaism began with an incredible moment of faith.

God tells Abram and Sarai to leave their home and their families, and travel to a place they haven't seen and possibly know little about. God tells them they will be blessed on this journey. They do this because God tells them to do it. Judaism may seem legalistic to those who don't know much about it, but for those who take the time to learn what it means to be a Jew our faith in God is a huge leap.

About a month ago, Rabbi Joshua Haberman passed away. He was one of my rabbis in Washington, DC. He presented an air of intellectualism when he gave a sermon. When he held up the *Torah* on *Shabbat* morning you felt as it was Moses

## ROBERTS

(continued from page 6)

His collected works *The Scribbler on The Roof* can be bought at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) or [lulu.com/content/127641](http://lulu.com/content/127641). This column was submitted eight years ago. ★



right then and there. He was the senior rabbi at my home congregation when I went through Confirmation. Rabbi Haberman wrote my letter of recommendation for Hebrew Union College.

The other two rabbis, Seaman and Weinberg, died a number of years ago, so Rabbi Haberman was my last rabbinic tie to the congregation where my Jewish journey began. I can't imagine that any of my religious school teachers are alive anymore. There was Mr. Gnatt and Mr. Burke (I hope I have spelled their last names correctly.) There was my first religious school teacher Mrs. Silverman who I kept in touch with periodically and wrote about in *Shabbat Shalom* when she died. I just remember how she so gently welcomed me into her classroom at Washington Hebrew Congregation on my very first day of school. I was in second grade. From that day until now I have never stopped learning on my Jewish journey.

On the first day of Confirmation, Rabbi Haberman asked us to write about our idea of God. I am sure that many students didn't take this too seriously, but I did. No one had ever asked us to do this before. No one really ever engaged us in a conversation about God. It isn't important what I wrote, but his response to me – if I ever had to nail down my becoming a rabbi – began my adult and rabbinic Jewish journey. He liked what I wrote. Wow! He liked what I thought about God. There wasn't any criticism or maybe think this way or that. He liked what I had to say.

To this day, through all of my Confirmation classes I have taught, I have asked my students to answer a similar question. The journey needs to begin somewhere and like Abram, it begins with a call from God. Thank you Rabbi Haberman. Thank you for caring what I thought about God. Thank you for helping me to become a rabbi. Your memory will always be a blessing to me.

When you light your *Shabbat* candles this week, light one for someone who inspired your journey – a rabbi, teacher, friend, partner – whomever. Light the other candle and may it guide you on your journey. *Lech L'cha* – go forth.

*Rabbi Jon Adland has been a Reform rabbi for more than 30 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](mailto:j.adland@gmail.com). ★*

# Wiener's Wisdom



BY RABBI IRWIN WIENER, D.D.

## Is the end near?

Recently the headlines in the newspapers and the media in general, talk about the destructive forces at play in the world. Each day we are exposed to the wonton disregard for human life. It seems that the world is on the brink of unknown consequences because of madness. It is so disheartening to watch, time after time, the indiscriminate destruction of values we hold dear.

Some turn to predictions to try to make sense of it all. These doomsday predictions occupy our time emanating from sources we have yet to fully understand. Names like Nostradamus take center stage when we are faced with such terrible difficulties.

The predictions of the end of time and the destruction of our planet seem to preoccupy our thoughts. We read about people climbing mountains waiting for the heavenly upheaval.

Some turn to Scripture as an expression of our faith to search for clues and answers to the most troubling issues facing us today. There are writings that offer consolation and hope. There are writings that seem to confirm that the end of time is near.

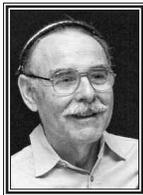
Yet, if we are to believe the message given to us by God in Genesis explaining that God will never destroy the world again, as was done in the great flood symbolized by the rainbow in the sky, then how can we explain the thoughts described in the depictions of the end of everything?

My understanding of Creation is that what we are experiencing is the evolution of the process begun with the "Word." "God said" is the declaration preceding the beginning of everything. This is followed by "And God saw that it was good." If God indicates that what was given is good, then why are we not convinced about goodness and instead concentrate on the evil that exists?

Perhaps the lesson is so simple it eludes us. Each of us is endowed with the ability to make choices. Of course, with these choices come consequences. If the choices we make enhance our lives then the consequences are deemed satisfactory. However, if the choices we make cause us pain, then for sure the consequences are unsatisfactory. Simple enough?

(see Wiener, page 8)

# Gather the People



BY RABBI MOSHE BEN ASHER, PH.D.

## My weaker side

I have often wondered why one half of my body is weaker than the other half. My left leg is weaker than my right leg. My left arm, wrist, and hand are weaker than my right. My left eye is weaker than my right. No doubt there are “scientific” explanations for this condition, but as far as I can determine they are all *speculative* – not based on solid research findings. One thing that does seem clear, however, is that this condition is common. That suggests it’s possibly not the result of an idiosyncratic cause, such as injury during birth. Could it be like an “inheritance” that is widely shared, given to us by God? But if so, how might we understand it?

If we regard human beings as God’s creations, not simply the random outcomes of mindless forces, we can appreciate that, in fact, there are no “mindless” forces in the Creation. A clearly identifiable set of *fixed* laws governs the action or behavior of every material thing in the universe, no matter how small or large. In other words, although the Creation is constantly changing in myriad ways, somehow the laws, by which all change occurs, themselves stopped changing and became fixed. How did that happen? What “force” stopped and fixed that part of the ever-changing Creation. Of course, there are those who say the laws are simply the outcomes of another random set of events, which might be believable if these specific “outcomes” – that is, fixed laws – didn’t turn out to govern every other facet of the Creation. Nothing occurs “mindlessly” in the Creation, including our physiological inheritance. All is “masterminded.”

Which brings me back to my inheritance of a weaker side and a stronger side – presumably somehow from God who stopped a part of the Creation and fixed the laws that govern all the other parts. What might be the purpose or meaning of this condition? I’m assuming, of course, that it is not simply a random, meaningless outcome of mindless forces.

Pondering the question, a vision came to me of Jacob in the night wrestling with an angel, and Rabbi Samson Rafael Hirsch’s commentary on that event. (*Bereshit* 32:25–29) Rabbi Hirsch describes the fight as a prototype that lasts throughout history. It’s the conflict between the purposes of empire, as evidenced by Roman conquest and domination, represented by Esav and

symbolized by the scepter and sword; and the godly principles and practices Jacob lived out in his own life and passed on to his posterity – righteousness, truth, and justice, freedom, peace, and kindness. Jacob, lamed and weakened, refused to give up the fight and admit defeat. He would only stop if his opponent would bless him – in effect, give Jacob assurance that what he stood for, although weakened, would continue and ultimately defeat Rome and dominate the nations.

I take it that, in giving me weaker and stronger sides, the Creator has implanted within me a reminder of the conflict between Jacob and the purposes of Rome. But what does it mean for me?

Certainly, I can make several interpretations. I believe that the “truth” of them, however, rests entirely on the extent to which they serve to help me mimic Jacob’s godly purposes. I now see that my strong side is a reminder of how I can use my strength to further evil in the world, which I have done, and my weak side is a reminder that even from a place of weakness I can further goodness, which at times I have not done. I have also learned that I can strengthen my weaker side to do good by “exercising” it, simply using it more to create goodness.

Withal, I’m reminded of the blessing we recite before the morning blessings: *Elohai, neshama shnatata bi, tehora hi* (My God, the soul you placed in me, it is pure). I have recently begun to recite this blessing slowly each morning after arising, savoring each part as I understand its meaning:

*Elohai* – My God: *Gaon Hakol*, Mastermind of all Creation Who created me as a human being, Who has given humankind a wondrous world with all we need to survive and succeed in joy and contentment with justice and compassion, and Who cares for our world by sustaining the moral infrastructure of *mitzvot*; *neshama shnatata bi* – the soul You placed in me: You breathed into me, as one of humankind, unlike all other creatures, the ability to know right and wrong and the free will to choose between them, and – in Your image – You have given me the power to bring that moral spiritual (non-material) goodness into existence in the material world; *tehora hi* – it is pure: I affirm that purity by recalling myself as a small child with an untarnished soul, before others betrayed me and, consequently, I began betraying others and poisoning my own happiness; but that essence of pure soul remains, nonetheless, and I can uncover it whenever I choose – and God sustains me by giving me the *Torah*’s blueprint for the Creation, which enables me to find my way.

Incidentally, I have also found it useful,

## WIENER

(continued from page 7)

We are faced with forces over which we have no control. These cause us to question the very fabric of our faith in God. Why would God allow such insanity to strangle us as we attempt to live up to God’s expectations? Are our expectations unrealistic? Do we tend to rely too much on miracles to save us? Have we not forgotten the most treasured attribute instilled in us – choice?

Civilization was, and is determined by values we learn and the understanding that without connection there is no future. We have the responsibility to form the significance required to ensure continuity and survival. Together we can, and will overcome the foolishness that seems to prevail in place of strength of purpose.

The end is near if we wish it to be. The end will never be if we put our efforts into the task of fulfilling God’s wish of peace and contentment. The Prophets of old taught us through their own experiences that it is not enough to wish, but rather to be willing to put each foot forward toward the destination of completion.

When we read about the turmoil that exists today, we should remember that each preceding generation had its hurdles and survived so that we are now able to learn the path to salvation from them. Each of us is a partner in this effort. The same stress of everyday life has been experienced before and will be part of our future as well. I prefer to rely on the message of hope given to us by a God hoping for us to choose to find peace and contentment.

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after saying the blessing for myself each morning, to repeat it in a slightly altered form, replacing “the soul You placed in me” with “the soul you placed in them” – that is, in all other human beings, so I remind myself to treat all others as “soulful” children of God, as I wish them to treat me.

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*Rabbi Moshe ben Asher and Magidah Khulda bat Sarah are the Co-Directors of Gather the People, a nonprofit organization that provides Internet-based resources for congregational community organizing and development (www.gatherthepeople.org). ☆*

# Kabbalah of the Month



BY MELINDA RIBNER

## Cheshvan – build an ark within

In the Jewish calendar, a new month begins at the time of the new moon. The Hebrew word for month is *chodesh* which also means “newness”. According to *Kabbalah*, each month offers new energies and offers new opportunities to realize one’s personal potentials. Just like there are various seasons and fluctuations in our weather, there are fluctuations in the spiritual energies available. Those who are attuned to these energies are very aware of such changes and know how to use this knowledge for their personal growth and success. Rather than promoting fatalism, this knowledge actually increases our capacity to make meaningful and effective choices for our highest good.

We welcomed the new month with *Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan* on the eve of Oct. 20th. In the preceding month of *Tishrei*, we spent more time celebrating holidays than any other time in the calendar year. *Tishrei* is the month when we open and fill ourselves with blessings for the entire year. In this month of *Cheshvan*, the month following *Tishrei*, we begin to translate into reality the visions we received in *Tishrei*. Now is the time when we focus on our intentions and get back to work. Now is the time to let go of what is not essential and purify ourselves so that we are really able to contain the new. During this month, it would be most helpful to incorporate new supportive spiritual and physical practices to support you in going forward.

This month of *Cheshvan* is also a time of cleansing and purification. It is no coincidence that the *Torah* portion Noah is read to welcome in the month of *Cheshvan*. As you recall the story, Noah was instructed to build an ark to safeguard life from the destruction of the flood. *Cheshvan* is the month when we must build an ark within ourselves to afford us safety and security for this month and the coming year. There may be floods in the forms of challenges in the course of one’s life and particularly during this month. Our internal ark will serve us through these intense times.

The Hebrew word for ark (*teva*) also means “word”. The arks we build in our lives are the positive words of love, prayer and blessing that we utter. Positive words provide a sanctuary for us and we need to

fortify ourselves with them during this month. We each need to make a conscious effort particularly this month to speak positively, to express words of love and blessing more than we might do otherwise. Positive affirmations of oneself are fundamental.

For this month, I am encouraging myself and others to reclaim the beauty of prayer and meditation. Meditation offers such precious moments to find yourself, to find God, to find the peace, the silence, the knowledge that is beyond the world, that is not dependent on what happens externally around you.

During this month of *Cheshvan*, it is helpful to know that it is natural to find ourselves letting go of what no longer serves the new spiritual order of blessing we opened to in the month of *Tishrei*. Loss is common this month. Just as the trees shed their leaves, we also shed parts of ourselves as we open to and reveal the new within us. Letting go of the old, letting go of what is not essential or is even detrimental may not be an easy one for many of us who are sentimental and want life to remain the same. What worked for us last year may not be relevant or even good for us this year. We need to contact the deeper resolve within us to go forward in our lives.

The month of *Cheshvan* corresponds to Scorpio. Pluto, the ruler of Scorpio, was known in mythology as the lord of hidden wealth. Many of the earth’s important resources such as iron, gold, silver, oil and mineral are hidden below the ground. To find these resources, we have to dig deeply, to get down in the dirt and mud and uncover and sort out the inner riches. Scorpio is associated with the scorpion, the eagle, and the phoenix, the mythological bird that rose from the ashes of destruction. The scorpion is dangerous. The eagle soars high and the phoenix renews itself from death.

In this month, we tap into these three expressions of the energy of the month. We dig deep inside ourselves. We sort out what is true from what is not. In the process, we may become aware of the negative workings within and around us symbolized by the scorpion. Awareness is the first step for transformation. With awareness, our consciousness can then soar upward to new heights and swoop down to new depths like an eagle. And most importantly, throughout the month, we must remember that what may be destroyed can take new inner and outer forms like the phoenix.

I have sent the message above out previously for the month of *Cheshvan*. I thought it appropriate to add something relevant to what is happening today. It is interesting that the “ME TOO” campaign came out after the Harvey Weinstein

scandal received attention during the week that we read about Noah and the flood. We can appreciate how widespread this problem is in our culture. What made the Hollywood scene so morally bankrupt was that most people knew what was going on and said nothing. Weinstein even had a sexual harassment protective clause for his actions in his contract. It is taught that the flood occurred because of sexual impropriety. It is also taught that sexual morality, sexual purity creates angels that protect a society.

It is not just beautiful Hollywood actresses who have been harassed, or exploited to advance their career. At some time in their lives, most women and even some men have experienced sexual harassment. Many women have been attacked, abducted and even raped. Unlike actresses who advanced their career, most women and men who have been victims of crimes or betrayals are left to pick up the pieces of their shattered lives alone. I hope these quotes from my book *The Secret Legacy of Biblical Women* are healing and helpful:

“When men are disconnected from God, they dominate and oppress women. Any man who is truly rooted in God honors and respects the wisdom of women. How a person treats a woman or women in general is a measuring stick of the Godliness of a person. ...When the sanctity of women is violated, the society is in danger of losing its divine blessing for sustenance and even survival”

“What wisdom can you offer women who have been oppressed by men?”

Miriam: “Women, please do not see yourself through the lens of weak and insecure men who are actually afraid or jealous of your womanly power. As a woman, you are so beautiful and so radiant. You are an embodiment of the *Shechinah*. Never forget that. No one can take that away from you. You must know this as your deepest truth. I strongly recommend that each woman join or form a group with other women who will reflect back to you the beauty and wisdom of who you are as a woman. Your strength lies in community with other women....”

*Melinda Ribner, L.C.S.W. is also the author of Everyday Kabbalah, Kabbalah Month by Month and New Age Judaism, and The Secret Legacy of Biblical Women: Revealing the Divine Feminine. Internationally known for her pioneering work in kabbalistic meditation and healing, she is also a spiritual psychotherapist and for more than 30 years has used kabbalistic wisdom as part of treatment. She offers a free newsletter on meditation, healing, kabbalistic energies of the months, holidays, and more. On the web at: [www.kabbalahoftheheart.com](http://www.kabbalahoftheheart.com) and e-mail at: [beitmiriam@msn.com](mailto:beitmiriam@msn.com). ✨*

# Holocaust Educator

BY DR. MIRIAM L. ZIMMERMAN



## Moral imperative to keep asking, “Why?”

Spouses of Holocaust educators are accustomed to schlepping to Holocaust programs and organizations throughout the year. This was to be my weekend, proclaimed my husband, Richard, in advance. Thus, I got to call the shots at my 50th college reunion at Northwestern University (NU) in Evanston, Ill. First stop? The Holocaust Educational Foundation (HEF), coincidentally located just across the street from the quad where I had lived during my senior year, 1966–67.

Assistant Director Alexandra “Alex” Israel courteously gave me her undivided attention and answered all my questions. Richard said he was comfortable reading his book in the hallway, sipping a fresh cup of coffee, thanks to Alex.



Alex at HEF.

Mauthausen survivor Theodore Zev Weiss, his wife Alice R. Weiss, and other Holocaust survivors founded HEF in 1976. Mr. Weiss was evacuated from Mauthausen in late April 1945 to one of its sub-camps, Gunskirchen. American forces liberated him on May 4, 1945.

I cannot think of Mauthausen without remembering George Heller, z”l, also a Mauthausen survivor, who yearly spoke to my Holocaust students at Notre Dame de Namur University (NDNU). His inspiring story about surviving two weeks without food and almost no water above the stone quarry at Mauthausen was like a TED talk, before TED talks became a cultural phenomenon. Students have told me that Mr. Heller’s story changed their lives.

HEF has as its mission to advance teaching and research about the Holocaust at the university level, according to Alex. It does so by various venues, including a biennial academic “Lessons and Legacies” Conference, an annual Theodore Zev Weiss Lecture, and a Summer Institute to help “teachers and graduate students gain a background in Holocaust studies in preparation for teaching courses on the Holocaust at their home institutions.” The Summer Institute consists of “intensive seminars on Holocaust studies and related topics, conducted by some of the field’s top experts,” according to the HEF website, and occurs on the Evanston campus and

at Royal Holloway, University of London.

Alex explained that HEF became part of Northwestern in July 2013. Last year, it moved from The Graduate School to NU’s Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences (undergraduate), a better fit. The next Lessons and Legacies Conference will be at Washington University in St. Louis, Nov. 1–4, 2018. The Call for Papers is now available. For the application and more information, consult the website: [www.hef.northwestern.edu/lessons-and-legacies-conference/lessons-and-legacies-2016/](http://www.hef.northwestern.edu/lessons-and-legacies-conference/lessons-and-legacies-2016/).

HEF also endows a professorship in Holocaust Studies. Peter Hayes is a retired professor of history and German at NU and the Theodore Zev Weiss Holocaust Educational Foundation Professor of Holocaust Studies Emeritus. The award-winning scholar and researcher chairs the Academic Committee of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. His newly published book, *Why? Explaining the Holocaust*, was just released in German.

In advance, I asked Professor Hayes if I could interview him during the upcoming homecoming weekend, Oct. 6–8, 2017. Email exchanges revealed that he would be leaving for a speaking tour in Germany just before the weekend. Professor Hayes graciously suggested a telephone interview instead.

My first question had nothing to do with Dr. Hayes’ new book, but with his colleague, associate professor of electrical engineering, Arthur R. Butz. Butz authored *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century: The Case against the Presumed Extermination of European Jewry*. This book by a tenured Northwestern University professor has served the Holocaust denial movement since its 1976 publication. As a NU alum, I have felt personally embarrassed by having such a man at Northwestern.

I asked Dr. Hayes if he had ever been on a committee with Butz or had to work with him in an institutional endeavor. My typed notes paraphrased Dr. Hayes’ response: “I never actually exchanged words with him; I have been in the same room with him. For example, Saul Friedländer gave a lecture at NU with Butz in the audience. He asked a question which Friedländer declined to answer. There was an overlap when we were in NU’s gym at the same time. Afterward [in the men’s locker room], we stood in front of the mirror, side by side, shaving.” Neither man spoke.

I asked what motivated Dr. Hayes to make the Holocaust his professional

focus, and, since I teach in a Roman Catholic university, if his Roman Catholic upbringing had anything to do with it. He replied that he lived in a suburb outside of Boston; many Jews lived in his part of town. It made the presence of anti-semitism puzzling for him. “All my best friends were Jews. I went to more *Bar Mitzvahs* than [Catholic] confirmations.”

His interest in the Holocaust happened gradually. He explained that he grew up in the ‘60s; saw little girls blown up in churches, police dogs attacking Blacks. Racial violence and the Vietnam War “raised the issue of how my country – people could be very destructive.”

His sister married a man born in Germany under the Third Reich, who had emigrated to the U.S. after World War II at the age of five. Subsequently, Professor Hayes lived with his brother-in-law’s father in Dusseldorf, where he went to work in a steel factory. While sorting steel pipes in the delivery hall, he learned German. He explained that he found the German language very challenging because he had never studied Latin and thus had to wrestle with complicated case endings. (I resisted the impulse to share with him that my high school Latin helped me understand grammar, but it did nothing to help me learn German. This interview was about him, not about me.)

“Language was a big factor,” he continued, in his becoming a Holocaust scholar – being able to read and write in German. “I am interested in racial violence, interested in how people become violent for the sake of largely fictional ethnic qualities,” the good professor concluded.

He graduated from Bowdoin College in 1968, received a Keasbey Scholarship to study at Balliol College, Oxford, and turned 22 that September. He went over on the boat with the Rhodes Scholars a month later, meeting Bill Clinton en route. Clinton “was at a different college (university), and I didn’t belong to his inner circle, but we were friends. We then met up again during his final year at Yale Law School, which was my first year of graduate school.” The then Mr. Hayes worked for a few years after Oxford and before going to Yale to earn his Ph.D.

“My Ph.D. thesis was a study of IG Farben, the largest corporation in Germany, and its relations with the Nazi State. That dissertation turned into my first book.” His NU Curriculum Vitae notes that his book, *Industry and Ideology: IG Farben in the Nazi Era*, Cambridge University Press, 1987, won the Biennial Book Prize of the Conference Group for Central European History of the American Historical Association in 1988.

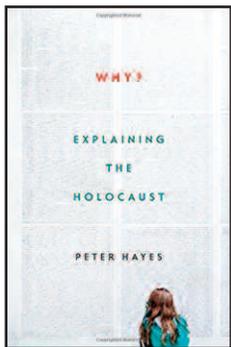
Recently retired (2016), Professor Hayes taught at NU for 36 years. “I’m not retired



Peter Hayes at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. Credit: Miriam Lambskin for USHMM; used with the author’s permission.

enough," he quipped. He is "still writing a lot, consulting with museums and exhibitions." His current speaking tour in Germany will last for 17 days; he will return to the U.S. for a week, and then back to Germany.

I am always looking for new books to update my required texts for my Holocaust class. On page XIV of his Introduction to *Why? Explaining the Holocaust*, Dr. Hayes described how the text accreted from years of student interaction and audience questions after his many lectures on the Holocaust. He did not use a thesis to structure his book, but had as his goal, to answer commonly asked questions about the Holocaust.



After "many years of teaching and public speaking, during which I learned which aspects of the subject people most want clarified and why," the researcher identified "the most reliable responses that scholarship can offer, and then honed ways to make that knowledge as accessible and memorable" as he could.

The book is divided into eight chapters, each of which answers a unique "why" question, such as, "Why the Jews?" "Why the Germans?" "Why Murder?" etc. Each chapter is divided into two parts, except Chapter 4, which has three parts. The text is detailed, compact, thorough, and clear.

I told Dr. Hayes how much I admired his ability to document his assertions with numbers; very persuasive. He said his "objective was to do this," modestly adding that he "didn't quite succeed as compactly as possible. Less is more." He did not want "to overwhelm the reader with detail. Each chapter is 40 pages, two parts of 20 pages each." His goal was that "every piece [should have] coherency, clarity, and concision." Despite his modesty, I believe he succeeded.

A secondary goal was "to set the record straight." Throughout the book, Dr. Hayes debunked common myths that have shrouded the topic, including, in his last chapter, the biggest myth of all: that the Holocaust never happened. I wondered if Professor Butz read that chapter.

The first such myth I encountered was in Chapter 3 "Escalation: Why Murder?" On page 122, In his discussion of IBM, the author stated that "...IBM's rebellious subsidiary, the *Deutsche Hollerith Maschinen Gesellschaft*, managed by the spiteful German who formerly owned it, did not play the roles in identifying and later rounding up the German Jews or in

managing slave labor that the parent firm's critics have maintained." The Hollerith machine, named for its inventor, was a precursor to the computer, but stored data on punched cards.

I asked Dr. Hayes to clarify. He stated that the Hollerith machine was not used in the 1933 census; it did not play a pivotal role in the collection of data. The historian explained that the results of the 1939 census were not completely counted until 1942. The Nazis had multiple other sources of data on the Jews. The Hollerith machines were not necessary to identify and segregate them.

He cited roundups in Poland as an example, where the Nazis used intimidation and terror. "If you don't assemble into the ghetto by such and such a date, you will be killed." Most Jews chose to comply. Hollerith machines were not needed for subsequent roundups of the Jews. "The Hollerith machine was not essential to moving German railways," he added.

"The role of U.S. businesses in the Holocaust is overblown; U.S. business was not important enough in the increasing power of the Third Reich. Standard Oil had deals with IG Farben, but were not central to the military of Nazi Germany," Dr. Hayes explained. He concluded, "The Hollerith machine is a legend."

I ruefully confided in him that I am guilty of perpetrating the legend, relying on other scholarship that indicates the opposite. I felt that my professional integrity was at stake here. He kindly pointed out that he keeps learning new things, refining his own teaching.

Instantly, I acquired more empathy for my students, who are currently beginning their research projects. Many feel overwhelmed by the vast array of sources on the Holocaust that the Internet makes available to them. If their instructor does not always correctly evaluate sources, how can she expect her students to do so?

It is my students who drive my ultimate decision as to whether or not I adopt a text for the class. As of this writing, I have not decided. The level of detail and documentation of this text, that I find so compelling, might detract beginning students of the Holocaust. Since NDNU became a designated Hispanic-serving university several years ago, most of my students are Catholic. Many have no prior knowledge of the Holocaust, save for clichés about the Jews and perhaps having read *The Diary of Anne Frank*. I decided to assign individual chapters to students later this semester for their oral reports to obtain their feedback on the text.

Professor Hayes' NU bio describes his current endeavor, working on a book, with Stephan Lindner of Munich, entitled, *Profits and Persecution: German Big Business in*

*the Third Reich*, which is under contract in English with Cambridge University Press and in German with Beck Verlag. I look forward to writing about this book.

Back on the Evanston campus, Richard parked our rental car in front of Hillel at Northwestern. A Holocaust foundation and a visible Hillel at NU? How far the University has come in 50 years! When I matriculated at NU, Jews were scarce and subject to an entrance quota. Scandal my freshman year: on admissions tracking forms, Jewish applicants were underlined and Blacks were circled. Maybe it was the other way around.

I regret tossing out my *Daily Northwesterns* (student newspaper) from that year, 1963-64, whose Jewish student editor broke the story. The director of NU's Admissions Office at the time, C. William Reilly, threatened to revoke the editor's scholarship. The editor promptly published that story. The unfolding of the scandal in a series of articles resulted in the resignation of Mr. Reilly and presumably, more equitable admissions practices.

These thoughts percolated through my mind as Richard and I boarded a shuttle to Ryan Field where Penn State's Nittany Lions would devour the NU Wildcats. Scoreless until the end of the fourth quarter, NU's only touchdown felt like a win. Fifty years ago, after opponents' repeated scores, NU cheerleaders chanted, "That's all right; that's OK. You'll be working for us someday."



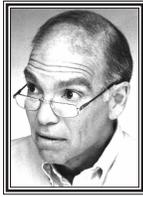
A selfie of the author and her husband seated among alums who now qualify to be in the "Half-Century Club" at NU.

One of my last questions for Dr. Hayes was what would he like readers to know about *Why?* There are two big takeaways, he declared. First, "the Holocaust can be explained as well or as poorly as any [other] human event. To say that it is unfathomable is an emotional, moral reflex."

"The other takeaway is to beware of the beginnings. It can snowball if you don't nip it in the bud. If people with terrible

(see Zimmerman page 12)

# Shipley Speaks



BY JIM SHIPLEY

## What we stand for

I was born into the “Sha Still” generation. “Sha Still”: Be quiet – don’t make a fuss. It meant: do not brag about being Jewish – matter of fact, keep it quiet whenever and wherever you can. It was a time of racial divide and racial hatred. African Americans in many cases lived not that different than when they were in slavery. Anti-Semitism was rampant.

In 1950 we moved to Shaker Heights, Ohio which just two years before cancelled a restrictive covenant that prevented Jews from buying a home in the city of Shaker Heights. It was a time that people – especially those in any area of public life (acting, writing, politics, medicine and law) changed their names – Cohen became Kane; Leibowitz became Lee, Steinberg became Sherman.

Jews were able to “hide” behind their new names because we were white. African Americans? Changing their names was not going to change anything for them.

It was not the Holocaust that changed things. Even after many Jews – and many non-Jews knew what was going on in Poland, Germany, Russia, Hungary and most of Eastern Europe, we kept pretty well quiet: “Don’t rock the boat – yes, it’s terrible, but what can we do?” Not until the war ended and the awful truth became general knowledge did we American Jews begin to act to help our people find refuge. And not very successfully.

Survivors did not flock to the Land of the Free – government regulations and the politics of the time did not make it easy. No – it was not this beacon of freedom and the Lady with the Lamp that shown for survivors. It was 1948 and the formation of the Third Jewish Commonwealth. Historically as you probably know – there was nothing “sudden” about it.

Did your grandparents’ home have the little Blue Box? Did yours? Were there coins put in every *Shabbat* to send to the Jewish National Fund to buy land in what would become the Third Jewish Commonwealth in the land of Israel? Probably.

But it was those whose contributions were their own future, their own lives who made it possible. We were no longer those “Dirty Jews” to most of the world. Oh sure, even today there are the marchers who chant, “A Jew will not

take my place”. They are safe. No Jew, no intelligent human being will take their place.

So, we are no longer a silent generation of Jews. It is time as Ann Rolphe wrote: Shout it out! We are the Jews of a new breed. We have pride, we are a people. Wait. You didn’t know that? It’s true! You, my fellow Jews, my “Lantsmen” have DNA that matches some of mine! We were a People for a thousand years before we were members of a religion. So, those who even today would change their name or give up their heritage? Sorry, buddy. It’s in your blood, in your genes. So, you might as well embrace it and say “Damn right. I am a Jew, a proud Jew and will fight for my people as you would for yours”.

There are many ways in which you can do this “fighting”. Learn your history. Know why you should be proud. It doesn’t have to happen in Shul on a Saturday morning. It can happen online or at the library or in a discussion with someone else.

Never hear an Anti-Semitic remark without answering it. Never miss a chance to defend your people and the State of Israel.

I’ve said it before: Are there flaws in Israel? Sure. Are there many things that should change? Absolutely. The Religious Establishment goes against the desires and needs of most of the people. The political system allows them to do that. It must be changed. But not by us.

We live in the United States of America and we have our own *tsuris*. There is much to be done here. Pick a project. Jews have a history of leading the charge for change. Work within our community. Reach out to the broader community so that everyone has an equal shot. We can work to change things here so that affordable health care is a right; proper education and equal opportunity are more than slogans.

You want to change Israel? Go there and live. No, seriously. You want to change peoples’ perception of *Eretz Yisrael* and maybe your own? Okay – take ten days on the ground there. Don’t be a tourist. Talk to people. Arabs, Jews, Christians and Druze. Learn truths. Visit Judea and Samaria. Even if you don’t like some of the things you see, the people you talk to – at least you will have some firsthand knowledge of what is going on.

But above all – be proud of who you are, where you come from and what your people have accomplished. Shout Jew and mean it.

*Jim Shipley has had careers in broadcasting, distribution, advertising, and telecommunications. He began his working life in radio in Philadelphia. He has written his JP&O column for more than 20 years and is director of Trading Wise, an international trade and marketing company in Orlando, Fla. Column submitted Sept. 18, 2017. ★*

## ZIMMERMAN

(continued from page 11)

ideas achieve power, they draw more and more people to their side. Fight back early.” The last sentence of his book underscores this admonition: “Beware the beginnings.”

I asked if he were referring to Trump. Was the U.S. “at a beginning?” Dr. Hayes pointed out that he “finished writing the book in Jan. 2016. [I] didn’t see Trump coming. Like a lot of Americans, [I] thought it was impossible. He won by the skin of his teeth; he’s a minority president, the second we’ve had in the last 20 years. He got 100,000 votes in the right places. I did not write the book with a presidential agenda beyond what I always teach: politics matter.

“[People] always have to be thinking about their individual actions’ impact on national politics. In the abstract, that is what I was trying to say, but now people see the relevance. The two most common words in reviews are ‘timely’ and ‘topical.’ The mobilization of political anger to achieve selfish ends....”

I could not type fast enough to keep up. I heard his alarms going off over the phone, similar to my husband’s annoying computer tones that remind him of his next engagement. We had been talking for more than 40 minutes, longer than I had requested. I thanked him, wished him luck on his speaking tour, and refrained from informing him that my daughter and her family had just moved to Munich permanently.

My takeaway: With a genocide of this magnitude, there may never be an end to asking the question “Why?” but there is a moral necessity to keep asking it. We cannot give up this pursuit by capitulating to “this is too horrible to fathom.” We must continue searching for answers. The search itself motivates us to seek alternatives to hatred, racism, misogyny, and xenophobia.

Based on one man’s lifetime of research, public speaking, and teaching, *Why? Explaining the Holocaust* provides answers to those questions that most people have about the Holocaust, including people who might not have the ability to articulate such questions. With this insight, I strongly recommend this book to anyone who wants to learn more about the complexity of the Holocaust. I will require parts, if not all, of this book to my next Holocaust class. As more of us find answers, there will be more of us to ensure that never again will prejudice, hatred and tyranny triumph.

*Dr. Miriam Zimmerman is professor emerita at Notre Dame de Namur University (NDNU) in Belmont, Calif., where she continues to teach the Holocaust course. She can be reached at mzimmerman@ndnu.edu. ★*

# Book Review

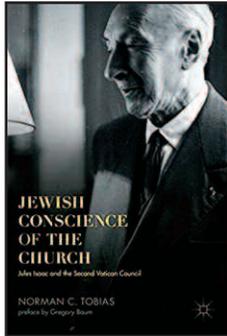


REVIEWED BY  
PROFESSOR ARNOLD AGES

## Catholic Church radically altered negative teachings about Judaism

*Jewish Conscience of the Church: Jules Isaac and the Second Vatican Council.* By Norman C. Tobias. Palgrave Macmillan. 307 pages. 2017.

This is an extraordinary book about the volte face which the Catholic Church executed at Vatican 2 in 1963 when, as a result principally of the intellectual exertions of Jules Isaac, former Inspector General



of Education in France, the Church radically altered its negative teachings about Jews and Judaism and repudiated its malignant doctrine of Jewish responsibility for deicide.

There are many anomalies associated with this meticulously researched and comprehensive survey of one of the most important developments in the 20th century. Dr. Norman Tobias is by profession a skilled tax lawyer, who taught the intricacies of that discipline at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario and who latterly earned a Ph.D. in religious studies at the University of Toronto.

The focus of his doctoral dissertation, Jules Isaac, was a man of many talents; his textbooks on French and general history were staples of the high school curriculum in France and regarded as authoritative sources for those subjects. That he would become the driving force after World War II towards a re-direction of Catholic doctrines vis-à-vis Jews is not something one would have expected from the high position he occupied, quite comfortably, in France.

That comfort disappeared during the Nazi invasion of France and the occupation which followed. Almost 70,000 Jews were deported by the Germans, most of whom perished in the concentration camps. Isaac himself narrowly escaped capture and survived only through the good will of friends who hid him from both French

collaborators and German troops. His wife and daughter, however, succumbed to the Nazi dragnet and he never saw them again.

Another element which makes it even more startling, that Isaac authored a number of treatises on the image of Jews in official Catholic doctrine, is the fact that Isaac had really little sympathy for Judaism. In fact, as Tobias reveals, Isaac once indicated that he much preferred paganism as a religious code. His indifference to the sancta of Judaism, a secularism that was quite common among many French Jews in the 1920s and 1930s, may explain why his son converted to Christianity.

It was during the Nazi interlude in France that Isaac, who had been a close associate of Charles Peguy, an early 20th century sensitive Catholic poet, essayist and editor, began to analyze the sources which had contributed to the hatred that targeted his wife and daughter and came to the not illogical conclusion that certain theological constructions in Catholicism were responsible for the teaching of contempt for Jews and Judaism.

As a gifted historian, Isaac, of course, knew that anti-Semitism existed before Christianity (as his Catholic interlocutors pointed out to him in later years) but he instinctively knew that pagan distaste for Jews was incidental, and recorded in minor chords – compared to the 2,000 year old assault on Jews and Judaism first enshrined in Christian Scripture and repeated century after century by the Fathers of the Church and thereafter from Church pulpits especially in Europe. Isaac also knew that economic, political and social prejudices were sometimes hidden in the religious vernacular but his purpose was to show that it might be possible to alter the religious narrative through patient argument and persuasion.

The late Gregory Baum, a Catholic theologian of high repute, who wrote a warm introduction to the Tobias volume, originally responded to Isaac's powerful "Jesus and Israel" (1948) by saying in the early 1960s that the New Testament was not anti-Semitic; it was an interpretation problem. Later in the 1970s Baum re-read Isaac's work and reported that racial anti-Semitism was indeed present in parts of the New Testament.

As the author shows in his carefully calibrated essay, Isaac consulted with knowledgeable people and during the decade from the end of the war he organized his thinking in order to hone his criticism of the Christian texts with anti-Semitic tonalities and to suggest changes that would improve the image of Jews and Judaism. In typical French style, Isaac created formats listing points to be analyzed like an explication de texte, that

wonderful exegetical instrument.

It is not possible in a review to go through all of the points which Isaac deployed in his polemic but the major ones deal with the New Testament's cruel caricature of Judaism as a corrupt and decadent civilization, its cavalier indictment of all Jews as being responsible for the crucifixion while most Jews actually lived in the Diaspora, and its horrendous "blood libel" in which Jewish participants in the deicide legitimize their own Jewish punishment in perpetuity.

In the various encounters he had in print with respondents and in conversations with Catholic representatives in the 1940s and 1950s at various conferences in Europe – the descriptions of which Tobias offers with generous details including a foot-note apparatus which I think should in some places have been inserted into the text – was always firm in his advocacy. His reputation as a sober, informed and flexible partisan of change in Church doctrines preceded him.

One of the most intriguing parts of the Tobias chronicle focuses on the road to Vatican II in Rome and the various responses to Isaac's most famous work "Jesus and Israel" – just one of several of his impressive essays. Tobias, indefatigable in research patterns, has ferreted out the major reviews of the book which appeared in the prestige French journals. Not all were favorable, as might have been expected. One of the most acerbic criticisms focused on Isaac's alleged memory lapse in not questioning Jewish unbelief after the crucifixion – as if this had anything to do with Isaac's indictment of the New Testament's "pogromist" attitude to Jews.

The Vatican II deliberations on Jews and other religions in 1963 incorporated, as far as Jews and Judaism were concerned, Isaac's plangent plea for changes in statements about both. Isaac unfortunately passed away before it became official Church teaching, but it was a wonderful posthumous reward.

A personal note: In 1964, this reviewer heard Father Gregory Baum deliver a public lecture at The University of Waterloo, Ontario. I asked Father Baum how long it would take for Vatican 2's message to seep down to the parish level. He replied "300 years."

**Arnold Ages** is "Distinguished Emeritus Professor" University of Waterloo (Ontario, Canada). ✨

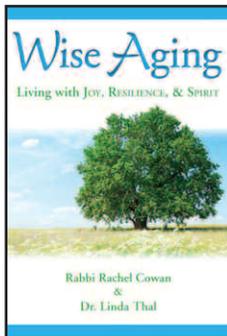
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# Book Excerpt

BY RABBI RACHEL COWAN  
& DR. LINDA THAL

## Wise Aging: Living with Joy, Resilience, & Spirit

Cultivating Gratitude



But sometimes we ourselves forget that lesson. When what we have becomes too familiar, we may take it for granted, flattening out the texture of life. When we want something another person has – perhaps a new car, device, or appearance – it is easy to be overcome with dissatisfaction or envy. By contemplating the possibility that we already have what we need, we can approach a state of true gratitude.

All wisdom traditions place a high value on gratitude. In Jewish and Christian traditions, gratitude is manifested as thanks and songs of praise. Texts and liturgies are abundant with psalms, prayers, blessings and teaching about gratitude. Many people, as they grow older, find new meaning in them, whether or not they call themselves “religious”.

Jewish tradition also encourages looking or the good in each person, each moment, every day. Recognition of the good is one definition of gratitude. In fact, one of the first phrases in the morning prayers service is, “How good it is!” – to wake up today, to recognize goodness in some aspect of our lives, to see a world of beauty and possibility. Another prayer affirms that each day the work of Creation is renewed in goodness.

In addition to recognizing good, Jewish tradition suggests that we take the time to express appreciation of it. A simple “Wow,” a quick “thank God,” a prayer, a song, or a thank you note can activate the feeling of gratitude and rewards generosity in others.

*One who crosses the sea and survives a storm thanks God. Why not thank God when there is no storm? One who survives an illness thanks God. Why not one who escapes illness altogether? (Rabbi Modechai Yosef Leiner, The Radziner Rebbe)*

A nonprayerful way of stating this idea is that when we are in the dentist’s chair, we are miserable. Why aren’t we grateful every day when we are not in the dentist’s chair?

This prayer from the Sabbath morning service expresses boundless gratitude:

*Could song fill our mouth as water fills the sea*

*And could joy flood our tongue like countless waves –*

*Could our lips utter praise as limitless as the sky*

*And could our eyes match the splendor of the sun –*

*Could we soar with arms like an eagle’s wings*

*And run with gentle grace as the swiftest deer –*

*Never could we fully state our gratitude  
For one ten-thousandth of the lasting love  
that is your precious blessing, dearest God,  
Granted to our ancestors and to us.*

Published in June 2015. ©Behrman House, Inc., reprinted with permission www.behrmanhouse.com

*Rabbi Rachel Cowan, formerly the executive director of the Institute for Jewish Spirituality, is working on a special project on aging with wisdom. She was named by Newsweek Magazine in 2007 and in 2010 as one of the 50 leading rabbis in the United States, and by the Forward in 2010 as one of the 50 leading women rabbis. She was featured in the PBS series The Jewish Americans. She received her ordination from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 1989. From 1990-2003 she was program director for Jewish Life and Values at the Nathan Cummings Foundation.*

*Her work has been included in Moment and Sh’ma as well as in anthologies, including Illness and Health in the Jewish Tradition: Writings from the Bible to Today, and The Torah: A Women’s Commentary. She is the author, with her late husband Paul Cowan, of Mixed Blessings: Untangling the Knots in an Interfaith Marriage. She lives in New York City, near her two children Lisa and Matt, and four grandchildren – Jacob and Tessa, and Dante and Miles Moses.*

*Dr. Linda Thal, after establishing her career in children’s and family education, pioneered some of the early work in synagogue transformation, guiding congregations through a process of re-envisioning and revitalizing their programming. For the past twenty years her work has focused on adult spiritual development. Dr. Thal was the founding co-director of the Yedidya Center for Jewish Spiritual Direction, an institute that trains rabbis, cantors, therapists and others in providing spiritual guidance. She has a private practice in spiritual direction and serves on the faculty of the Center for Mindfulness at the Jewish Community Center in Manhattan.*

*She is a recipient of the Covenant Award for Excellence in Jewish Education. Her work has appeared in Reform Judaism Magazine and in books such as What We Know About Jewish Education, A Congregation of Learners, Jewish Spiritual Direction: An Innovative Guide from Traditional and Contemporary Sources, and Every Ending Has A Beginning: Clergy Retirement (forthcoming). She is primary author of Vetaher Libeynu: The Institute for Jewish Spirituality Curriculum for Nurturing Adult Spiritual Development.*

*In addition to teaching in both the United States and Israel, she has conducted classes and workshops in Canada, Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, China, Singapore, and Hong Kong. She lives in New York City with her husband, Lennard, and travels to California frequently to teach and see her daughters Alona and Ariella, and grandchildren, Mo, Zeke, Noa and Zev.*

(see Cowan/Thal, page 15)

Gratitude is an invaluable quality for us as we grow older. It enables us to be more open-minded and openhearted. When we feel grateful, we are more likely to feel optimism and joy. When we express gratitude, others find it more pleasant to spend time with us. When we are grateful, it is easier to be generous, and when we feel our gratitude is welcome, we are, in turn, happier. We are able to see the good in the world, and to acknowledge it, and then to find more things to appreciate.

When we experience gratitude, we have less room for fear and anxiety. We tend to focus more on what we have and less on what we don’t have or what we might lose. We may experience our days as having richness in and of themselves. And as we pay more attention to the good, to the gifts we have been given, we may see more clearly that we exist in relationship to others. We are not alone. We depend on others, and they in turn rely on us. Gratitude helps us understand how intertwined our lives are with the lives of others, and can diminish the pressure we put on ourselves to remain fiercely and sometimes harmfully independent.

What is gratitude? It is a feeling that begins when we recognize the good. The good could be in another person, in a work of art, in an event, or something else. When we feel gratitude, we are experiencing the uniqueness of the moment and choosing not to take it for granted. We may feel we have been given a gift. When we notice gratitude, we may feel its afterglow, or a heightened sense of well-being, or warmth and expansiveness. This expansive feeling may yield a sense of connection to another, or to nature, or to God. And it may move us toward acts of generosity.

We teach our children to say thank-you and encourage them to feel thankful.

# Book Excerpt



BY OLGA GILBURD

## Happiness The Jewish Way

**Chapter 34 – The Power of Music**  
**“Music is bliss. Music brings us an island of peace.”~ Rafael Sommer[i]**

“O Music! miraculous art! A blast of thy trumpet, and millions rush forward to die; a peal of thy organ, and uncounted nations sink down to pray,” marveled Benjamin Disraeli. Music is often considered the universal “language of emotions,” because it is capable of producing some of the strongest emotional reactions in us, including calm and joy.

Studies prove that the musical sound waves affect us on a physical level, altering the brain’s functioning and changing our mood.[ii] This effect music has on us is even used in healthcare to improve physical and mental health through a treatment modality called music therapy. The famous Jewish sage and physician Maimonides knew about this hundreds of years ago. To people who were sad, he advised, “Listen to music.”[iii]

“Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life,” said Berthold Auerbach. And the more conscious we are of music, the more it affects us. If it is just a background noise, it doesn’t do much. But when we pay attention to music and listen to it with an intention to change our mood, slow and meditative music calms us, while joyful and upbeat music makes us excited and happy.[iv]

Similarly to smiling, music makes a good situation even better and helps us transcend difficult ones. Alice Herz-Sommer recalls how music helped her and other prisoners at the Theresienstadt concentration camp: “While performing the prisoners could nearly forget their hunger and their surroundings. Music provided comfort and hope to the performers and their audience.”[v]

Jewish culture places a major emphasis of music. The book of Psalms clearly instructs, “Serve God with joy; approach Him with joyful song.”[vi] Kabbalists hold that the world is saturated with melody,

and the most direct means for attaching ourselves to God from this material world is through music and song.[vii] Hasidic Jews use music to feel the connection to one another and God, singing cheerful and soul-stirring melodies at informal gatherings called *farbrengen*.

Klezmer is a specifically Jewish musical genre that translates the emotions of joy and exuberant happiness into music. It makes the listeners tap their feet and clap their hands to the lively tunes that reverberate throughout Jewish communities and are one of the key elements of Jewish weddings.

Music lifts our spirits whether we listen to it, make it, sing it, or dance to it. It works when we are alone and when we share it with others. Apply the power of music to your days, and observe how it changes your mood.

### PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Music has such a powerful ability to conjure up feelings. Use it to conjure up happiness. Infuse your days with music in all of the following ways:

**Listen** – If you feel down or depressed, fast, upbeat music can lift your spirits. If you feel overstimulated, anxious, and overwhelmed, you may benefit from listening to music with slow tempos.

**Sing** – “Get into the habit of singing a tune. It will give you new life and fill you with joy,” taught Rebbe Nachman of Breslov.[viii] He urged everyone, “Even when you can’t sing well, sing. Sing to yourself. Sing in the privacy of your own home. But sing.”[ix] Whether you are in a good mood or not, sing. Sing along with the radio, when you are in the shower, or with your family and friends.

**Dance** – Joyous, ecstatic dancing has always been the way of the Hasidim.[x] They regard it as a form of prayer, a way of getting close to God and reveling in the resulting feeling of happiness. Dance while you are at leisure or while you clean. Dance at home or at parties. Take lessons, or dance any way you like.

**Make music** – Alice Herz-Sommer summed up her feelings about playing piano in one sentence: “Making music always made me happy.”[xi] Make music whenever you can. Play musical instruments you know, or just hum or whistle a fun tune.

[i] Caroline Stroessinger, *A Century of Wisdom: Lessons from the Life of Alice Herz-Sommer, the World’s Oldest Living Holocaust Survivor*, 150.

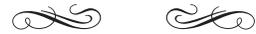
[ii] Emily Saarman, “Feeling the Beat: Symposium Explores the Therapeutic Effects of Rhythmic Music,” *Stanford Report*, May 31, 2006, [www.news.stanford.edu/news/2006/may31/brainwave-053106.html/](http://www.news.stanford.edu/news/2006/may31/brainwave-053106.html/).

[iii] Zelig Pliskin, *Happiness: Formulas,*

## COWAN/THAL

(continued from page 14)

*The Institute for Jewish Spirituality (IJS) is training facilitators to lead groups around the country in an exploration of what it means to approach our later years with intention, energy, and joy. Wise Aging: Living with Joy, Resilience, & Spirit will be the core text for these group workshops. If you would like to find out more about establishing a Wise Aging workshop group in your community, contact the IJS at [www.jewishspirituality.org](http://www.jewishspirituality.org). ✨*



*Stories, and Insights* (Brooklyn, NY: Shaar Press, 1999), 54.

[iv] V. Woollaston, “Listening to Happy Music Really CAN Make You Happier, Find Researchers,” *Daily Mail*, May 15, 2013, [dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2325004/Listening-happy-music-really-CAN-make-happier-researchers.html/](http://dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2325004/Listening-happy-music-really-CAN-make-happier-researchers.html/).

[v] Caroline Stroessinger, *A Century of Wisdom: Lessons from the Life of Alice Herz-Sommer, the World’s Oldest Living Holocaust Survivor*, 98.

[vi] Psalms 100:2.

[vii] Moshe Mycoff, *The Empty Chair: Finding Hope and Joy; Timeless Wisdom from a Hasidic Master, Rebbe Nachman of Breslov*, 50.

[viii] Moshe Mycoff, *The Empty Chair: Finding Hope and Joy; Timeless Wisdom from a Hasidic Master, Rebbe Nachman of Breslov*, 105.

[ix] Moshe Mycoff, *The Empty Chair: Finding Hope and Joy; Timeless Wisdom from a Hasidic Master, Rebbe Nachman of Breslov*, 50.

[x] Yitzhak Buxbaum, *Jewish Tales of Mystic Joy* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 155.

[xi] Caroline Stroessinger, *A Century of Wisdom: Lessons from the Life of Alice Herz-Sommer, the World’s Oldest Living Holocaust Survivor*, 93.

*Olga Gilburd is an author, speaker and blogger on the subject of happiness. Her book Happiness the Jewish Way was selected for a COJECO BluePrint fellowship. She is also a nurse and a cancer survivor. Born in Russia, she lives in Brooklyn, N.Y., with her husband and two daughters. Olga likes to figure skate, sing karaoke, crochet, and practice happiness every day.*

*“The idea of this book was born out of trying to teach my daughters to stay positive and find joy in everything while familiarizing them with their Jewish heritage. I looked, but I didn’t expect the Jewish culture to offer a lot on the subject of happiness, especially to people who are not religious”, says the author. “But I was amazed by what I found and how it changed my views on happiness and the Jewish identity.” ~ Olga Gilburd ✨*

## Giving PTSD the Jewish treatment, not just matzo ball soup

BY ANNA SELMAN



their own reasons to live.

Some survivors also found meaning in telling their stories – making sure that something like the Holocaust never happened again. They did not tell their stories to their psychologist; they told their story to their family, their friends and their synagogue. They went to schools and museums. By telling their experiences, survivors' experiences became a part of the Jewish experience. We all have a shared experience of the Holocaust, which, in some way, makes them feel not as alone.

However, some survivors were reluctant to tell their stories, which might be because we originally did not want to hear their stories when they first got to America. Survivors were told to move on, and they did. They built families, found careers, and kept their experiences bottled up for a decade or more. Meanwhile, they often experienced the nightmares and the intense flashbacks associated with PTSD, but once they did finally tell their family and friends, survivors reported a decreased number of symptoms and an increase in quality of life.

So what can be learned from the Jewish treatment of PTSD? There are many veterans coming home who feel like no one wants to hear about their story, but we know that it is good for veterans to talk about what happened "over there." This is not only for our veterans. We as Americans can bridge the military-civilian divide and make the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan a shared American experience. In some ways, this can make our veterans feel less alone.

So, this Veteran's Day, please invite your local veterans to come speak at your synagogue. Organizations, like the Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A. or the JWB Jewish Chaplains Council, can help connect you with veterans in your area that can come speak to your synagogue, schools and other groups. We owe it to our veterans to understand where they are coming from and to make them part of our community. Together, we can help them overcome their problems, and they can teach us about what it means to serve something greater than ourselves.

*Anna Selman is the Programs and Public Relations Coordinator for Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A. (JWV). She is an Army veteran. She works with partner organizations and legislative representatives to pass legislation important to JWV's priorities. She is co-editor of the Jewish Veteran and coordinates all of JWV's programs. As an Army nurse she supervised multi-bed units in the Medical Surgical, PACU and Urgent Care fields. She created programming for Nursing Education. She received her Bachelors of Science in Nursing from Purdue University where she minored in Military Science and Leadership. ✨*

A recent study from the Department of Veterans' Administration (VA) found that the daily number of American veterans who commit suicide has decreased from 22 to 20 a day – a small improvement, but a step in the right direction. The leading cause of veteran suicide is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), a disorder where you have intense and sometimes disturbing thoughts about a traumatic event that can lead to severe psychological suffering. It can be very common in veterans that have combat experience, and after almost two decades of fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan, we have a lot of veterans with combat experience and many with PTSD.

In a shocking discovery, researchers have also found that only 30 percent of PTSD treatments are effective. With such a low success rate, it might leave you wondering what else we can do for our veterans.

When someone brings up treating veterans with PTSD, it is unlikely that the first thing that comes to mind is to look to the Jewish community for how it helped treat Holocaust survivors. However, for those of us that come from families of Holocaust survivors, we know that Jews have a long history of treating PTSD even before the term came into use. In fact, according to some researchers, the prevalence of PTSD in Holocaust survivors is somewhere between 46 and 55 percent, which is really high. To give some comparison, the prevalence of PTSD in combat veterans in Vietnam is much lower, between 2 and 17 percent, and only 15 to 20 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans meet the criteria to be diagnosed with PTSD.

As Jews, our long and rich track record in treating PTSD provides us lessons for treating our veterans today. Jewish scholars found that survivors deal with their PTSD in 3 ways – some victimize themselves, some become defensive, while others numb themselves so that they could feel protected. These behaviors can be somewhat helpful during the trauma, but they can create problems down the road.

One of the leading scholars in treating survivors during the post-Holocaust period was Viktor Frankl, who famously wrote *A Man's Search for Meaning*. Just by looking at that title, Frankl's approach to treating traumatic events was to give everything meaning (also called logotherapy) – even their painful trials. He would often talk to survivors – helping them discover

## My Kosher Kitchen



BY SYBIL KAPLAN

### Apples and Latkes

In Israel now, pomegranates, grapes and clementines are popular. Apples are also popular and, personally, are my favorite fall and winter fruit. I'm really a firm believer in, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away!" Colonists to America brought seeds from Europe, planting the first orchards along the East Coast in the 17th century, particularly Massachusetts.

#### Baked Apples

(4 servings)

- 4 cored apples
- 2 tsp. lemon juice
- 4 tsp. brown sugar
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 6 tsp. raisins (optional)
- vanilla extract (optional)
- 1/2 cup rum, sherry or apple juice (op.)

Preheat oven to 350°F. Place apples in a baking dish. Sprinkle with lemon juice. Fill centers with brown sugar and raisins if using. Drizzle with vanilla, if using, and cinnamon. Pour rum, sherry or apple juice into bottom of dish. Bake in preheated oven 10 minutes, baste, bake 10 minutes more, baste and bake 10 minutes more. I buy red cinnamon candies and place a few in each apple to give them a pink color and nice extra cinnamon taste.

#### My Mom's (z"l) Deep Dish Apple Pie Crust:

- 1-1/4 cups flour
- 1/8 tsp. baking powder
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/3 cup butter or margarine
- 5 Tbsp. water

#### Filling:

- 4-6 sliced apples
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 Tbsp. butter or margarine
- 1/4 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp. nutmeg
- 1/4 cup water

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a mixing bowl or food processor, combine flour, baking powder, salt, butter or margarine and water and blend into a dough. Roll out to fit two pie plates. In another bowl, combine apples, sugar, butter or margarine, cinnamon, nutmeg and water. Place one dough piece into a pie plate. Spoon filling onto dough. Cover with dough topping

(see Kaplan/recipes, page 18)

# Chanukah songs



BY SYBIL KAPLAN

What do we have every year but never think about their origins? The *Chanukah* songs. In a *Hadassah* magazine article of some years ago by Melanie Mitzman, she quotes Velvel Pasternak about this subject.

Velvel Pasternak is a musicologist, conductor, arranger, producer, and publisher specializing in Jewish music. He has been described as “an expert on the music of the Hasidic sect and probably the largest publisher of Jewish music anywhere, although he is quick to note that publishing Jewish music is a business that attracts few rivals.”

The founder of Tara Publications, Pasternak has been responsible for the publication of 26 recordings and over 150 books of Jewish music since 1971, spanning the gamut of Israeli, Yiddish, Ladino, Cantorial, Hasidic and Holocaust music. He said *Chanukah* songs are no more than a century old because *Chanukah* is a post-Biblical holiday.

Most *Chanukah* songs, he told Ms. Mizman, have been adapted from old folk melodies, have more than one set of lyrics and/or have been translated from language to language.

## “Maoz Tzur”

“*Maoz Tzur*” is also called in English, “Rock of Ages” and was written sometime in the 13th century. The hymn is a Jewish liturgical poem or *piyyut*, written in Hebrew, retelling of Jewish deliverance from four ancient enemies – Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Haman, and Antiochus.

It is usually sung after lighting the festival lights. Its six stanzas correspond to five events of Jewish history and a hope for the future. Of its six stanzas, often only the first stanza is sung (or the first and fifth), as this is what directly pertains to *Chanukah*.

## “Oh Chanukah”

This song is the English version of a traditional Yiddish song, “*Oy Chanukah*”. According to Freedman Jewish Music Archives at the University of Pennsylvania Library, alternate names of the Yiddish version of song have been recorded as “*Khanike Days*,” “*Khanike Khag Yafe*,” “*Khanike Li Yesh*,” “*Latke Song (Khanike Oy Khanike)*,” “*Yemi Khanike*,” and “*Chanike Oy Chanike*.” *Chanukah* is and was sometimes written as *Khanike* as that was the standard transliteration from Yiddish according to the YIVO system.

The Society for Jewish Folk Music in St. Petersburg published two classical compositions which make extensive use of this tune: “*Freylekhs*” for solo piano, by Hirsch Kopyt (published in 1912 but performed as early as 1909); and “*Dance Improvisation*” for violin and piano by Joseph Achron (published in 1914, composed December 1914 in Kharkov)

There is also a Hebrew version, which has the same melody, its words penned by Avraham Avronin. The words correspond roughly to the original (more so than the English version), with slight variations for rhyme and rhythm’s sake. Thus the first line names the holiday; the second calls for joy and happiness (using two synonyms); in the third, the speakers say they’ll spin dreidels all night; in the fourth they will eat *latkes*; in the fifth, the speaker calls everyone to light the *Chanukah* candles; the sixth mentions the prayer, *Al Hanissim*, “On the miracles”. The only big change is in the last line: whereas the original calls to praise God for the miracles he performed, the Hebrew one praises the miracles and wonders performed by the Maccabees.

This reflects the anti-religious attitude of early Zionism, evident in many other Israeli *Chanukah* songs. In Israel, it’s still a very popular song, but since the country has a rich inventory of *Chanukah* songs, it is not as exclusively popular as the English version in English-speaking countries, or the Yiddish version in the past.

## “I Have a Little Dreidel”

“*I Have a Little Dreidel*” (also known as the “*Dreidel Song*”) is a very famous song in the English-speaking world for *Chanukah*. It also has a Yiddish version. The Yiddish version is *Ich Bin A Kleyner Dreydl*, (I am a little *dreidel*). The lyrics of the song are simple and about making a *dreidel* and playing with it.

The lyricist for the English version is Samuel S. Grossman and the composer of the English version is listed as Samuel E. Goldfarb. The Yiddish version was both written and composed by Mikhl Gelbart whose pseudonym was Ben Arn, but he listed the author as Ben Arn, a pseudonym referring to himself as the son of Aaron.

There is a question about who composed this music, as the melody for both the Yiddish and the English versions are precisely the same. The meaning of the lyrics to the Yiddish and English versions is largely the same. However,



in English, the singer sings about a dreidel, whereas in the original Judeo-German version, the singer is the four-sided spinning top made out of ‘blay,’ which is lead. The original version is historically accurate. In the English version, the singer has a four-sided spinning top made out of clay, yet clay is not easily spun.

## “Sevivon”

“*Sevivon*” or “*S’vivon*” is Hebrew for “*dreidel*”, where *dreidel* is the Yiddish word for a spinning top. “*Sevivon*,” is very popular in Israel and by others familiar with the Hebrew language.

## “Al Hanasim”

“*Al Hanasim*” is a popular Hebrew song for *Chanukah* taken from liturgy. It is also an Israeli folk dance. The song is about thanking God for saving the Jewish people. The most popular tune, however, is relatively recent, having been composed by Dov Frimer in 1975.

## “Mi Y’maleyl”

“*Mi Y’maleyl*” is a very well known Hebrew *Chanukah* song. The opening line, which literally means “Who can retell the mighty feats of Israel,” is a secular rewording of Psalms 106:2, which reads “Who can retell the mighty feats of God.”

## “Ner Li”

Literally translated as “I have a candle,” “*Ner Li*” is a simple Hebrew *Chanukah* song that is popular in Israel. The words are by L. Kipnis and the music, by D. Samburski.

## “Chanukah Chanukah”

Another traditional *Chanukah* folk song with origins in Israel is “*Chanukah, Chanukah*,” words by Levin Kipnis.

## “Judas Maccabaeus”

“*Judas Maccabaeus*” is an oratorio by George Frideric Handel. During *Chanukah*, the melody for “See, the Conqu’ring Hero Comes” is used by Spanish and Portuguese Jewish communities for the hymn *En Kelohenu*.

## “Ocho Kandelikas”

“*Ocho Kandelikas*” is a *Chanukah* song in the language Ladino from the Sephardic Jewish tradition. It was written by the Jewish-American composer Flory Jagodain in 1983. The lyrics of the song describe a child joyfully lighting the menorah candles, saying that “beautiful *Chanukah* is here” and describing all the wonderful things that will happen this time of year. The song counts out the eight candles for the eight days of *Chanukah*.

See Sybil Kaplan’s bio on page 18. ★

# Media Watch



BY RABBI ELLIOT B. GERTEL

## Landline

Smack dab in another directorial/writing collaboration between Gillian Robespierre and Elisabeth Holm, Jenny Slate gets to play another Jew-ish twenty-something woman with commitment issues exacerbated by her parents.

In a previous film, *Obvious Child* (which I reviewed in the May 17 issue) Slate's character, a stand-up comic, bonds with her mother over abortion, but keeps the boyfriend on leash. In this film, her character, Dana, who lacks even a passion for her work, bonds with her sister and then her mother over her dad's marital infidelity and then over Dana's own pre-marital infidelity.

Whereas in *Obvious Child* the writers delighted in making a non-Jewish boyfriend into a loyal dunce, in this movie the devoted, trusting Jewish boyfriend, Ben (Jay Duplass) is contrasted with the straying Jewish father, Alan Jacobs (John Turturro), whose indifference to wife and daughters and frustration at being copywriter rather than playwright contrasts with his Italian-American wife Pat's (Edie Falco) *deus-ex-machina* parenting and high-powered city administrative position.

Though a tribute to mid-1990s life, this film is clearly no ode to Jewish men. From the very first vulgar scene, we understand that Dana relates to her boyfriend, Ben, to the extent that she can embarrass him and herself. (For some unexplained reason, Ben is identified by his Hebrew name, "Binyamin," by an African American male friend.) Dana's father is already adept at embarrassing himself by leaving graphic love notes on his computer, which are discovered by Dana's younger, high school age sister, Ali (Abby Quinn). Though the sisters bicker and tease and often seek to embarrass each other, they bond in an effort to play detective and to ferret out Dad's secret lover.

Dad has hardly made his mark as a parent. He seriously suggests to his wife that she allow Ali to sneak out at night because the teen may (fortuitously?) get mugged and "learn from her failure." He adds: "Most people learn from failure." Obviously, this Jewish father has no insight into dealing with human frailties and revolts, or any insight or understanding at all, as the disconnected lines from his latest play will reveal.

Ultimately, Dad moves in with "Poppy"

(his father), another less-than-dignified Jewish father, at least according to the hearsay dialogue that the senior spends most of his time in Atlantic City with his latest flame.

Meanwhile, the sisters do not make life easier for their mom. Ali crosses the line even of testing limits with a boyfriend (whom she is exploiting somewhat as well), and, even worse, she is in blatant pursuit of hard drugs, putting herself and Dana in harm's way in a police sting situation.

Though engaged to a reliable, loving and good Jewish man, Dana is easily distracted by a former bad boy college flame, a guy for whom commitment is a dirty word, and who outright tells her that it is best that Ali learn as soon as possible that monogamy cannot last.

Dana knows that it is wrong on many levels to have sex in a movie theater with her distraction while a film about Nazi atrocities is playing (echoes of a *Seinfeld* quip about making out during *Schindler's List*). But all she can say is, "I was supposed to see that film with Ben. He likes Nazi stuff." (A characteristic of a nice Jewish boy?) This film ratchets up the vulgarity with comments about the "energy" of the Nazis and how they "really knew how to sing!"

Soon enough, Ali philosophizes: "We're just a family of cheaters." She becomes reconciled with this and with her sister after an unexpected bonding experience at their parents' summer home. Only when the sisters unite can they bond with, and bring some solace to, their mother. Mom tells them as they all suffer through Ali's drug scare and assorted commitment issues: "I love you two so very much, even when you make me crazy. It doesn't have to end like this."

Such is the "optimistic" note in a comedy that does provide some laughs and some hope, though the overall picture it presents is not pretty. One character observes: "All I really want is a nice Jewish Italian girl who will sit on the couch with me and watch *Mad About You*." But the message here is that nobody's wants can be fulfilled by anyone else, especially with popular media playing in the background.

I suppose that the "moral" of this movie is that everyone has to monitor and even control his or her wants. But there seems to be a lack of authenticity in the way that that point is made here, if indeed it is consciously made.

From within an excellent cast in which each member stands out, Slate provides a particularly memorable scene of regret and tears which would seem to confirm the morality play intention of this movie. But in the end the film comes across more as a study in (or example of) commitment

(see Gertel, page 19)

## KAPLAN/RECIPES

(continued from page 16)

and crimp edges to secure. Place a slit in the top to let steam escape. Bake for 50–60 minutes.

And with *Chanukah* just a month away, let's not forget the *latkes*! From *The Seasonal Jewish Kitchen*, by Amelia Saltsman:

### Best Potato Latkes

(24 latkes, or 6 servings)

(Pareve or Dairy)

- 2 pounds peeled starchy potatoes
- 1 small onion
- 2 heaping Tbsp. unbleached all purpose flour or potato starch
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- freshly ground black pepper
- 2 lightly beaten eggs
- mild oil (grapeseed, sunflower or avocado)
- sea salt

Using the large holes of a box grater or a food processor fitted with the grating disk, grate the potatoes (about 5 cups). Grate the onion on the large holes of the box grater or fit the processor with the metal S blade and grate. In a large bowl, stir together potatoes, onion, flour salt, baking powder and a few grinds of pepper. Stir in eggs. Line 2 or 3 sheet pans with paper towels. Place the prepared pans, the latke batter, a large spoon and a spatula near the stove.

Heat 1 or 2 large skillets over medium heat. Gentle film the skillets with not more than 1/4-inch oil. When the oil is shimmering and a tiny bit of batter sizzles on contact, start spooning in the latke batter, making sure to add both solids and liquids. Using the back of the spoon, flatten each spoonful into a circle 3 to 4 inches in diameter. Do not crowd the latkes in the pan. You will get 4 or 5 *latkes* in a 12-inch skillet.

Cook the *latkes*, flipping them once until golden on both sides, 5 to 6 minutes total. Transfer the latkes to the prepared baking sheet. Cook the remaining batter in the same way, stirring the batter before adding more to the pan and adding oil as needed at the edge of the pan. Arrange the *latkes* on a warmed platter, sprinkle with sea salt, and serve with applesauce or sour cream.

**Sybil Kaplan** is a foreign correspondent, book reviewer, food writer and lecturer. She has compiled and edited nine cookbooks; she writes the food column for The National Jewish Post & Opinion; she created and leads weekly walks in English in Jerusalem's Jewish food market, *Machaneh Yehudah*; and writes the restaurant features (photographs by her husband, Barry) for the website *Janglo*. They live in Jerusalem. ✨

**KLEINER**

(continued from page 20)

Pomegranate publishers have two wall calendars this year. Jewish Celebrations, with paintings by Malcah Zeldis is closely tied to the concept of the *zachor* injunction. Zeldis focuses on rejoicing throughout the Jewish year with paintings that celebrate the holidays of *Sukkot*, *Chanukah*, *Pesach* and *Shavuot*. There are also more personal paintings that celebrate the Jewish year, such as *My Mother's Shabbat*, *The Men in My Life* (depicted on *Simchat Torah*), *My Grandmother's Kitchen*, and others. All the paintings are in bright, joyous colors that will appeal to both young and old.

Pomegranate's The Jewish Museum Calendar 2018 displays images of art works that date from as early as the 17th century, and right up to the end of the 20th century.

Among the oils is the Judaica Artist Gabriel Cohen's *The Creation of the World* (1979); Reuven Rubin's *Pomegranates* (1942), and Moritz Daniel Oppenheim's *Self-Portrait* (1814–16), to name but a few.

There are two striking *menorahs*, which are centuries apart by the date of their creation and by the style which they represent. The ornate, copper cast *Menorah* from Northern Rhineland, Germany dates back to the 17th century. The avant-garde, whimsical *Menorah* by Peter Shire made of steel, painted aluminum and chromium, dates from 1986.

Also included in this calendar is a *Marriage Contract* from 19th century Persia made with ink, watercolor and gold paint on paper. Equally charming is the 19th century quilt, of Russian-American origin, made of velvet and embroidered with wool, silk, metallic thread and beads.

Last, but certainly not least, is Kar-Ben Publishing's *My Very Own Jewish Calendar*, for children, and for the child in all of us. This calendar is rich in color and in content. There is history, trivia, easy recipes, and a certain joy that embraces Jewish culture, civilization and daily living from around the world and even in outer space.

In its data entries this calendar touches on the observance of *Yom Kippur* in outer space, on *Purim* in Venice and in the Central Asian city of Bukhara. The latter, a city on the ancient Silk Road, had a custom of sculpting Snow Hamans on *Purim*. Bukharan Jews would then watch as Haman would disappear when the sun came out. On *Chanukah* in Israel's city of B'nei Brak, the Rebbe of the Premishlan Chassidic Court celebrates this holiday by taking fiddle in hand and leading his followers in singing and dancing.

This calendar for children is all about memory, and remembering for the new



generation. One of the entries covers *Shabbat Zachor*, the Sabbath of Remembrance, which precedes the holiday of *Purim*.

An entry on Israel's Yiddish-speaking Defense Dogs and on the Lion King of Jerusalem is included. There is the thoroughbred horse, American Pharoah the 2015 Triple Crown Winner whose owner Ahmet Zayat is yet another of the children of Israel to leave Egypt. Born in Cairo, he came to America as a student and in 2002 opened Zayat Stables.

Many culinary delights are presented in this calendar, with simple recipes, that reflect the rich diversity of Jewish cooking from many lands. These include the *Sabich* Sandwich of Middle Eastern origin; Humus Ice Cream and *Tzatziki* Soup; Sephardic *Marunchinos* and Tunisian Cookies, as well as more traditional simple dishes. The medical benefits of olive oil and of the *etrog* are pointed out. The latter should not be thrown out after the holiday as it can be made into jams or even served with tea instead of lemon.

The injunction, to remember Jewish tradition has now been carried into outer space. While living on the Mir space station, Astronaut David Wolf observed *Yom Kippur* and described it as "unlike anything on Earth. All I had to do was fast for an hour-and-a-half, because the sunrise occurs every 90 minutes. I fasted a few sunrises!"

Long before the Jewish calendar or the alarm clock became an essential part of the Jewish household, the injunction of *zachor*, to remember, found expression in many other ways. One of them was personified by the *Shulklafer*, the person on whom Jews in Poland relied to wake them up for the *Selichot* prayers at the *shul* during the month of *Elul*. ✨

**COVER**

(continued from page 3)

"*Hanukkah*, the Holiday of Light," and "Happy Holiday of Lights".

**Naomi Teplow** ([www.ketubotbynaomi.com](http://www.ketubotbynaomi.com)) was born in Israel, and now lives in Oakland, Calif. She is a long-time member of various Jewish peace movements. Her paintings are strongly influenced by both European and Islamic illuminated manuscripts and by Islamic tile art and architecture. ✨



Eric Lindberg and Doni Zasloff are the band, *Nefesh Mountain!* (see Editorial, p. 3.) Photo by Jennie Cohen.

**GERTEL**

(continued from page 18)

issues than as an expose of them. It used a hyphenated family ploy in order to isolate Jewish men from a sisterhood of self-pity.



**Rabbi Elliot Gertel** has been spiritual leader of congregations in New Haven and Chicago. 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. ✨

# The Jewish calendar – to remember... and to rejoice

By ROSE KLEINER

## The Jewish Post & Opinion

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*Zachor* (remember) is an injunction deeply ingrained in the culture of Jewish life. It speaks to us on many levels. *Zachor* is a reminder of the myriad special dates that are an integral part of Jewish life throughout the year.

*Zachor* speaks to us of the solemn dates in our calendar such as the days of awe, the fast days and the memorial days. *Zachor* equally reminds us of the imperative to rejoice on other dates in the Jewish calendar – the feast days and festivals such as *Purim*, *Passover*, *Shavuot*, *Succoth* and *Chanukah*.

Then there is the calendar's constant reminder to rejoice week in and week out, throughout the year on the Sabbath. Referred to as *Oneg Shabbat* (the joy, or rejoicing of the Sabbath) this special day of rest, reflection, mindfulness, and rejoicing, embraces the individual in a way that turns the whole year with all its challenges into a unique Jewish experience.

For this reason *Shabbat* is a day that is welcomed with candle lighting. The exact lighting times are set by the calendar. For this special day, the Jewish calendar gives the weekly readings from the *Torah* and *Haftarah* because these readings are a part of remembering and rejoicing on *Shabbat*.

Thus the concept of *zachor* permeates the Jewish calendar from the year's start to its completion, inviting us to remember, rejoice and celebrate time through the encounter with *Shabbat*.

To complement their profound messages, many Jewish calendars come with magnificent illustrations of fine works of art and of priceless Judaica treasures created from diverse materials. These items often date back over many centuries, and have their origins in many lands. Such splendid illustrations enhance the daily use of these calendars.



From Universe Publishing come three Jewish calendars this year, one for the wall and two for the desk. The wall calendar's illustrations are from the Collection of the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam. There is an Esther Scroll (with the *Purim* story) from the 18th century, a silver *Torah* Shield from 1750, and a *Mizrach* (for the home's eastern wall) from 1900 Germany. The moving Hebrew passages in this *Mizrach* come with translations in German.

Not only precious metals, but also parchment and canvas are the medium of choice here. Textiles are an equally powerful medium for communicating the richness of Jewish civilization, and stressing the need to remember. The vibrant textile wall hanging of velvet with gold and silver threads proclaims, "Remember (*zachor*) the Sabbath day..." It is from 1875, Netherlands.

This Universe calendar has a list of Jewish holidays through 2031, and candle lighting times for all large Jewish communities in the U.S., as well as for Toronto, London and Jerusalem.

The Universe Calendar for the desk, with illustrations of treasures from the collection of the Jewish Museum in New York, contains a full-page calendarium for every week, and has a great 'flowchart' with concise, useful information about all the Jewish holidays, festivals, fasts and

feasts throughout the year. It serves as an excellent reference for the busy household and should be a part of other Jewish calendars as well.

Among the magnificent objects illustrated in this calendar is silver *Torah* Crown from 1780 Galicia, engraved, gilt and embellished with silver bells and colorful stones. Other silver objects in a more modern style include Ludwig Wolpert's hammered and engraved *etrog* box (1963–4), Moshe Zabari's Hanging Sabbath Lamp, and Michael and Bonnie Berkowicz's Executive Dreidel (1993).



There is an ornate handwashing basin and pitcher from early 20th century Persia in hammered silver with a Hebrew engraving. A silver *havdalah* candleholder with spice container from Frankfurt am Main dates back to the 1770s. A most striking *menorah*, referred to as the Tree of Life was created by Erte (born Romain De Tirtoff). It is made of polished brass (1987).

The second Jewish desk calendar from Universe starts with January 1, 2018, and focuses rather on Jewish culture without the inclusion of the traditional dates and *Torah* readings of the classic Jewish calendars.

365 Things To Love About Being Jewish, is a day-to-day calendar which 'serves up...a daily reason to celebrate being a member of the tribe!' Filled with Yiddish words and phrases, religious and secular traditions and celebrations and with all sorts of trivia, this calendar in its own fun way is a call to remember, *zachor*, to rejoice.

(see Kleiner, page 19)

