

The Jewish Post & Opinion

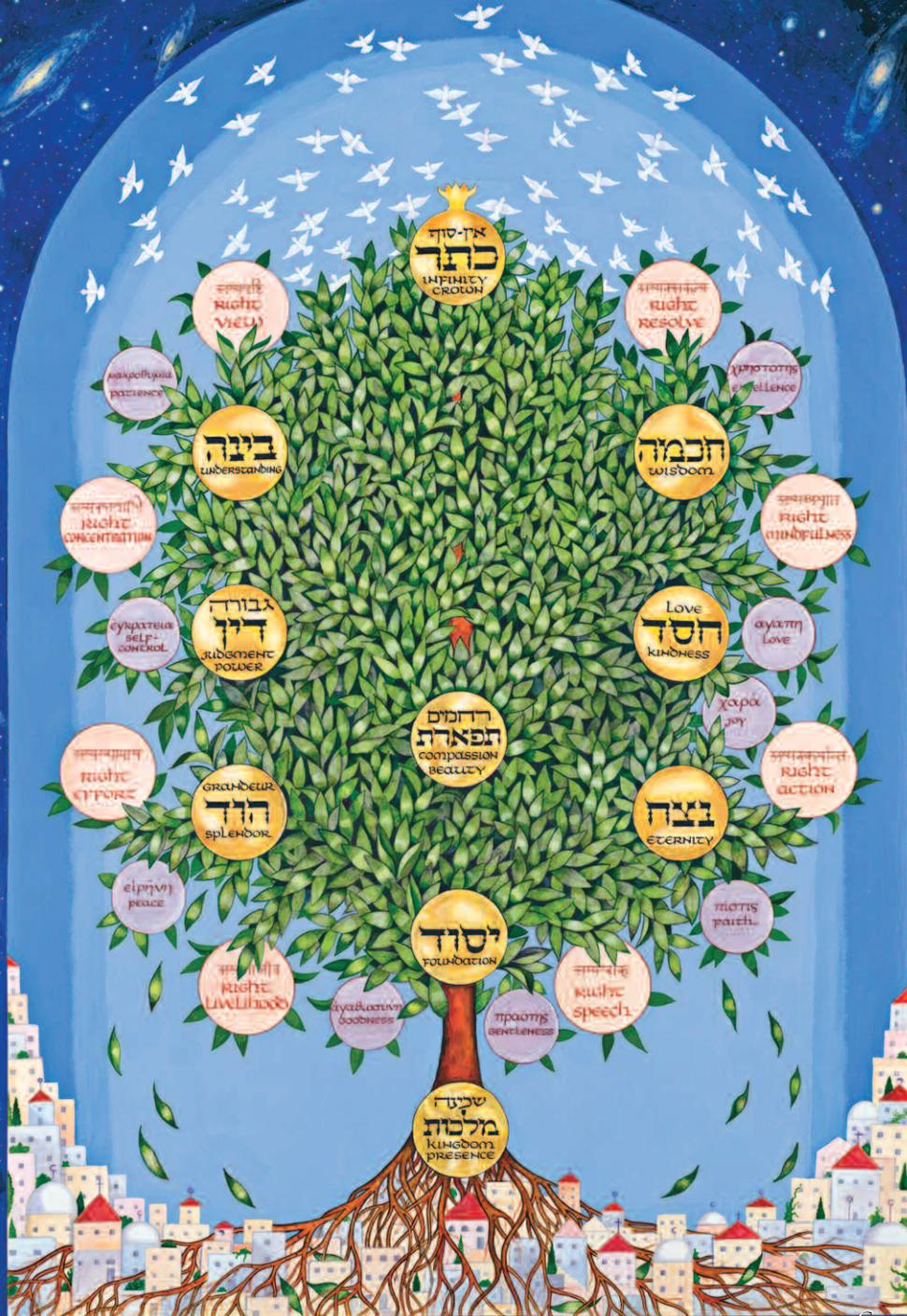
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Mi Shebeirach – A Focus on Healing



Cover art by Naomi Teplov
(see About the Cover, p.4).

Holocaust Educator



BY DR. MIRIAM L. ZIMMERMAN

Opportunities to be an “Upstander”

Erev New Year’s, 2017. I love having two chances to make New Year’s resolutions – on *Rosh HaShanah* and again on Jan. 1. Historically, my lists always begin with, “Eat better, lose weight, and exercise more.” In 2017, a new commandment superseded that perennial trio: “Thou shalt not be a bystander.”

It is a value I have tried to instill in Holocaust students for 22 years, to help them bridge the chasm between moral *thought* (thinking about the right thing to do) and moral *action* (acting on those thoughts). Most of us know the right thing to do; actually doing it is the challenge. An apt analogy: smokers who know they should quit smoking, but do not.

Most of us know we should eat right, volunteer more, speak out against injustice. But how many of us find the time or energy to do so in our busy, everyday lives? In the new age heralded by President-elect Donald Trump, acting on such values becomes urgent. As a society, we cannot stand by and allow the xenophobia and hatred that Trump released during his campaign, to dominate our interactions.

My daughter, Rebecca Goodman, read an early draft of this article. She informed me that on Jan. 3, 2017, vandals painted a swastika on a sign on Hebrew Union College’s (HUC) campus in Cincinnati (above). Rebecca graduated from HUC in Los Angeles with twin masters’ degrees in Jewish Education and Jewish Communal Service. She related to me that she never experienced such vandalism while at HUC. “But Mom, we live in the bubble that is California.”

We cannot allow Trump’s values to undermine our democratic institutions, the most cherished of which is freedom. The great Irish statesman and orator, Edmund Burke (1729–1797), is credited with the saying, “All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men [and women] do nothing.” The word “bystander” best describes the paradox of “doing nothing.” The majority of people “doing nothing” in Nazi Germany allowed a dictator to seize power and wage genocide. To avoid such catastrophes, the imperative to become an “upstander,” the opposite of “bystander,” applies to us all.



Sign on Hebrew Union College’s (HUC) campus in Cincinnati, Ohio. Picture is from www.daytondailynews.com/news/hebrew-union-college-vandalized-with-swastika/1NdvajGCTrcDvkudzZRvXPI.

In late November, several mosques in the San Francisco Bay Area received hate letters. I emailed to students in my Holocaust class my letter to one of the mosques as an example of “upstander” behavior. I wanted to model such behavior so that they might be motivated to do the same. The following is an excerpt from that letter.

“Dear Members of the Evergreen Islamic Center: Our interfaith group has just been informed of a threatening letter you received, which stated that President-elect Donald Trump will ‘do to you Muslims what Hitler did to the Jews...’ As the daughter of a 1937 Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany, I cannot adequately express my outrage that you have received such an egregious message.

“I was reared in a German-Jewish family with the axiom, ‘It can happen here,’ meaning that another Hitler can come to power, legitimize hatred, end freedom, and destroy a population. Our generation learned the hard way the need for ordinary people to stand up in the face of bigotry and prejudice, lest they take hold and destroy the moral fiber of a country.

“It is important that those of us with recent memories of exterminations and genocide stand up for their brothers and sisters facing similar persecutions. Hitler began with small steps; it will take bigger steps to undo the destructive behaviors that Trump unleashed during his political campaign... All of us, whether connected to the Holocaust or not, must not be idle, silent bystanders. We must become ‘upstanders,’ speaking out against hate crimes and xenophobia.... Recently, my husband remarked that if it came to a

registry for Muslims, that he, also Jewish, would register as a Muslim. I pledge to do the same.”

My letter resulted in a personal invitation from Hasan Zillur Rahim, Outreach Director of Evergreen Islamic Center of San Jose, Calif., “to attend a peace and solidarity rally at our mosque site in San Jose on Sun., Dec. 11.” (photo below)

My husband joined me in the outdoor hour of speeches and prayers by local politicians and religious leaders. I was gratified to see almost a dozen men wearing *kipot* among the audience of over 200. The first speaker to give an invocation was a rabbi.



Peace and solidarity rally at the Evergreen Islamic Center of San Jose, Calif. Photo courtesy of Richard Zimmerman.

The most memorable speech for me was delivered by an 11th grade Hindu girl, Shyama Chaganti, a member of the local Youth Interfaith Group. Shyama raised her open hand, fingers spread. The different lengths represented different faiths. She closed her hand into a fist, pointing out that diverse faiths can work together, becoming strong.

(see Zimmerman, page 7)

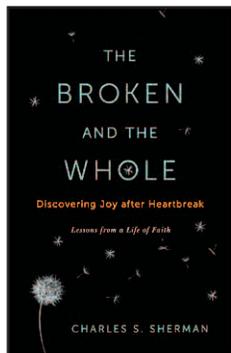
Editorial

The Jewish Post & Opinion

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More than a year ago I came across an announcement in one of the synagogue bulletins that I receive from different locations around the country. It was about a program where Rabbi Charles S. Sherman would be promoting his book titled, *The Broken and the Whole: Discovering Joy after Heartbreak* (thebroke-andthewhole.com).



After reading the endorsements for the book, I knew a review of it would be ideal for our “Mi Shebeirach, A Focus on Healing” section. I tore out the page from the bulletin for safe keeping but when it came time to prepare for the

next of our twice a year 4-page-pullout sections, I could not find that page. After 15 years of publishing I have come to realize that sometimes when my best effort to publish an article at a specific time does not come to fruition, eventually it turns out a better time for it to be published surfaces. So it missed our July healing section but I was able to receive a review copy in time for this one.

On the website for Rabbi Sherman’s book it is written, “A wise, uplifting memoir, about a rabbi’s search for joy and understanding after his young son suffered a brainstem stroke that left him quadriplegic and dependent on a ventilator for each breath.” One might think the book is depressing but instead it is inspiring.

This book is a memoir demonstrating with very specific details, not simply how a person copes in one big bite with one of the biggest challenges ever, but how getting through each daily challenge associated with it, leads him or her to become a more empathetic, patient and less judgmental person. I would not wish hardships on anyone, but we all have them. Rabbi Sherman sets the example that we can learn from these stumbling blocks and grow to become kinder, more caring, compassionate people.

With chapters titled Normal, Perseverance, Optimism, Faith, Anger, Regret, Time, Acts of Loving-kindness, Connection, Personhood, Communication, Marriage, Gratitude and Joy, this book is perfect to help one with New Year resolutions. In the various chapters, Rabbi Sherman explains these different subjects not only with examples from his own life but also from the *Torah*.

For example in the chapter on “Time” on pages 90–91, he writes on the importance of staying in the present moment – not regretting the past or fretting about the future. He gives an example from the Book of Numbers and “the Israelites’ forty-year trek from Egyptian bondage through the desert to the Promised Land.” He writes, “[Life] is a *journey* to the Promised Land; life is the wandering in the desert. The present moment matters – not our future destination.”

Below in italics from page 174 is another excerpt appropriate for now and any time during the year from the chapter on Gratitude.

When people come to me lost and dispirited, questioning their self-worth, I listen carefully without being judgmental. Sometimes I ask them to make a series of lists. Take a legal pad, I tell them, and draw a line down the middle. On one side, write down all of the bad things that have happened. On the other, write down all of the good things. On one side, write down what you can’t do anymore. On the other side, write down what you can do. On one side, list people who have let you down, on the other side, list people who have stood by you.

Inevitably, one list is much longer than the other. And I’ve never seen the longer one be the list of what’s lacking.

Bad things do happen to all of us. But when we’re in pain, we tend to focus all our energies on the painful situation, the losses. Making lists like this, we force ourselves to look beyond our pain, to see the whole scope of our lives, and to acknowledge the bigger picture for which we feel grateful.

Gratitude opens our eyes to what we have and the possibilities in front of us. It leads us to discover the previously undiscovered.

Since the devastating news about their son Eyal, who was four when they received his diagnosis, Rabbi Sherman and his wife Leah have spent many days, weeks and months at his bedside in different hospitals. When Rabbi Sherman tells a story about a another patient or visiting family member of a patient, a nurse, doctor, therapist, technician or even a janitor who has gone out of his or her way to be helpful expecting nothing in return, that reminds me of what humans

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are capable of and what we can hope to aspire to in 2017.
 Jennie Cohen, January 11, 2017 ✨

About the Cover

Tree of Life for the Peoples of the World

By Naomi Teplow

In this painting, I looked at the similarity between the main values of different religious groups. The Jewish *Kabbalah* talks about the ten *Sefirot*, which represent ten qualities (or aspects) of God, which humans are called to imitate or emulate in order to repair or complete the world (*Tikkun Olam*). Those ten aspects of the divine include Wisdom; Understanding; *Hod* and *Tif'eret*, two words for Beauty (hinting, perhaps, at the importance of the awe we feel confronting the physical beauty of the world); Judgment, and its antidote, Lovingkindness; *Shechinah*, the feminine aspect of God; Eternity, and so forth.

The Buddhists talk about the Eightfold Path, which is the way to end suffering: Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Speech, Right Mindfulness, Right Energy, and such. And the Christians talk about the Nine Gifts of the Spirit: Love, Patience, Joy, and more.

At the bottom of the painting is *Malchut*, the other name for *Shechinah*, which refers to the earthly world in which we humans live. It is in our daily life that the tree's roots are planted; it is here that we struggle to live by these values. Here, the symbols of Muslims, Christians and Jews are on the rooftops, to show that if we all respect each other's values, the doves of Peace would surely come out of our Tree of Life, and we might live again in a kind of Garden of Eden.

Naomi Teplow (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.

Art Brings Together Jews, Muslims and Christians

By Lea Delson, Exhibit Organizer

The cover artwork by Naomi Teplow was part of an interfaith art exhibit *Finding Common Ground Through Sacred Words* held May and June 2013 in Oakland, Calif., at the Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California (ICCNC). This exhibit of 130 works of art by Jews, Muslims, and Christians expressed a commitment to peace and hopes for greater understanding



N. Teplow



Lea Delson

Chassidic Rabbi

By RABBI BENZION COHEN

What is *Hanukah*? Twenty-two hundred years ago the Greeks ruled most of the civilized world, including the land of Israel. At first they didn't interfere with our observance of *Torah* and *Mitzvahs*. But then arose an evil king who tried to make us forget our beliefs, to wipe us out. Many Jews assimilated. The situation looked hopeless.

But then arose Matisyahu, the *Cohen Gadol* (High Priest) and his sons (one of his sons was Judah the Maccabee). They saw what was happening and took action. With the help of *Hashem* (G-d) they defeated the mighty Greek empire and strengthened Jewish observance. This redemption is what we celebrated last month during *Hanukkah*.

A very similar scenario is happening today. Hitler tried to wipe out the Jewish People. Communism declared all out war against Judaism and all religion. Many Jews all over the world assimilated, including me and my siblings. I was born Jewish, but at the age of 17, I planned to leave the Jewish people. I would move away to some place where nobody would know that I was born Jewish, and that would be the end of my Judaism.

However, also in our generation, *Hashem* sent us a redeemer, the *Lubavitcher Rebbe*. Together with a handful of followers he turned the tide. He has saved me and millions like me from total assimilation. He is strengthening Jewish observance and identity in every country in the world.

Amazing! History is repeating itself! Today we are in the process of bringing a



among people of different faiths. Works in a wide variety of media including paintings, photography, sculpture, calligraphy, ceramics, textile art and glass were shown.

This exhibit elicited very positive reactions and drew large audiences. Many viewers called the exhibits inspiring, and one artist called the experience of being in the exhibit "life changing".

ICCNC is one of the three organizations that make up the *Faith Trio*, an interfaith alliance in the Oakland area that sponsored this event. The other two organizations are Kehilla Community Synagogue, part of the Jewish Renewal movement, and Montclair Presbyterian Church (MPC).

Followers of the three different faiths working together demonstrated that art can be a wonderful way to bring people together, create friendships, and help (see Cover, page 9)

new holiday into the world! Just like we celebrate our redemption from the Greeks, so we will celebrate the redemption that is happening right now. We believe that this will be our complete and final redemption! After this redemption, there will be no more evil, no more war!

What is happening? According to *Chassidic* teaching, every Jew has two souls, an animal soul and a G-dly soul. All of us are familiar with our animal soul. When we are hungry, it tells us to eat. When we are tired, it tells us to sleep. Just like the souls of all of the other animals on this planet. It wants to enjoy the physical pleasures.

Our G-dly soul is a spark of G-d. It is our essence, what we really are. However, we are not always aware of it. I only discovered mine at the age of 18. Just like a child yearns to be close to his parents, so our G-dly soul yearns to be close to *Hashem*. How can we be close to *Hashem*? By praying to *Hashem*, by learning *Torah* and fulfilling commandments, by loving and helping our family and our neighbors.

Once I found my essence, my G-dly soul, my life improved immeasurably. Before, I knew a lot of disappointment, frustration and heartache. I wanted a lot of the wrong things, and ate my heart out when I didn't achieve them. Now what do I want? To pray to *Hashem*. I do this a lot, and *Hashem* is always there to answer me. To love and help my family and neighbors. I give them a lot of love, and get back even more.

The *Rebbe* helped me to discover who I really am, and now I help others to find themselves. This is a chain reaction.

I mentioned above prayer. In my previous column I wrote about one of the meditations to prepare ourselves to pray. I hope that this inspired you to try it yourself. Now if you are ready to pray, here are some basic instructions.

First, you need a prayer book which has the daily prayers. On *Shabbos* and holidays we say different prayers. We pray three times a day, but it is all right for a beginner to start out once a day, or even once a week. Begin by saying the three paragraphs of *Shema* (Hear O Israel) morning and night. If you don't understand Hebrew, say it in English or any language that you understand.

Then add the standing prayer which is composed of 18 blessings, morning, afternoon and night. This prayer is very urgent now. In many of these 18 blessings we are asking *Hashem* to redeem us and bring us to our Holy Land. The more prayers that we offer to *Hashem*, the better it will be for all of us.

We want *Moshiach* now!

Rabbi Cohen lives in K'far Chabad, Israel. Email him at bzioncohen770@gmail.com. ✨

An open letter to the incoming vice president



BY RABBIS
DENNIS C. AND
SANDY E. SASSO

Dear Vice President-elect Pence:

Congratulations on your election to the vice presidency of the United States of America. As rabbis in the city of Indianapolis, we have had the honor of knowing and collaborating with you frequently over the past decade. We have valued your graciousness and your friendly manner.

It will not surprise you that we have often viewed with concern several of your policies and comments as governor, which, despite their calm and civil tone, have sometimes yielded discrimination and disenfranchisement. As you assume the vice presidency of our country and take the national stage, allow us to add to our congratulations the following pleas.

Please advocate and advance the welfare, rights and privileges of all citizens, residents and visitors, regardless of race, gender identity, religion or ethnicity, within the boundaries of our nation. May your oft-proclaimed identity as “Christian, conservative and Republican” be practiced in the service of your identity as an “American,” the vice president of a diverse nation. Please respect and honor the religious differences and the spectrum of deeply held moral values on women’s rights, reproductive freedom and LGBTQ rights. Please always see to it that the Constitution of the United States of America be enshrined above any one community’s scriptures or interpretations thereof.

We ask that you encourage and guide our new president-elect to be discerning in word and in deed, in intention and execution, that he may create a climate of civility, harmony and hope. His campaign and early transition have not always inspired confidence in this regard. We hear daily from Hoosiers who are afraid, who experience intimidation and bullying, who are being told there is only one America and that it is white and Christian. This should be repudiated in no uncertain terms. Children should not be made to feel unsafe because of who they are, because of their race, faith or where they came from.

Please counsel President-elect Trump to

Dr. King’s Legacy



BY RABBI PHIL COHEN, PH.D.

On the 18th of January, we’ll celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King’s birthday. It’s remarkable when I think about how long he’s been gone – assassinated nearly 50 years ago at the age of 39 in Memphis, Tennessee, on the evening of April 4, 1968.

The brevity of his life notwithstanding, as we all know well, Dr. King left behind a remarkable legacy, a gift that changed the United States for good. Much has improved for the African-American community over those years from 1968 to now, largely because of the large footprints Dr. King laid down.

The role of the Hebrew Bible in King’s quest is large. For example, in his famous “I Have a Dream” speech, two prophetic quotes figure prominently:

Amos 2:24: *But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!*

Isaiah 40:4-5: *Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain.*

King had excellent relations with the Jewish community. You may remember seeing that famous photograph of Dr. King marching arm-in-arm with Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel and Rev. Ralph Abernathy in Selma, Alabama. This picture has become the iconic image of Black-Jewish cooperation during the heyday of the civil rights movement. But it would be a mistake to assume that the image of Rabbi Heschel with Dr. King encapsulates the entire movement.

I also remind you of the work of Rabbi



build an infrastructure of tolerance and trust so that we might achieve the greatness of the America we love, with freedom, liberty and justice for all. Help him to speak out against the increasing and emboldened acts of hate and vandalism, so our children and grandchildren learn that bullying, disparagement and antagonism are not tolerated in our nation and are not paths to success or models of leadership.

Dear Mr. Pence, you brought a touch of civility and reason to the angry rhetoric of the campaign. But Hoosier hospitality is only true if beneath it lies respect for all people, even those with whom we disagree, and respect for a broad spectrum of truth.

We are emerging from the current (see Sassos, page 9)



Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel participating in a civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Ala., on March 21, 1965 with Martin Luther King, Jr., where Heschel said the famous quote, “When I marched in Selma, my feet were praying.” First row, from far left: John Lewis, an unidentified nun, Ralph Abernathy, Martin Luther King, Jr., Ralph Bunche, Abraham Joshua Heschel, Fred Shuttlesworth. Second row: Visible behind (and between) Martin Luther King, Jr. and Ralph Bunche is Rabbi Maurice Davis. Rabbi Davis was a columnist for The National Jewish Post & Opinion for several years and served Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation from 1956–1967. One can read his account of that march in detail on pages 27–31 of the following link: http://indiamond6.ulib.iupui.edu/cdm/com_poundobject/collection/IJO/id/23161/rec/4

Joachim Prinz, as he and Dr. King were among the ten speakers at the August 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Preceding King to the platform, he delivered a stirring speech, deploring silence in the face of injustice.

During that time, from the early to the late 1960s, American Jews participated in virtually every aspect of the civil rights movement. Rabbis and lay people from all over the country worked on behalf of civil rights for African Americans.

Despite the great progress African Americans have made in this country, we’ve been reminded in this last year that racism remains one of our continuing issues. We still need to see justice and righteousness increase. We still have many crooked places that have yet to be made straight. And American Jews still need to participate in that hard work.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. left behind a magnificent legacy that will serve for a very long time as a model for work done on behalf of social justice. As Americans, we must continue this work to build a nation committed to equality and democracy.

Rabbi Cohen is the spiritual leader of Temple Israel in West Lafayette, Ind. He can be reached at rabbicohen@templeisraelwlaf.org. Reprinted with permission from their January 2017 bulletin. ✨



By IRWIN J. PRINCE

The two state solution: the need for strategic direction

From 1937 Peel Commission Report:

Arab nationalism is as intense a force as Jewish. The Arab leaders' demand for national self-government and the shutting down of the Jewish National Home has remained unchanged since 1929.

UN Partition Resolution 181, April 1948:

The 1948 UN Partition Plan sought to address the conflicting objectives and claims of two competing movements, Palestinian nationalism and Jewish nationalism by calling for partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states. The Partition Plan contained a rough delineation of boundaries between the two States. The Plan also called for economic union between the proposed states, and for the protection of religious and minority rights.

From 1949 until 1967 the state of Israel existed within a demarcated territory of former Palestine known as the "Green Line". The Green Line resulted from the armistice agreement between Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, ending the war on Feb. 24, 1949. Jordan and Egypt occupied the remaining territory of Palestine from the date of the Armistice until 1967 when Israel gained possession of that territory.

From 1948 through May, 1967, neither Israel and the surrounding states, nor Arabs of former Palestine acted to establish a Palestinian state in the Arab occupied territories of former Palestine. The unspoken reason was to avoid the necessity of creating a realistic map of the Arab state which would recognize the partition of Palestine and the existence of the State of Israel. Had actual maps been created which might have been acceptable to both states, the so-called Arab-Israel conflict would have ended in the early 1950s. Instead, and tragically so, the Arabs of former Palestine who did not flee into refugee status or stay on as citizens of Israel, formed the PLO in 1964. The sole purpose of the PLO was the eradication of Israel through armed conflict.

Had the PLO acted to establish a state alongside Israel, the Arab-Israel conflict would have been seen by the world as

minor disputes between two neighboring states over mundane problems. It was not to be then, but does that necessarily mean it cannot be now? Most informed, objective observers today, reject the idea of Jews and Arabs co-existing within a single state. The consensus of the informed public seems to be that the "two state solution", i.e. the actual implementation of Resolution 181 is logical. It is the only way to permanently end the conflict over Palestine. Thus, in the eyes of two state advocates, if a border settlement agreement is the answer, then a way must be found to get the maps drawn and agreed to, and the sooner the better. The question is how to achieve that result.

There are those who argue that two states can be achieved *only* through direct negotiations between Jews and Arabs, by the "peace process". This writer respectfully disagrees. It is in fact, the peace process that has kept the existential issues brewing for nearly 70 years. It is that never-ending "peace process", by studiously avoiding the key issue of final borders that has perpetuated and exacerbated the conflict. By dealing only with subordinate "confidence building" issues, the peace process has served only as a political tool to be used by the leadership on both sides. It has camouflaged the underlying existential issues, causing them to boil up into violent confrontations, which probably would never have occurred between two maturing and developing states. Thus, it is high time to say "*dayenu*" to that "peace process".

The key question today is whether or not a road to the two state solution is still open. Some observers say that it isn't, pointing to the influx of Jewish settlers into what would have to be included in any Palestinian state. I again disagree. The two-state solution can be reached with a new and radical strategic approach to the problem. I see the strategic road map as follows:

A small multinational settlement conference should be convened along the following specific guidelines:

1) The *single stated purpose* of the conference would be to map out the State of Arab Palestine and thus establish its border with Israel. By accepting the invitation to attend the conference, both Israel and the Palestine Authority must agree in advance that:

a) maps of the two states must be agreed upon and publicly issued before the conference can be adjourned;

b) a mutual recognition and peace treaty, along with an end of claims agreement will also be agreed upon and publicly issued before the conference can be adjourned.

c) there will be absolutely no precondi-

tions required by either party for their attendance.

d) no external event may be given as a reason for leaving the conference.

2) The convening nations might logically be: USA, GB, France, Russia, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia – call them the "Convening Nations".

3) The conference will not have any power to compel the parties with regard to the settlement. A general agreement must be that as in a deliberation by a jury in a locked room, i.e., nobody leaves until the two-state maps are drawn.

4) Representatives of the convening nations will have the function of assisting in the deliberations between the parties, as good faith arbiters and mediators using their good offices with both parties to produce concessions by both parties which are necessary to any final agreements.

I believe that such a conference has an excellent chance for success for the following reasons:

1) There is ample evidence that important players in the Arab world are moving in the direction of accepting Israel as a viable part of the Middle Eastern family of nations. Egypt, Jordan and the Saudis should play a part in any territorial agreements. Such will alleviate the immense negative pressure upon Palestinian leadership that was felt by Yasser Arafat in 2001.

2) The convening nations will be able to make significant offers to both the Palestinians and Israelis. The offers will be financial and political in nature. They will be so substantial that the populations of both countries are likely to dismiss any government that refuses them.

3) The newly created state of Arab Palestine will receive enormous economic assistance from the rest of the world. New wealth derived from trade will ensure its future prosperity and ease the "pain" of ending the conflict with Israel with something less than victory.

4) As for Israel, it is important to understand that essentially the two state solution, with maps drawn up and signed, ends the conflict over the existence of Israel as a Jewish state. What is that worth to Israel and the Jewish people? Only everything.

5) Other issues including Jerusalem, refugees, water rights, air rights, economic cooperation, and defense between the two states would be sent to lower bureaucratic levels to work out and facilitate the pragmatic operations of the two states. At such levels, problems that were viewed as insoluble at the head of state level will start falling into place rapidly. Jews and Arabs are not natural enemies.

6) This will by no means solve all of the problems between Arabs and Jews in the

(see Prince, page 9)

ZIMMERMAN*(continued from page 2)*

To cement learning about upstanders, I asked students, in their final Holocaust course response paper, to ask themselves, "What is needed to motivate other students (students who do not take a university level course in the Holocaust) to become 'upstanders,' that is, to take action when they see bullying, injustice, or racism?"

One African-American female student and a campus leader responded emphatically (edited for brevity): *"I think that students need to be open to talk about racism and social issues to each other.... I further believe that it is up to us, the students who are taking a university level course in the Holocaust to initiate such conversations...."*

"We need to be the leaders since we now have the information. Students should also watch the news in order to know exactly what is happening in our world and society. Even though many news outlets have their biases, it is important to watch all of the outlets and notice how they are portraying certain stories and social issues. Since a lot of students are not educated in the study of the Holocaust, we should inspire and motivate others to take action against social injustices.... Individuals count, and we should encourage others to have these difficult conversations and have an open mind and not be so defensive when we hear an opinion we do not agree with."

For a different point of view, I present a young Caucasian male's answer to the same question, a student nourished by Catholic education from grade school. *"I think the most important thing that is needed to stop bullying, injustice or racism is time. These are three of the ugliest aspects of society, and they need to be stopped. But to say that it can be stopped immediately is unrealistic. And to say that these aspects are out of control in society is untrue. I believe that people refuse to realize how far we have come as a society."*

"Think about all of the amazing things that this country has done for inclusion of minorities over the last 100 years. This is a country that says 'For Liberty and Justice for All,' but let's be real, it was a country formed for and by rich white males. To turn this into a country of cultural diversity that has never been seen before in the history of the world is pretty amazing! ...There is obviously a long way to go, but it seems incredibly achievable when you consider where we have come from."

"For voters ages 18–25, only Idaho, Wyoming, North Dakota, Kentucky and West Virginia, voted for Donald Trump. That is amazing on two fronts. One being that they decided to overwhelmingly elect a female president but also to take a stand

against a person who they believe to have racist and misogynistic motives...."

I was a college student during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's, and agree with this student that we have, indeed, come a long way. Unfortunately, the current president-elect is turning back the clock on civil rights and eroding the gains my student articulated. Bullying and intimidation are Trump's preferred methods of persuasion. Further, this is a man who would reignite the nuclear arms race.

Parallels between the rise of Hitler and the rise of Trump abound. On Jan. 2, 2017, Robert Reich, former labor secretary under Bill Clinton and a U.C. Berkeley professor, author, and political commentator, posted, "The 15 Warnings Signs of Impending Tyranny" on his website, <http://robertreich.org/post/155319264160>. The parallels from history that he cites and recent actions by our president-elect are truly frightening.

To help students see such parallels, I challenged them in their final response paper: "This semester was unique in that the political process produced a narcissistic and untruthful president-elect, who released racist and anti-Semitic behaviors in his followers. To what extent should we have discussed his campaign in this class (more, less, about right?) and discussed similarities and differences to the Hitler campaign? What parallels do you find between Trump and the tactics used by Adolf Hitler to get elected?"

Quoting again from my African-American student, *"I think that we should have discussed Trump's campaign a lot more in class. We should have discussed the possible reasons of how Trump got elected, the possible future of America that will soon be under his leadership, and how and why he received so much support. Furthermore, we should have discussed the racial divide that he has now caused in America and how we can still promote peace and positivity."*

"...Throughout his campaign, Donald Trump instilled fear in Americans just like Hitler instilled fear in the Germans. Trump used Mexicans and Muslims as scapegoats ... and stereotyped all Muslims as terrorists. I am still in shock that he won the presidential campaign and am somewhat scared for what the future might hold due to him attracting many hate groups to publicly display their racist beliefs and ideas...."

"Trump being elected president [has] caused racial tensions to increase in this country. As a result, there is even more hostility between white people and minorities, especially in the south where I currently live and was born and raised."

It was interesting to me that my one Jewish student had the opposite response: *"To be entirely frank, I believe that political*

discussion should stay out of the classroom. In our case, at a Catholic University, there are many different people from many different backgrounds, some of which are rather conservative. I believe it is very inappropriate to discuss current politics in class, especially when taking a side."

"We can agree that Donald Trump did do bad things during the race, and we can see that he brought out racism and prejudice from his followers; however, not everyone has the same viewpoint. In a classroom setting, students are supposed to not necessarily feel comfortable, but at least feel safe. While I am not sure of the political beliefs of other students in the classroom, it is unfair to not assume there was at least one Trump supporter in the room."

"In addition to this, any comparison between Donald Trump and Adolf Hitler, I believe, is a form of slander. This is a different time, different era, and there are different laws of the land. To view our own president as an equal to one of the worst war criminals in history is demeaning to both the government and ourselves, as OUR democratic nation elected Donald Trump. By comparing him to Hitler, we are, in a sense, comparing ourselves to the German people in the 1940s."

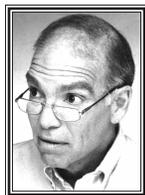
I would point out to this student that Hitler, too, was democratically elected. For 22 years, I have responded to equations between our politicians and Adolf Hitler as specious. Trump is the exception. I feel it is my personal and professional imperative to point out the parallels and to warn of the dangers of a despot. As upstanders, it is incumbent on all of us to recognize and speak out against racism, misogyny, and xenophobia. Doing nothing is not an option.

Perhaps one of my Holocaust students will initiate a campus response to the new era wrought by Trump. Such responses could be a seminar to discuss racism safely, a declaration of the campus as a hate-free zone, setting up a student government committee to prevent bullying and sexual assault, invite students to sign the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on Dec. 10, 1948, or a teach-in to remind us of the values of a free democratic society.

These strategies are in opposition to the University of California Berkeley (Cal) Republican Club's recent invitation to a right-wing extremist. "As the nation's political climate continues to polarize in the wake of Donald Trump's election to the presidency, the Berkeley College Republicans will host conservative journalist and Breitbart editor Milo Yiannopoulos, who has emerged as one of the more divisive voices from the political

(see Zimmerman, page 9)

Shipley Speaks



BY JIM SHIPLEY

Oy! What a year!

While as Jews we celebrate our own New Year with a religious flourish for ten days, usually in the fall, tell me you won't do at least a little family and friends for this one. What a year, right? It looks mightily like we will, in this country of ours have four political parties by the end of 2017. The Democrats are split between the "Regulars" and the "Progressives"; the Republicans between the "Regulars" and the "Tea Party". Not to worry – we are one of the last developed nations on earth to have only two "major" parties. Will things work any better? Don't bet on it.

When Rachel and I were in Israel in October we had breakfast one morning with our friends, Bennie and Ruthie Begin. Bennie has been a Member of Knesset for the past 25 years. He is of course, the son of the late Prime Minister, Menachem Begin, also a friend of ours. Bennie was most interested in our presidential campaign still underway at that time. I discussed the party splits with him. He said "you know in Israel, we have really many parties." Under Israeli law, pretty much anybody can form a party. If your family is large enough, you can do an inter-familial party. "So," Benny shrugged, "we have to have coalition or it won't work."

"So," I asked. "How does it work?"

"Sometimes in chaos, I'll admit," Bennie answered, "but if I want something done, I meet with a member of another party. I'll ask what he wants, tell him what I want, we do some negotiating – then the two of us will round up a third person from yet another party and we will get the votes we need."

Okay, might sound messy, but it works fairly well – not nearly as dysfunctional as what Washington is today.

David Friedman will be the new Ambassador to Israel. Some folks on the left and of course from J Street are upset that he has no diplomatic experience. Take a look at the list of Ambassadors under every president from Roosevelt to Obama. Except in a few instances, their basic experience is as a celebrity or as a major donor.

Friedman does not believe in a Two State Solution. His reason: Anyone of any power on the Other Side does not really want a Two State Solution – just the destruction of the Jewish State. Moving the Embassy? Well, maybe not so fast.

Syria is a failed State. Maybe the U.N. or even the U.S. does not want to recognize it, but Assad's Regime, like so many others in the region, is a participant in the thousand year war between Sunni and Shia. It is a war that shows no sign of abating; just a changing of names of the combatants on both sides. Which begs the question – why are we involved at all?

The only country that seems to pay attention to history is Israel. They have made it very clear to both sides, like a Revolutionary flag of the U.S.: "Don't Tread on Me".

According to Torah, God gave us "dominion over the animals and the world around us." I think that means it is our responsibility to care for this earth. So far as the earth itself is concerned, well what can I say when the President-elect wants to put a man who is currently suing the EPA in charge of it? He wants to put an arsonist in charge of the fire department.

Like the country and most of the "civilized" world, this past year the Jewish Community has become divided. No – this is not the case of two Jews three opinions. This is spiritual, ideological and political. When I was coming to maturity in the work of the "Jewish Community" – while we had our differences on many subjects, the State of Israel was inviolate. That she could do no wrong? That was almost taken for granted.

Obviously as Israel is full of real live people – most of whom are Jews, Israel by its very nature is going to be messy, even wrong in certain cases, but – and I hate to belabor the point – we don't live under the conditions in Israel, we do not pay taxes to the State of Israel – so we have no business lecturing those who do live there and pay those ridiculous taxes.

The problem is with our younger generation, the Millennials and whatever we are calling today's Jewish teenagers. They have no historical perspective. They are exposed to as much "fake news" as real news (go ahead, Jim – what's "real news"?). I could blame their parents – but that probably depends on the relationship between their parents and the generation before them. *L'dor v'dor*. (From generation to generation.)

Yes, like Bette Davis said: "Fasten your seatbelts – it looks like a bumpy ride ahead." Here's hoping things are not as dire as some think and that there is a light at the end of this tunnel that is not a train coming at us.

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. ✨

Shabbat Shalom



BY RABBI JON ADLAND

January 6, 2017, *Vayigash*
Genesis 44:18–44:27, 9 Tevet 5777

A Happy and Healthy secular New Year to everyone. I was going to take one more week off from writing, but some sad and troublesome events in this country convinced me to come out of my short writing vacation to write a few words.

As most of us are aware, at least those who are part of one of the many minorities living good and purposeful lives in this country, there is a rise of anti-minority rhetoric on the airwaves, there is the voice an emboldened part of our society spouting anti-whatever hate they want in the streets, and there are troubling incidents around the country ranging from physical attacks on people of color or on people in the LGBTQ community or minorities to anti-Semitic acts of vandalism. Every day brings news or a picture or a report of something happening someplace.

I am saddened by every act I read or hear about. I can't respond to every one, but they weigh heavily on my heart and soul. Obviously, the increasing rise of anti-Semitism is particularly concerning to me. Jews have faced anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism for the last 2,000 years in almost every place we've tried to put down roots. We've been beaten, exiled, murdered on our long and, at times, arduous journey. In the 1930s and 1940s this culminated with the murder of 6,000,000 Jews and the near extermination of Jewish life in Europe. Today, the remnant of the survivors, the witnesses to the *Shoah*, grows older and quieter. What I am afraid of is that the anti-Semites living in this country are feeling more confident at this time and in this season for any number of reasons. Instead of just words, physical acts against Jewish communities are growing.

As I said above, I can't write or report about every Jewish cemetery that is defaced or synagogue with a swastika painted on it. I can't give you insight into words spoken by the alt-right or white supremacist or neo-Nazis or just plain anti-Semites and bigots. If you go to the ADL website, they will report and detail these incidents. Yet, three things have taken place in recent weeks that reached into my soul and told me to speak up and out. The first is about a girl in *Chadash* religious school program who was harassed by classmates who picked on her because she is Jewish. The girl's family did
(see Adland, page 10)

★ A FOCUS ON HEALING ★

Enhance Healing with Ten Suggestions



BY MELINDA RIBNER

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Reconciliation and Healing



BY RABBI HELEN COHN

Torah Reflections on Parashat Vayechi, Genesis 47:28–50:26

Many Jews are surprised to learn that a sickbed prayer, known as the *Vidui*, is a part of Jewish tradition. This prayer asks God for healing, yet acknowledges the possibility that death may be near. The prayer also asks forgiveness for any previous transgressions or wrongdoings.

This prayer is not seen as a bad omen. Indeed, we are taught "Most of those who said the *Vidui* did not die, and many who did not say it died. Many who are walking the streets recited the *Vidui*..."

Thus a prayer for healing and forgiveness, accompanied by the realization that one's fate is ultimately in God's hands, is something that need not be reserved for



You receive more spiritually. Even if you yourself are sick, pray for others.

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

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

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

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, (see Ribner, page Healing 3)

life's final moments. Rather, forgiveness and reconciliation should be a part of our lives every day.

However, as this week's Torah portion shows us, old hurts and fears may lie under the surface for decades.

We read that after the patriarch Jacob dies, his sons become afraid of their brother Joseph. Years ago the brothers had traveled to Egypt to get food during a time of famine. They appealed to the second-highest ruler in Egypt. They did not realize that illustrious person was their brother Joseph whom they had sold into slavery 22 years before. Eventually, when Joseph makes his identity known to them, they are stunned, then frightened. Surely Joseph would now pay them back for the terrible treatment he had from them!

But Joseph has only comforting words for them, reassuring them that he holds no grudges. He realizes that ultimately it was God, not the brothers, who sent him to Egypt. He urges his brothers to bring their father and all their households to Egypt, to live peacefully with him there.

But now, after living together for 17 years, their father Jacob has died. The sons fearfully wonder if Joseph has truly forgiven them for their harsh treatment of him decades before. Perhaps now that their father has died, Joseph will finally demand his revenge.

When Joseph learns of their fear, he weeps. His tears are those of compassion as he realizes the pain and uncertainty his brothers must have harbored for all those years.

We too feel compassion for the brothers. What a shame that for so long they never spoke to Joseph of their fear. What a shame they lived with their fear, rather than dealing with the situation directly. Fortunately, Joseph was finally able to reassure them and they were at last fully reconciled. They lived their remaining days at peace with one another.

When we are ill, thoughts of our mortality are often with us. The *Vidui* is a prayer of hope and reconciliation, reminding us to make amends with those we have hurt, to forgive and ask forgiveness. Illness can often be a time of introspection and review of the past. Are there people with whom it is time to make amends? Are there situations that can be forgiven, so that reconciliation can take place in this lifetime?

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Jewish Educator



BY AMY HIRSHBERG LEDERMAN

Gift of the hummingbird

I have become aware of many things since my husband died. At first, it had to do with the content of my dreams, visual images and messages that brought me closer to feeling his presence in my non-waking hours. As time went on, that closeness has come through beautiful images I see in the natural world – on hikes in the mountains, in the sky at sunset, and often, in my own back yard, mostly through visits from hummingbirds.

For many years, we both witnessed the beauty of these tiny but determined creatures as they drank from feeders on our back porch. But now, I feel an almost intimate connection with them as they have made their home in nests in both my front and back yard.

I am not a “woo-woo” kind of gal but I knew something significant was going on when I noticed a nest no bigger than a half of a walnut shell on the tiny twinkle light suspended over the seat where Ray often sat when we ate dinner outdoors. I couldn’t be on my porch for more than a minute without the hummer hovering overhead. I began to wonder: is this a messenger from the “other side” wanting to tell me something? Should I do anything about it? Put up extra feeders? Talk to the tiny glittering creature as it whizzed overhead?

I started reading books about the meaning of the hummingbird. I learned that it is the tiniest of all birds and is the only creature that can stop dead while traveling at full speed. It can hover or fly forward, backward, up or down, its wings moving in the configuration of an eight, the sign for infinity.

In many traditional cultures of the western world, the hummingbird has powerful religious and spiritual significance. In the high Andes of South America, the hummingbird is a symbol of resurrection. Hopi and Zuni legends tell of hummingbirds intervening on behalf of humans, convincing the gods to bring rain. Other mystical traditions believe it represents the past and the future and opens up the heart center, bringing joy, happiness and love into the world. One thing was certain: any way I looked at it, having a hummer on my back porch was a good thing.

But one morning everything changed. As I was drinking my coffee on my front



porch, I noticed something that resembled a feathered tiny tea cup on a branch of the potted ficus tree next to our front door. There, camouflaged amidst the leaves, was the tiniest, most compact nest I have ever seen. This is the same porch in which I had created a meditation garden to honor Ray after he died.

The magic and the miracle of having hummingbird nests on my front and back porches continue to overwhelm me. I stop several times each day to watch the mommy birds, whose wings normally flap 50 times per second, sit perfectly still atop their nest. I marvel at the complexity of the home they have constructed for their babies, made of moss, fiber and plant down, and how smart they are to choose secure, shaded spots on the porch for their babies. I feel like I am living on the Disney Nature Channel as I watch this unfold: first eggs and now babies the size of a thumbnail, peaking out from tiny nests.

I have always loved animals but there is something so precious about this experience that I can’t stop thinking about how these mommy hummers have given me an opportunity to experience both awe and compassion in viewing their maternal process.

The Jewish commandment to treat animals with compassion is mentioned on numerous occasions throughout the *Torah* and the *Talmud*. In the book of Deuteronomy, we are commanded not to work on the Sabbath and likewise, must not require our animals to do so. We are told how to avoid causing suffering (*Tza’ar ba’alei chayim* in Hebrew) by not muzzling an animal when it is working (so that it can eat when it needs to) or plowing with an ox and mule together (because their unequal size and strength will cause them both to suffer). But what I love most is the prohibition of taking baby birds from the nest while the mother is present because of the pain that she would experience. How amazing to think that more than 2,500 years ago, our Jewish ancestors were concerned with protecting

(see Lederman, page Healing 3)

Forgiveness



BY RABBI SUSAN GOLDBERG

A congregant recently asked me if forgiveness plays a role in the Jewish tradition. This is an understandable question, as we more often stress repairing relationships and making amends (as aspects of *t’shuvah*) over forgiveness. However, it is indeed present and very much an important point of focus during the High Holy Days.

The Rambam’s summary of the *Talmudic* laws of *t’shuvah* in the *Mishneh Torah* describes a *t’shuvah* process: one who has wronged another must approach the person he has wronged and ask for forgiveness. (Please note: we are not talking about extreme situations such as murder and sexual assault.) If the person does not forgive, the next step is to bring three friends and approach the person again, and ask for forgiveness. If this does not work, the person in the wrong can repeat the process, for a total of three attempts.

If the person still does not forgive, then the matter can be left alone. Here, the Rambam includes an important last sentence: in which he adds, “The person who refused to grant forgiveness is the one who is considered a sinner.”

Forgiveness is a complex subject that provokes strong feelings: There is a false idea that in forgiving, you condone what has happened. Forgiveness is not forgetting that something painful or terrible happened; forgiveness does not mean that you absolve the offender. We can forgive and heal our pain and still know that what happened was not okay.

As South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu said, “Forgiveness does not mean condoning what has been done. It means taking what has happened seriously and not minimizing it; [instead] drawing out the sting in the memory that threatens to poison our entire existence....” When we forgive, we release the hold that the pain has on our lives.

In these High Holy Days, may you ask for forgiveness from those you have wronged and, when it is asked of you, may you open your heart and forgive others.

Rabbi Susan Goldberg is one of seven serving Wilshire Boulevard Temple in Los Angeles. This is from their Oct. 2016 bulletin which can be found with others from the past nine years at www.wbtla.org/online-bulletin. ✨



Wiener's Wisdom



BY RABBI IRWIN WIENER, D.D.

The best is yet to come

To say that life is strange is to undermine the value of life. Perhaps there are things that occur that seem to be strange, but in essence the strange aspects contain surprises we never expected or even anticipated. Perhaps our description should include words like unusual, or unfamiliar. I would go even further and describe them as exotic or mysterious.

These thoughts, and more, came to mind as I entered a phase in my life encompassing the number 80. I remember very vividly a member at a congregation I served who was approaching that magic number and was crying uncontrollably. I asked him why he was in tears, and his reply remained with me to this day, and even resonates more today. His answer: "I am now at the end."

I was in my 20s and did not really comprehend his comment or the thoughts bringing him to this sadness. In those days, this age not only represented a milestone, but also defied statistics. Today, longevity seems to be a given. Even more so, it is not an end, but rather a new chapter in a journey that takes us into uncharted waters.

I look at the years, not as a detriment, but rather as lessons in the mystery of survival. Life, as we know it is something we do not understand, and perhaps never will. We read prosaic notions about the breath of life, or the miracle of birth, or the majestic mystery of creation, and still we find it difficult to comprehend the enormity of birth.

I think about the time we seemed to be vital and energetic, and even daring. Now we, for the most part, are afraid to travel life's road. Once we stood tall in the sunshine, now we look for shade. Our days seem to blend with other days, and the nights never end.

I believe that exotic and mysterious are the most wonderful expressions about our travels into a new dimension called maturity. We are more vital and still have so much more to offer. We are essential to our friends and family. Most of all we need to realize that we are indispensable to ourselves. To age requires grace and dignity because we have an advantage few have enjoyed. The generations that preceded us could never think in terms of numbers

There is a story in the Midrash of an old guy observed planting a fig tree. When asked if he really expected to live long enough to consume the fruits of his labor, he replied: "I was born into a world flourishing with ready pleasures. My ancestors planted for me, and I now I plant for my children..."

Tu B'shevat is Feb 11, 2017

because the numbers we so small.

I believe that to remain young requires us to remain relevant. We have outlasted some friends, but we have gained new ones. Groucho Marx once remarked that at a certain time in our life we go to bed hoping that we will feel better in the morning. Now we go to bed hoping there will be a morning. On the surface it may seem funny, but if we concentrate on the end rather than the continuation, we will have defeated the value of our endurance.

When we were younger we had dreams. Now some of those dreams may have been realized. But our obligation is to continue dreaming. We may, occasionally fall back to thinking and reminiscing about those days long gone, but now more than ever we need to remind ourselves of our vibrancy, our usefulness and our relevance.

Yes, life may be strange and we may fall back to thoughts of "those were the days," but to remain in that vegetated frame of mind truly undermines the value of life. Eighty is not some magical number, rather it is a number in the flow of time. It is not the end of the road, but rather a number that helps us understand that best is yet to be. We may have a pain or two, but hopefully they will go away.

We may face defeats, but victories lie in our perseverance and determination. We may lose a friend or family member, but our fond memories of them can sustain us, and we also make new friends and new family members come into our lives.

Life, to whatever extent, is to live and the reminder given to us, the rainbow in the rain filled sky, was, and is intended to do exactly what God intended it to do – give us hope!

*Rabbi Wiener is spiritual leader of the Sun Lakes Jewish Congregation near Phoenix, Ariz. He welcomes comments at ravoyitz@cox.net. He is the author of two books: *Living With Faith*, and a modern and contemporary interpretation of the *Passover Haggadah* titled, *Why is This Night Different?* ✨*

RIBNER

(continued from page Healing 1)

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. www.kabbalahoftheheart.com. ✨

LEDERMAN

(continued from page Healing 2)

the feelings of a momma bird!

Hummingbirds often return to the same location to build a new nest on top of the old one. I look forward to next spring when I hope to be blessed again with the joy and wonder that these little hummers have given me.

Amy Hirshberg Lederman is an author, Jewish educator, public speaker and attorney who lives in Tucson. Her columns in the AJJ 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. This column was originally received on Aug. 3, 2016. ✨

WEINBERGER

(continued from page Healing 4)

your family. Go ahead and reach out to thank them.

It's wise not to put off your thanksgiving for too long. People are not just sitting around waiting for you to decide to thank them. A few years ago I reached out to Pete Yellin, the man who first taught me clarinet, who then also taught me saxophone as well for about a decade. But alas, I was only able to convey my thanks to his daughter Allegra, for Pete had suffered a debilitating stroke two years before I made contact (he died this past April, may he rest in peace). The bottom line is that you cannot thank people enough, and it's a smart idea to do the thanking sooner rather than later. Plus, it's good for you. Happy Thanks-giving!

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Weinberger has been writing a biweekly column on life in Israel since 1998 that is published in other American Jewish newspapers. He made aliyah in 1997 with his wife, the former Sarah Ross from Omaha, Neb. The four oldest of their five children Nathan, Rebecca, Ruthie and Ezra are veterans of the Israel Defense Forces. He graduated from Columbia University in New York in 1983 in the same class as President Barak Obama. He can be reached at weinross@netvision.net.il. Reprinted with permission from The Jewish Press, Nov. 18, 2016. ✨

Thanksgiving science



BY TEDDY WEINBERGER

We all know how good it feels to be appreciated. When someone thanks us for something, we are happy. It turns out that psychologists have shown that giving thanks also benefits the thanker. For example, Dr. Robert Emmons of the University of California, Davis and Dr. Michael McCullough of the University of Miami conducted a study where participants were divided into two groups: one group was asked to write about what they were thankful for, and the other group was asked to write down what displeased them.

After 10 weeks, participants in the thankful group (based upon a relevant questionnaire) were found to be more optimistic and happy than the other group. In another study, conducted by Dr. Martin Seligman of the University of Pennsylvania, participants were asked to write and personally deliver a thank-you letter to someone whom they had never properly thanked. The impact of this exercise was a huge increase in happiness scores.

You get the idea. Even if you are a natural curmudgeon, it is in your self-interest to practice gratitude on a regular basis. The internet has greatly facilitated thanksgiving. Every now and then over the past decade or so I have reached out to someone from my past, typically a teacher, and thanked them. I strongly encourage this practice, but I also urge you to remember that whatever the reaction of the person being thanked, you have already been successful by doing the thanking. It may happen that with that first thank-you a relationship is rekindled and then this feels extremely good, as happened with me and Professor William B. Dillingham, with whom I studied 19th Century American literature in the mid 1980's as a doctoral student at Emory University.

But it can also happen that the person being thanked doesn't wish to engage with you at all, as happened when I emailed my college clarinet teacher. After resending my email and still getting no response, I wrote the department secretary (I call this being persistent; my daughter Rebecca calls it "stalking"). The secretary wrote back to say that, yes, my clarinet teacher had received my note and that he was happy to have it. While I was disappointed not to receive a personal response, I needed to remember that my goal was accomplished whether or not I heard back from him.

Viktor Frankl on man's search for meaning



BY SARA DEBBIE GUTFREUND

From Aish Hatorah Resources. Aish is the place for everything you want to know about Judaism.

Nine crucial lessons

For so much of our lives, we define ourselves by what we do or what we have. In the month of *Av*, we take the nine days leading up to *Tisha B'Av* and we look at our lives through a different lens. We mourn not only our Temple which was destroyed on the Ninth of *Av* but also the loss of meaning and clarity that followed.

We forget what our purpose is as a nation. We forget what is meaningful and significant in our lives. We forget who we are when we take away the titles and activities and possessions that keep us so distracted from searching for meaning in our lives.

In his awe-inspiring book about his experiences in a concentration camp, *Man's Search for Meaning*, the psychologist Viktor Frankl teaches us crucial lessons in the search for meaning in our lives. Here are nine of the Nine Days leading up to the 9th of *Av*.

Choose hope. We cannot always change our circumstances but we always have a choice about our attitude in any given situation. As Viktor Frankl writes, "When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves."*

Know your why. Ask yourself: What am I living for? Every single day, we should ask ourselves why we are getting up and why we are here at all "Those who have a 'why' can bear with almost any 'how'."



With the tale of my clarinet teacher serving as a cautionary lesson, I still very much urge you to make a practice of thanks-giving. Anyone in your life who has been especially nice, kind, or helpful is an appropriate candidate to receive your thanks. Then there are people who worked for you, whom you treated nicely but whose contribution to you and your family continues to grow in hindsight. I am speaking here in particular of women who were responsible for your home and/or child care. At the time the relationship seems to be a standard professional one, if (hopefully) mutually warm and pleasant. But only in retrospect do you realize how important these people were to

(see Weinberger, page Healing 3)

Learn how to cry. Tears are not a sign of weakness; they emanate from a soul that is not afraid to break: "But there was no need to be ashamed of tears, for tears bore witness that a man had the greatest courage, the courage to suffer."

Don't just be part of the herd. The world is upside down; sometimes doing what everyone else is doing is what is insane. "An abnormal reaction to an abnormal situation is normal."

Live meaningfully. We create meaning by answering the questions life asks from us. "Ultimately, man should not ask what the meaning of his life is, but rather must recognize that it is he who is asked. In a word, each man is questioned by life and he can only answer to life by answering for his own life. It did not really matter what we expected of life, but rather what life expected of us."

Fill your day doing acts of kindness. There is purpose in kindness; there is meaning in the hundreds of small acts of giving that we have the opportunity to grasp each day. "We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's own way."

Move beyond yourself. We find true meaning when we transcend our own needs and limits. "The more one forgets himself – by giving himself to a cause to serve or another person to love – the more human he is and the more he actualizes himself."

Feel the pain of others. Suffering hurts no matter how irrelevant or ordinary it may seem to others. Be attuned to others' grief even if doesn't seem like a tragedy in the overall scheme of life. "Thus suffering completely fills the human soul and conscious mind, no matter whether the suffering is great or little. Therefore, the 'size' of human suffering is absolutely relative."

We can change even when life is hard. We can create meaningful lives full of depth and love and purpose. "Man does not simply exist but always decides what his existence will be, what he will become the next moment. By the same token, every human being has the freedom to change at any instant."

*All quotes in this article are from Viktor Frankl's *Man's Search for Meaning*

Sara Debbie Gutfreund received her BA in English from the University of Pennsylvania and her MA in Family Therapy from the University of North Texas. She has taught parenting classes and self-development seminars and provided adolescent counseling. ✨

ZIMMERMAN*(continued from page 7)*

milieu, for a talk on campus Feb. 1," reported staff writer Camryn Bell in the *Daily Californian* on Jan. 4, 2017.

That Cal legitimized such a man as Yiannopoulos, who harasses students, spews misogyny and racism, and targets both Jews and Muslims, is beyond my comprehension. The Republican Club used freedom of speech to justify their invitation. Freedom to speak or freedom to hate? You decide.

I asked a friendly 2001 Cal physics graduate, Leah Sharp, what she thought of Yiannopoulos speaking at her *Alma Mater*. (Leah is my daughter.) "I would hope that Cal Republicans would be less extreme than other Republicans in the country, tempered by the atmosphere in which they live. The values of equality and justice [permeate] Cal...and justice should be promoted. It's very disappointing."

Leah continued, "I understand and even support UC Berkeley campus officials not being able or wanting to cancel the event. Instead, I think people should take issue with those who invited Milo to speak in the first place, the Berkeley College Republicans." She informed me that the Feb. 1 event is already sold out. So much for California as a liberal bubble.

Another example of the hatred unleashed by President-elect Trump occurred recently in Montana, during *Hanukkah*, the quintessential Jewish holiday of freedom. Rabbi Nat Ezray of Congregation Beth Jacob of Redwood City, Calif., emailed congregants how to support the Glacier Jewish Community in Whitefish, Montana, which has been targeted by white supremacist Richard Spencer.

Rabbi Ezray included action items from Rabbi Francine Roston, spiritual leader of the Glacier Jewish Community. These actions constitute "upstander" behavior; readers are invited to act on any or all of them. Donate to Glacier Jewish Community efforts to increase security, <http://www.glacierjc.org>. Or, donate to Southern Poverty Law Center, which fights hatred in America, <https://www.spl-center.org/>. Finally, write positive, loving messages to "Love Lives Here" – a committee dedicated to creating a caring, open, accepting, and diverse community free from discrimination, which promotes equal treatment for all citizens, PO Box 204, Whitefish, MT 59947. This committee will deliver your messages of support to the Whitefish community.

For two generations and longer, American Jews have proudly celebrated *Hanukkah* without fear of reprisal or harassment. A typical family such as my

PRINCE*(continued from page 6)*

near-term and at best it will be a significant first step toward establishing permanent peace in the long term.

There will still be numerous problems between the two states, after the settlement. Terrorism and radical Islam will not disappear overnight. However, those problems will be resolved by two sovereign states without resorting to war. Whatever disagreement between the states that may follow, will not contain an issue of the existence of either state.

Many knowledgeable observers will say that this can never happen in view of the personalities and the myriad of religious and political conflicts in the Middle East. They are right because that is the status quo. The two state solution is currently a pipe dream, much the same as a Jewish state in Palestine was for many American Jews until April, 1948, and for some until June 1967. For Zionists such as myself, the status quo, i.e. a single Jewish state with control over, and responsibility for Arab territories is unsustainable for Israel in the long run.

It is time for those with a positive vision of a future Middle East to take the first steps to implement a two state solution. The time may well prove to be right for a "deal maker" President-elect Donald Trump to negotiate "the deal" of several centuries. If successful, Trump might ensure his (positive) recognition by history.

Irwin J. Prince (iprince5@hotmail.com) is an Indianapolis attorney from a long-time Zionist family. He has been an active advocate and speaker to community groups on the Israel/Arab conflict (through JCRC) since the late 1960s. (Ed. Note: He also wrote the teen column for the JP&O as a high school student in the mid-1950s.) ✨



own (above), enjoy a family celebration including *latkes*, *dreidles*, and presents; laughter, love, and togetherness.

Without an increase in upstander behavior to mitigate the onslaught of hatred and xenophobia facilitated by our new president, I wonder, how many more

COVER*(continued from page 4)*

people move past negative stereotypes and discover the values they share in common. More information about this and two other exhibits, and images of artwork can be seen at www.inter-faithart.org.

Teplow's reflections about her part in the exhibit:

"Participating in the interfaith exhibit was very exciting and heart-warming for me, because while working with the other participants to hang the pictures, I got to meet the most amazing Muslim and Christian artists. In Israel, my *Kibbutz* was situated between two big Arab villages, and yet, I never got to meet any Muslim person as a friend. Here, I had the pleasure and honor to work closely with some wonderful Muslims and it was a most gratifying and joyful experience." ✨

SASSO*(continued from page 5)*

electoral season with a sense of mistrust, insecurity and fear, with a sense that America is divided and polarized, that we are no longer "one nation under God." May the pronouncements, directives and decisions of the newly elected leadership dispel any apprehension that we are entering a period of fractured trust. May the words and deeds of the new administration yield conciliatory purpose and constructive endeavor.

In the spirit of hope of our state's bicentennial and of the approaching holiday season, we wish you and Mrs. Pence blessings of health and fulfillment in Washington, D.C., as we pray for harmony, goodwill and peace upon America and the world.

Respectfully yours,

Rabbis Dennis and Sandy Sasso

The Sassos have served as spiritual leaders of Congregation Beth-El Zedeck since 1977. Sandy Sasso is director of the religion, spirituality and the arts initiative at Butler University and Christian Theological Seminary. Reprinted with permission of Indianapolis Business Journal, copyright 2016. ✨

years will Jews and Muslims have the opportunity to celebrate our holidays so freely and openly, in the land of the free and the home of the brave, with liberty and justice for all?

Dr. 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. ✨

Spoonful of Humor



ADLAND

(continued from page 8)

BY TED ROBERTS

Fathers, you're never too old to inspire

I used to be a father. I still am, and now I'm a grandfather, too. But it's a load I can handle because the job description is just about identical. It calls for inspiration – of young minds and young hearts; especially grandkids who are remote and therefore consider themselves safe from my constant inspirational messages.

Yes, despite TV and video games and blackberries and cell phones and an environment humming with electronic messages – we all honor and cherish words printed upon paper. We still are the People of the Book. Give us a pencil and a piece of paper, and we'll find something to say.

So, I write a lot of letters to my grandkids. For only 47 cents (it goes up every year – no competition will do that every time) you're allowed a large number of words written on paper. And a wise grandfather, besides counsel, advice, and family gossip, can include a candy bar, a stick of gum, a newspaper clipping, or a baseball card to lure the young mind into the civilized joy of correspondence. What teacher ever taught successfully without incentives? It's a trick I learned years ago from the Crackerjack people. They marketed candy with cheap, fragile toys. I market family pride.

History hints that Socrates – you've heard of the Socratic School – kept a big jar of black olives beside his desk to reward precocious students and I do the same with my letters. I use wiles of all kinds to encourage my younger kin to rip open their envelopes with frantic enthusiasm. "Wonder what he sent this time? Maybe if I write back today, he'll send me another Hershey bar."

Yes, Hershey bars are great. Nice and flat – but they have their disadvantages in July unless you live in Nome and your granddaughter hangs out with her kids in Anchorage. Kids love letters with or without sweet bonuses. They love their name in big, bold letters on the envelope. They love the ritual of sorting through the mail and throwing the discards on the floor before finding THEIR letter.

And like I say, I rarely write without including something that is either amusing, edible, or ethically fortifying. My favorites are clippings from my local

the right thing and reported what had happened. This happened on a school bus and the camera recordings verified the incident. The school, from last I heard, was taking appropriate steps to address the offending students.

Just punishing the students is not the end though. Where did this terribly hurtful and negative attitude come from? You are not born prejudiced. You learn it somewhere and somehow. Did these students hear their parents talking? Did they hear this on the news? Finding the source



newspaper (human interest stories, we used to call them). So educational! Encourages kids to read and observe the world outside of home and school. And if you pick your stories with care, you can package amusement and even morality in your envelopes. For example, I just mailed off to eight grandkids a story of a 65 year old lady who wrote a confession to her high school principal; she cheated in a high school writing course 47 years ago! My small audience loved it and marveled at her delayed, but full confession. And they were full of questions: "Did she have to take the class over? Did she get a punishment? Did they send her a new report card? I assured them she was not punished and maybe – because of her honesty – they renamed the auditorium in her honor.

But my kids usually award the family Pulitzer Prize to the vignettes I call "Pet Saves Family": the collie who pulled Jamie out of the river. The cocker spaniel who barked and alerted the family to their smoldering home. And of course the whole category of dog-finds-missing-child story. We humans, even after we've lost the glow of childhood, still have a soft spot for animal rescue stories. It goes back in history to the gabbling geese who saved Rome. A story probably told in a grandfather's letter of 300 BC.

We don't always need burning homes and swollen rivers. Kids of the right age (say over 3 and under 10) love any animal story. Naturally. They love animals. There's a kinship there of smallness, innocence, helplessness that we just don't understand.

Just this month I mailed out a tearjerker that couldn't fail to warm the juvenile heart. A 2-column report of a 3-legged dog – yes, a handicapped mutt who had lost a race with a truck and forfeited one of his four limbs – found a lost child. The sheriff and an army of searchers failed, noted the article, but the dog, only 75%

(see Roberts, page 13)

of this anti-Semitism and prejudice and getting rid of it is immediate absolute.

Out in Montana in a little town up north called Whitefish is a small Jewish community. This Jewish community and its rabbi are facing the wrath of one of the leading white supremacists in this country. (Really – in Whitefish, MT) He is from this community and his mother has a store there that has suffered because of his views. He has scheduled a march there to coincide with the country's celebration of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday. All of the political leaders of Montana have denounced this bigot and his bigoted movement, but this is a free country. We allow speech of all kinds, even speech that is offensive. All of us must be vigilant and protest against this kind of vicious hate. My hearts are with the people of Whitefish who are supporting the Jewish community and the Jews of Whitefish.

Finally, the incident that drove a personal dagger into my heart and soul, the street sign of my beloved seminary – Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion – located in Cincinnati was defaced with a swastika. This seminary has been a vibrant part of the Cincinnati community since 1875. The school is integrated into the life of the general community. Students work in any number of capacities to help make Cincinnati a great place to live. To see this symbol of hate and murder on the sign of such a beautiful and gentle place is quite painful. Who are these people? Where is the hate coming from in the souls?

Things seem to be changing rapidly in the attitudes and words being spoken publicly in our country. It didn't start yesterday, but for some reason the bigots and haters feel it is now okay to be bigoted and hateful without fear. We must not let this happen. We must not shy away from speaking out. We must remind the people of this country that we are a melting pot of people and ideas from all over and that is what makes us strong. We must always walk toward the blessing and not the curse.

Yes, I worry, but I have faith that goodness and love and kindness are who we are at our core. That is the Americans we must be and that is the America that others look for us to be.

When you light your *Shabbat* candles this week, light one to remind us of the beauty of this world and the possibilities in this country. Light the other candle and let its light guide us in goodness each and every day.

Rabbi 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. ✨

Kabbalah of the Month



BY MELINDA RIBNER

Challenges of Tevet

Dec. 29 – Jan. 27

According to *Kabbalah*, every month offers unique spiritual opportunities and blessings. Just as there are fluctuations in the weather, so there are changes in the spiritual energies available. Those who are attuned to these energies are aware of these changes and know how to use this knowledge for their personal growth and success.

Kabbalah divides the calendar months between Jacob and Esau. *Tevet* is one of the three months that belong to the other side, that of Esau. In Jewish history, *Tevet* has been a time of great trial to the Jewish people. As the darkest and often the coldest month of the year, *Tevet* brings challenges that force us to tap into our inner resources and become stronger as individuals and as a people.

Unlike the expansiveness of *Kislev*, the previous month, when we take steps to go forward to realize our dreams and visions, in *Tevet*, we uproot the remaining negative forces that keep us from realizing them. During the month of *Tevet*, there is a natural tendency to restrict oneself, to be prudent and focused. This is an optimal month to establish and strengthen a routine that truly supports your well being.

On the inside level, this month of *Tevet* is a time of great light, a time of transformation and redemption. The light of *Tevet* is hidden in the darkness. As the Baal Shem Tov said, that because God's light is so powerful it needs to be concealed in darkness. The letter for *Tevet* is *Tet*, which is also the first letter of *Tov* which means "good".

According to *Kabbalah*, the month of *Tevet* is devoted to the purification of negative emotions, particularly anger and jealousy. *Tevet* offers an amazing opportunity for clearing and healing negative emotion. Do not be surprised if you witness around you or even within you greater anger.

The Hebrew letter *Ayin* (eye) is associated with this month. The ability to see the good in every person and in everything that happens is a worthy goal for this month and one that will offer protection. Jealousy, the root of so much suffering and anger personally, communally and globally, comes from the incorrect perception that someone can have something that is meant for you. It is not possible! We can only have what we have the vessels

to receive.

Take care, and always pause to breathe if you find yourself becoming angry or jealous. Before we cast judgment on ourselves or others, we need to be aware that our eyes may deceive us. What we see may not actually be true. On a personal level, it is important to remember that often times the reason the qualities of a person bother us so much is that they are mirroring something within ourselves needing healing. When we judge others in a negative light, too often we are simply projecting our own negative qualities onto them. Projection is a defense mechanism used to protect oneself from the experience of one's own vulnerability. Our freedom lies in the "true seeing" of the Godliness within the person moving from being reactive to being able to make conscious heart centered responses in the face of challenge.

The feelings of jealousy and anger are indicators of a need for greater connection with ourselves and God. The inner work of *Tevet* asks us to be grateful for what we do have and to take responsibility for what shows up in our lives. The inward tone of this month invites us to see reality more as it is. Though this process may be painful and disillusioning, it actually strengthens us. Through this kind of introspection, we touch the essence of truth, which in itself brings an inner joy and goodness with it.

This month we have an amazing opportunity to heal the anger we carry inside that continues to limit us. It may not be an easy process, but working through it will yield greater well being, freedom, and joy in our lives. We must begin with the awareness of how we limit ourselves through our anger. Awareness is the first step. It does not matter if the anger is directed at ourselves or toward other people. Blaming oneself or others is simply disempowering.

Tevet is a time of great light, for the greatest light is hidden in darkness. Everything is a mirror. Whatever we see is reflected back to us. If we see the good, the good is reflected back to us. If we see the negative, the negative is reflected back to us. So let's try to see the good in others and in ourselves, particularly this month.

The challenge and opportunity this entire month is to cultivate patience, practice forgiveness, and continually remember that nothing happens by accident. There is goodness within each challenge. Everything that is happening to us, what appears as good and what may feel as not so good, is designed to take you forward in your life. During this month, make a conscious effort to let go of the need to be right and attempt to see everything and everyone in the best light.

We will know how we are progressing spiritually by observing our anger level. Becoming angered easily is a sign we need to purify ourselves.

We must make a decision to work on anger because being stuck in anger has so many negative consequences. It renders us victims who are powerless and unable to go forward in our lives. When we are angry we are not free. We are slaves to our emotions. We are out of control. We lose contact with our own souls when we blame other people or events for our own unhappiness. That is why during this month the *Torah* portions we read are all about slavery.

Long before the holistic movement made the connection between the mind and the body, *Kabbalah* said that anger was the root cause of illness, because it actually disconnects us from God's energy and from who we really are. If we want to heal ourselves from illness, we have to heal and transform the anger we feel inside. Joy and love are powerful healing forces in life that we need to nourish in our lives.

If you find yourself becoming angry this month, here are a few suggestions. Make an effort to calm yourself and not speak or act impulsively. Train yourself to take long deep breaths, visualize the release of tension through the breath. Make a habit of speaking in a soft and gentle voice so when you are angry you will not raise your voice too much. Give yourself time to look at the situation differently before responding. Try to be detached, objective, as if it were happening to someone else. Imagine yourself on a mountain top looking down from that vantage point. Assume responsibility for your feelings, making I statements such as "I feel this ___- when you do___". Do not blame the other person for your feelings. It is ultimately your choice whether to be hurt or angry. Raise your vibration by doing something nurturing or enjoyable.

While it is not helpful to be angry and reactive, it is also important that in the face of conflict that we not become door-mats or passive. It is not healthy to stuff our feelings inside. Denial does not in itself make the anger go away. Anger continues to occupy psychic space within us, whether we are conscious of our feelings or not.

It is therefore important to create safe venues for oneself to process, feel and release anger particularly this month. Give yourself time to feel, rather than avoid or deny yourself or your negative feelings. If you are angry, do not deny your angry feelings. Your feelings are beautiful, even your angry feelings. It is really okay to feel your feelings. It is safe and healing to do so. Yet feeling one's

(see Ribner, page 13)

Media Watch



BY RABBI ELLIOT B. GERTEL

American Pastoral

Based on Philip Roth's novel, *American Pastoral*, tells the story of "Swede" – Seymour Irving – Levov (Ewan McGregor, who makes his directorial debut here), a good-looking, charismatic high school athlete admired by many and envied by some for what appears to be an easy, charmed life.

Levov returns from the Korean War to gather his sweetheart, Dawn Dwyer (Jennifer Connelly), a former Miss New Jersey – according to the narrator, a "shiksa" – and to escort her to his father's Newark leather glove factory in order to win the elder's approval. Manufacturer Dad Lou (Peter Riegert) grills her, asking what her very Catholic family says about Jews, and nixing her desire to have her children baptized or to learn the catechism ("whatever that is"). After stating that "all of the sacraments are important to me," she quickly announces that, if need be, she and Seymour will not have children.

The couple receives Pop's reluctant blessing and are soon blessed with a daughter, Merry (Dakota Fanning), who, like her mother, spends as much time possible tending to the horses on their rural – or pastoral – farm in a distant, affluent suburb. But the beautiful daughter, who exceeds her father in blondness, stutters terribly. According to her therapist, the reason is not physical but psychological: a way to get the attention of her handsome father and of her "rival" beauty pageant winning mother.

The parents refuse to accept clear signs that their daughter is becoming a prototype of Freudian inner conflict, until she starts setting off deadly explosions during her high school years, after embracing Marxian doctrine during the turbulent 1960s. Her parents, by the way, have allowed her to travel to New York City to commune with "friends" whom they do not know. Until Swede learns about her destructive deeds, which include the killing of a beloved neighbor, he is perfectly satisfied that these friends like her and that she likes them.

In this story, Freud definitely one-ups Marx, even though the "Marxist" activities appear to cure the stutter. Merry is opposed to everything her parents represent (which, if the therapist is correct, was the problem all along), and delights in



Ewan McGregor and Dakota Fanning in *American Pastoral*, adapted from Philip Roth's 1997 novel and directed by Mr. McGregor. Credit Richard Foreman/Lionsgate.

the youth "revolution" fueled in Newark by police brutality against blacks. Dad insists that the family factory has always been generous to black employees, who have worked there for many years. One African American employee helps him to guard the factory during the riots.

Just as Seymour and Dawn discover that their daughter is wanted by the FBI, the latter disappears. Seymour holds a torch for Merry but his wife moves on, finding comfort in plastic surgery and the possibility of finding an admirer. After suffering a nervous breakdown, Dawn comments to Seymour that she should have married one of the nice Catholic boys who courted her during happy family summer outings. Seymour's parents have been unable to help him; his physician brother Jerry helps a bit but mostly takes out the family tension on nurses at his hospital by being nasty to them.

The wife of Merry's victim offers a sobering prophecy when Seymour and Dawn visit to offer their condolences: "We will survive as a loving family with our memories in tact...to sustain us. We'll be the same family. That's the difference [between our families in the wake of this murder]."

Perhaps this film, written by John Romano, and the Philip Roth novel on which it is based, intend to preach about the pitfalls of interfaith marriage. (The film put that discussion briefly but effectively at the beginning; the novel places it by flashback at a culminating spot near the end.) But there is also a suggestion that Jewish women can be vicious. A young woman, "Rita Cohen" (Valorie Curry) visits the factory, claiming to be a business student studying the industry. Right after Seymour the Swede and his staff present

her with a pair of gloves as a gift, she makes demands as a messenger in behalf of Seymour's long lost daughter. Then she tries to seduce the desperate father when he comes to her hotel room hoping to see his daughter. The film does suggest that she might not be who she says she is, that the name is false. But the implication is that there is nothing shocking about accepting the name at face value.

The likable and beautiful Seymour and Dawn are in over their heads. In many ways their looks and their eye for looks have robbed them of any spiritual resources. For a poster guy, Seymour is nice enough and responsible enough; he does well with the family business. And he's not a bad detective. He discovers that the therapist has betrayed them, so they are without Freudian succor, as well.

Roth and Romano have made some powerful points, but to what purpose? The film highlights in bold relief that Roth did not write the great American novel about the conflicts of "half Jewish" children. The novel and film appear to have a far more modest purpose.

Rather than a penetrating look at the 1960s, *American Pastoral* (the novel, as well as the film) is a rather superficial tribute to soap opera movies of the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. Seymour is, after all, a male Mildred Pierce, a long-suffering Jewish father willing to do anything to help his murderous religion-less daughter, who does, interestingly, embrace an unexpected religion for atonement purposes. Whether or not there is some Jewish chauvinism in the contrast made between the father on one side, and the mother and daughter on the other, the film-goer must decide. But for whatever reason,

(see Gertel, page 13)

Torah Study



BY RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN

The Joseph saga

The great and most colorful Joseph saga extends over four *Torah* portions and 13 chapters! How opportune it is as we celebrate the miracle of *Hannukah* and the reading of Joseph's awesome adventures, that the Jewish experience has often been to find ourselves like Joseph in the darkness of the pit without losing faith in the light of redemption yet to emerge.

Just like Joseph, the dreamer and interpreter of incredible dreams (he should have kept some of them to himself!), the Jewish people have believed that noble as well as disturbing dreams have the potential and power to transform reality. Like Joseph who was not accepted by his own immature and treacherous kin, begrudging him his unique spirit and grandiose ideas of a dreamy youngster whose father's favoritism put him at risk, we have felt isolated throughout much of history.

We have been rejected for insisting on living our own authentic lives as a minority, yet willing to stand up to the majority if necessary. Our faithfulness to the dictates of our faith and conscience has been interpreted as a negative reflection of aloofness rather than one of a proud choice. Joseph, through his mind's genius and heart's compassion, was able to save both his adopted empire of Egypt and his family from small Canaan. In the process he taught us that borders and feelings need not be obstacles to a constructive response to the urgent demands of life and death issues.

Joseph managed to transcend his personal insecurities and apprehensions in order to accomplish the larger and lasting goals of putting his substantial talents to the beneficial use of society, rather than dwelling on past hurts and injustices that could have crippled him and others. Thus he wisely chose the high road allowing him to become a great Egyptian while earning his status as a great Hebrew brother and leader, whose early self-centered dreams turned into a blessed reality for all concerned through maturity of character wrought by trials and tribulations.

The ultimate challenge of this mighty ruler second only to Pharaoh, as is often the human case, was to conquer and control his own raging passions, which he had already proven with tempting and

GERTEL

(continued from page 12)

there is definitely something Madame X and Mildred Pierce about this film.

Rabbi 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. ★



aggressive Mrs. Potiphar, earning him the Rabbis' honorific appellation "*Hatzadik*" (The saintly one). He was able to repeat it with his brothers at the pinnacle of his brilliant career with so much at stake for himself and for them. What a moving moment of victory it is for all concerned when Joseph can no longer hold back his tears and eagerly desires to reveal his true identity to his overwhelmed brothers, not quite realizing that they would never recover from the shock of the encounter and/or from the guilt that would continue to burden them.

Perhaps Joseph's favorable decision to reach out to them was ultimately prompted by Judah's display of sincere love for brother Benjamin as well as for father Jacob's well-being. Earlier, Joseph learned of his brothers' remorse and fear when being challenged by him, acknowledging their past wrongdoing. Upon reconnecting to his family he was enabled to rejoin his roots and was thus ennobled and made whole. Joseph could have abandoned his Hebrew background, protecting his painfully acquired identity and status, but he knew that his remarkable life's success had to carry a humbling message of healing and gratitude.

Joseph appeals to us in his touching humaneness which is not lost when he becomes powerful and his survivor's skills of ascending from the pit to the palace inspire us, realizing that it reflects the historic Jewish challenge to survive and even thrive in a harsh reality. He is the prototype model of the modern Jew, enlightening us about living in two worlds. He was able to perceive God's guiding hand in his tumultuous life, steeled and sensitized by adversity turned into advantage. Joseph and the Maccabees of all ages have taught us that to be a Jew is to somehow make a difference, reducing darkness and rejoicing in the light's promise.

Dr. Israel Zoberman is the founding rabbi of Congregation Beth Chaverim. He is Honorary Senior Rabbi Scholar at Eastern Shore Chapel Episcopal Church. ★

ROBERTS

(continued from page 10)

effective, found the missing child.

The returns from my young readers have been overwhelmingly enthusiastic about this theme. More! they cry. They want more. But that's not so easy. I'm at the mercy of the newspaper industry, which is attracted to war, corruption, crime, and disease rather than the uplifting genre of "Pet Finds Child".

Besides the inspirational value, there's a selfish payoff to my letter writing campaigns: I like the return mail. And maybe decades from now when I'm old and my pen trembles on the paper; and my poor old grinders are loose and wobbly, my mail will be full of attentive notes sweetened with easy to chew Hershey bars. Bread on the waters, you know.

The humor of Ted, The Scribbler on the Roof, appears in newspapers around the US, on National Public Radio, and numerous web sites. Check out his Web site: www.wonderwordworks.com. Blogsite: www.scribblerontheroof.typepad.com. His collected works The Scribbler on The Roof can be bought at Amazon.com or lulu.com/content/127641. ★



RIBNER

(continued from page 11)

angry feelings is quite different than acting upon them and dumping them on another person. A person will often find that underneath the anger they feel is hurt, and a call for greater love and acceptance. Love Yourself and All Your Feelings Unconditionally!

When the root cause within yourself for your anger is revealed to you, you will appreciate the growth opportunity that the anger offered you, and you will then be able to truly heal yourself. And after that, if it is necessary, you may be able to express yourself to the actual person who has hurt you in a way that invites healing and reconciliation rather than defensiveness and hostility. It is possible to stand up for oneself and assert one's truth without being angry, defensive or making another wrong for their truth.

In the course of the month particularly, as a general principle, it is helpful to continually remind yourself that the challenge or problem in front of you is an opportunity to change, heal, and expand yourself in the way that your soul wants to take you forward. Take time to meditate and speak to God about your hurt and anger and ask how you can heal and better respond to people in a more loving and positive way.

See her bio on page Healing 1. ★

My Kosher Kitchen

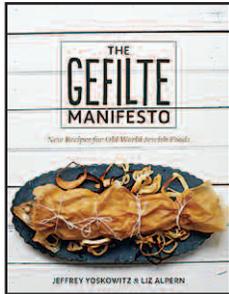


BY SYBIL KAPLAN

Traditional Ashkenazi recipes

The Gefilte Manifesto. By Jeffrey Yoskowitz and Liz Alper. Flatiron Books. \$35 hardcover. 320 pp. Sept. 13, 2016.

A manifesto is a written statement that describes the policies, goals, and opinions of a person or group. But what kind of manifesto can you write about gefilte fish?



To discover this, meet Jeffrey Yoskowitz, trained pickler who worked as an entrepreneur and consultant for small businesses. Then he met Liz Alper who had worked with Jewish cookbook and cooking maven, Joan Nathan, then curated and cooked for pop-up events and boutique shops.

Together they founded The Gefilteria, a Brooklyn business to reimagine Jewish classics. In this cookbook, they decided to focus on recipes “that tell the story of a rich ethnic cuisine,” that of Ashkenazi cooking using “an old approach to a new way of eating.” There are 98 recipes (by my count) enhanced by 102 color photographs of food and more.

The introduction alternates between Jeffrey and Liz as they discuss how they grew up and got into the business of gefilte fish revival with a friend, Jackie Lilinshtein, first for local shops then for stores around the country. This developed into pickles, horseradish, borscht and more. They then discuss the basics of Ashkenazi cooking, what the book is really all about, and things to keep in mind when using this book.

Chapters are: Pantry Staples (10 recipes including Quick and Creamy Farmer’s Cheese, Apple-Pear Sauce and Summer Harvest Jams); Pickles (12 recipes such as Classic Sour Dills, Sauerkraut and Clove and Spice Pickled Beets); Breads (8 recipes like Jewish Rye, Bagels at Home and Bialys); Soups and Dumplings (11 recipes with Beet Borscht, Classic Chicken Soup and Rustic Matzo Balls); Appetizers and Lighter Sides (11 recipes including Sweet Lokshen Kugel, Herbed Gefilte Fish and Sweet Beet Horseradish Relish); Deli Sides and Specialties (11 recipes like

FOGEL

(continued from page 15)

for The Relish (an e-publication dedicated to female sports fans; sign up for the twice-weekly newsletter at therelish.com or view longer posts at medium.com/the-relish), and a freelance book editor. For more information on the latter, check out her website at hanna.mfogel.wordpress.com. She can be reached on Twitter at @hannamfogel, or by email at hmfogel@gmail.com. ✨



Mustard Slaw, Chopped Liver Pate and Peasant Potato Salad); Mains (10 recipes with Roast Chicken and Wine-Braised Brisket); Desserts (12 recipes including Bow-Tie Kichel, Schnecken and Apple Strudel); and Beverages (13 recipes like Soda syrups).

The book ends with sample menus, leftover adventure, water bath canning, resources, notes and a bibliography before the index.

There is no doubt this cookbook is not only creative but all of the recipes have introductory remarks (which I personally love), ingredients are bold face and (my favorite in a cookbook) – instructions are numbered.

This is the cookbook to give to anyone who appreciates the nostalgia of their family recipes, traditional old-world, Ashkenazi recipes and who will enjoy revitalizing them for today’s families. I would be remiss if I didn’t include their recipe for gefilte fish!

Poached Gefilte Quenelles

10 (2-ounce) quenelles

heads, bones and tails from a fish

1 Tbsp. kosher salt

2 coarsely chopped onions

4 medium carrots

3 Tbsp. sugar

4 quarts water

Place the fish parts, salt, onions, carrots, sugar and water in a large stockpot and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to maintain a simmer, cover and simmer for at least 45 minutes before poaching the quenelles. Skim off any foam that rises to the surface. Wet your hands and form the gefilte fish mixture into about 10 quenelles the size of an egg, with a similarly oblong shape. They will expand as they cook. Place them one by one into the poaching liquid. Make sure the heat is on low and cover the pot. Poach for 30 minutes. Remove the quenelles with a slotted spoon and place them in a bowl. Spoon enough poaching liquid over to cover the quenelles. Let cool slightly before refrigerating. To serve, remove the carrots and cut them into 3/4-inch rounds. Serve chilled with carrot pieces and horseradish relish. ✨

KAPLANIS

(continued from page 16)

bones at Philistine sites are pigs. But here nothing,” Garfinkel said.

[Professor Garfinkel] argues that the pottery shard, also known as an ostrakon, is the earliest example of Hebrew writing ever unearthed. On it are written commandments to worship the Lord and to help widows, orphans, and slaves.

“It started with the word *al-ta’as*, which means “Don’t do.” And “*ta’as*,” to do, is only in Hebrew. It’s not Canaanite and not Philistine,” Garfinkel explained.

Garfinkel also argues that the absence of idols, which would have been in abundance, points to a Jewish city. “If you go to Canaanite temples of the Late Bronze, you will find a lot of human and animal figures, but not in KQ. So the people here really obeyed the biblical taboo on graven images,” he said.

“The esteemed archaeologist points out that in the absence of idols there were religious shrines. And the models predate Solomon’s temple by about 40 years. Yet they match the Bible’s description of the temple down to the triple framed doors. They’re the first physical evidence of Jewish worship in the time of King David.”

Also on display and part of this exhibit at the Bible Lands Museum are the two inscriptions that were found: one on a jar; and one inscribed with ink on a pottery shard (see photo top right, page 16), which contains the distinctly identifiable Hebrew words of “king,” “don’t do,” and “judge.” This may be the earliest words written in the Hebrew language.

Among other objects found and on display are storage jars; water basins; a model of a house; hundreds of pottery vessels; storage jar handles with finger impressions; cooking pots and jugs (see photo bottom of page 16); and the bowl with the olive pits.

Most amazing was a stone model shrine, which reflected a Mesopotamian architectural style before the era of King David but which probably inspired the look of the palace built by Solomon, David’s son. Features of the model are mentioned in biblical references to King Solomon’s temple, built decades later.

Sybil Kaplan is a foreign correspondent for North American Jewish newspapers, a book reviewer, compiler and editor of nine kosher cookbooks, restaurant feature writer for the Israeli website Janglo.net, feature writer for the website itraveljerusalem.net. She lives in Jerusalem. ✨



Jews in Sports

BY HANNA FOGEL

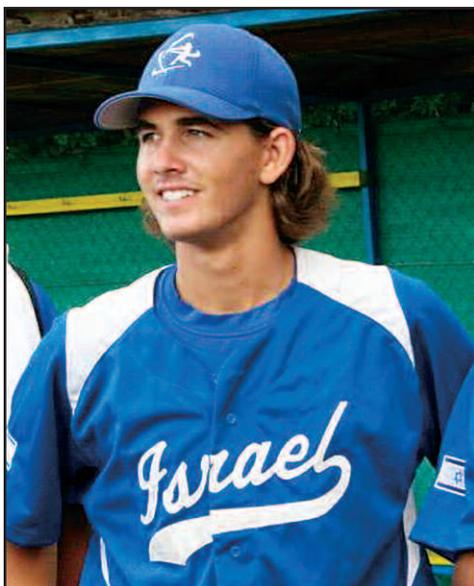


Up-&-Comers

Because of the stereotype that Jews aren't athletic, the ones who are, tend to become fairly well-known in Jewish circles pretty quickly. This means you've likely heard of baseball player **Ryan Braun**, gymnast **Aly Raisman**, New England Patriots football player **Julian Edelman**, offensive linemen **Geoff** and **Mitch Schwartz** (who recently released a joint autobiography called *Eat My Schwartz*) and basketball players **Amar'e Stoudemire** and **Omri Casspi**.

There are likely even more athletes you're familiar with but maybe didn't realize were Jewish, like current Toronto Blue Jay **Kevin Pillar**. So in this roundup, we're going to focus on three Jewish athletes (one baseball player and two hockey players) that you may never have heard of, for their religion, athletic prowess, or otherwise – at least not yet. These are some of the up-and-comers, the ones we think you'll be seeing on your TV screens sooner rather than later.

When you think of Israeli sports, baseball likely isn't the first sport that comes to mind. Yet last month Team Israel claimed the last qualifying spot for the World Baseball Classic (for the country's first ever appearance) that'll be taking place in South Korea in March 2017. How, you might ask? The WBC's rules allow any player that could possibly qualify for citizenship to play for a country – so in Team Israel's case, because of the Law of Return, this includes anyone who is Jewish themselves, has at least one Jewish parent



Dean Kremer (from Jewish Baseball News)

or grandparent, or has a Jewish spouse.

One of the two actual Israeli citizens on the team is 20-year-old relief pitcher **Dean Kremer**, who in 2015 became the first Israeli drafted by a Major League team and eventually ended up joining the Dodgers organization. Though he was actually born in California, his parents are Israeli, so he holds dual citizenship.

If baseball seems like an unlikely Israeli pastime, one would think ice hockey would be even more so. Yet sixteen-year-old **David Levin**, who was born and raised in Israel, is currently playing in the



David Levin (photo from Sports Illustrated)

Ontario Hockey League (and was the first overall pick in their 2015 draft) and figures to be a top prospect for the 2018 NHL Draft. He would be the first Israel-born player to ever be drafted onto a National Hockey League team. His dad coached a roller hockey team, which led Levin to trying it out on the ice at one of Israel's two rinks. At the age of 12, he moved to Canada to live with extended family and work on his game. Levin's one setback may end up being his obligations to the IDF as an Israeli citizen: his status will be reviewed once he turns 18, at which time he may or may not be granted an exemption from military service.

Toronto's **Zach Hyman** had a brief stint with his hometown Maple Leafs last season, playing 16 games with them before being sent back down to their minor league affiliate as the Marlies entered the Calder Cup playoff race. Though his time in the NHL was brief, and while he may not have the flashiest game, Hyman's steadfast effort has impressed. The Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto graduate made the Leafs' roster out of training camp; it looks like this time he will be sticking around.

Baseball may be winding down this month but will be back again in the spring, and what with hockey just starting up and going until June, sports fan or no, as fellow Members of the Tribe, these guys will give you an extra reason to root for them all year 'round.

Hanna Fogel has lived in Indianapolis most of her life and has been part of the Jewish community. She attended the Hasten

New baseball facility at Beit Shemesh, Israel



Jordy Alter, US Expat and head of Beit Shemesh Baseball non-profit organization addresses the crowd at the January 6 groundbreaking for the state of the art baseball center at Beit Shemesh. Photo credits: Margo Sugarman.



Ike Davis, Josh Zeid, Peter Kurz (President of Israel Association of Baseball), Jordy Alter, Moshe Abutbul (Mayor of Beit Shemesh), Eric Michaelson, Itzik Kanizo (Head of Sport, Beit Shemesh) break ground for the new facility



Zach Hyman (photo from the Toronto Star)

Hebrew Academy from Gan through 8th grade, spent her summers at JCC camps, and remains a member of Congregation Shaarey Tefilla. Alongside writing for the Jewish Post & Opinion, she is currently a copy editor for NUVO Newsweekly, founding staff writer (see Fogel, page 14)

Seen on the Israel Scene



BY SYBIL KAPLAN
PHOTOS BY BARRY A. KAPLAN

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Bible Lands Museum

“In the Valley of David and Goliath”

⁴⁸As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. ⁴⁹Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground.

⁵⁰So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him.

We’ve all read or heard the story of David and Goliath, and tour guides point out where the battle took place. But in 2012 “an archaeological dig near Goliath’s home town yielded evidence of Judean religious practices 3,000 years ago, pointing up fresh connections to the stories of King David and King Solomon” wrote Alan Boyle, Science Editor, NBC News, May 2, 2012.

This was part of his interview with Yosef Garfinkel, an archaeologist from the Hebrew University, currently Yigael Yadin Chair in Archaeology of Israel, at the Hebrew University, and Director of Excavations at Khirbet Qeiyafa.

On Sept. 5, we were invited to the Bible Lands Museum, as members of the press corps, along with hundreds of other non-press people to see the opening of a new exhibit, “In the Valley of David and Goliath.” This exhibit was presented to the public for the first time and will be on view for a year until September 2017.



The author, Sybil Kaplan, meets Professor Yosef Garfinkel at the opening of the “In the Valley of David and Goliath” exhibit at the Bible Lands Museum.

Khirbet Qeiyafa (which means fortress of Elah), 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem,



The dating of the city, based on the carbon14 dating test, was performed on these 28 olive pits.

on top of a hill overlooking the Valley Elah, was excavated by Professor Garfinkel from 2007–2012. This fortified city was across from Gath, the Philistine city, where Goliath lived when he came out to face the Israelites. The evidence indicates the fortified city was a military outpost for the House of David. In David’s day, the Valley of Elah served as a neutral zone between the Israelites and the Philistines. In Qeiyafa, which was right on the frontlines, excavators discovered a large cache of weapons, which Professor Garfinkel identifies as “an area of conflict between two political units.”

Based on carbon 14 dating performed on 28 olive pits (photo above), archaeologists believe the city lasted from 1020–980 BCE. Items found at the site strengthen connection to King David and religious practices specified in the Bible.

In other words, what archaeologists found was evidence of urbanization, a fortified city (verified by carbon tests) built at the end of the 11th century BCE and located across from the Philistine city where Goliath lived when he came out to face the Israelites. According to Professor Garfinkel, this Iron Age town was described by the Bible as the location of the battle between David and Goliath 3000 years ago.



One of the inscriptions was found on this pottery shard, maybe the earliest written Hebrew language.

In an interview by Erin Zimmerman (for CBS News, June 7, 2013), Professor Garfinkel maintained this was a Jewish city for four reasons.

“It has a big casement city wall and houses abutting the city wall,” [the professor] said. “This is known from four other sites, so now we have five sites. All these five cities are in Judah. None of them is in Philistia. This is really typical Judean urban planning.”

[The professor’s] second argument is the animal bones found in the city, all of them strictly kosher.

“We have sheep, goat, cattle, but we have no pigs and no dogs. On the Philistine side, they consume pigs and also dogs. Up to 20 percent of the animal (see Kaplan15, page 14)



Cooking pots.