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L'Shana Tova!



Cover art by Alex Levin (see About the Cover, p.3).

Editorial

Synchronicity is not a common word but it is the best one to describe what happened for me on Aug. 21, 2012. Miriam Zimmerman, Holocaust educator and mediator, who has penned a column for this newspaper since 1988 was visiting Indianapolis. She is the daughter of a German Holocaust survivor and many of her columns have been about or related to this subject.

I will save the details about her trip in case she would like to write about it herself, except to say that she came to Indianapolis for a corneal transplant, because in researching, she found one of the most respected doctors in that field works here.

She wanted to be sure we got together while she was here so she contacted me in advance. A few days after her surgery on the above date, we met for lunch. I asked her what else she hoped to do while here. She told me she had plans to meet Eva Kor at the Indianapolis International Airport in a couple of hours.

Kor is one of approximately 200 sets of twins out of 1500 who survived the genetic experiments of Dr. Josef Mengele in Auschwitz Concentration Camp during World War II. She has lived most of her life in Terre Haute, Ind., where in 1984 she founded the CANDLES Holocaust Museum (www.candleholocaustmuseum.org). C.A.N.D.L.E.S. is an acronym for the words "Children of Auschwitz Nazi Deadly Lab Experiments Survivors."

Another event for which Kor is known more recently is leading tours of Auschwitz. Zimmerman has probably known Kor all her life and in 1995 she had the privilege to travel with Kor on one of those trips. I, on the other hand, have never met Eva Kor even though I have wanted to for several years especially after Oct. 2006 when I saw and reviewed a movie about her life titled, *Forgiving Dr. Mengele*.

I was thrilled when Zimmerman asked me if I would like to join her at this meeting and ride to the airport with her. Since this is a High Holiday issue, I knew I would hear some opinions from Kor about forgiveness that would be appropriate for this season.

I had high expectations of Kor after reading much about her, but she topped those. She is knowledgeable about all kinds of Jewish history, especially World War II and the Holocaust, but also current events such as the upcoming US elections. She is so full-of-life, the exact opposite of what Dr. Mengele set out to accomplish with her. He treated her worse than an animal and yet she has triumphed. Instead



L-R: Eva Kor, Jennie Cohen, and Miriam Zimmerman meeting at Indianapolis airport.

of seeking revenge, she has taken the high road by forgiving him.

This has been a bone of contention with many Jews and one of the reasons the surviving twins will not talk to Kor. She remarked that she is never depressed yet all of them except one are taking anti-depressants and tranquilizers. She believes that by forgiving the evil doctor she was able to be released from the hold he still had on her even decades after her physical liberation.

Kor suggests another reason for their refusal to talk to her. They think she is using their story for her own purposes. They along with other Jews believe that according to Jewish law one can only forgive if the perpetrator asks for their forgiveness. This is not possible in her case because he is no longer alive to do so.

Kor insists that she is not telling others what to do, but for herself, forgiveness was the best way to finally be freed from her perpetrator. She said she has spoken to many young people who have been abused. Even if every one of those abusers was caught and punished, the pain they caused would not suddenly disappear if those perpetrators were brought to trial, sentenced, and penalized for their crime. The images and memories would still be there to haunt these victims. She said forgiving the criminal does not mean the victim believes that what the perpetrator did was acceptable, and it is not saying that the criminal does not need to pay for his or her actions.

Even though Kor was liberated from Auschwitz in 1945 at age 11, it wasn't until many years later that she was finally able to feel and express the terrifying emotions from being tortured in Auschwitz. In 1978 she began speaking out about her Holocaust experiences to school children and others. About seven years into these speaking engagements, the emotions she had repressed began to come out. She said her speeches became interrupted by her sobs.

I learned by observing Kor that this is an ongoing healing process for her. For example, she was explaining that she was sorry about her behavior to one set of twins she knew in Auschwitz. Upon liberation,

Inside this Issue

Editorial.....	2
Rabbi Benzion Cohen (Chassidic Rabbi).....	3
About the Cover	3
Rabbi Jon Adland (Shabbat Shalom).....	4
Rabbi Sandy Eisenberg Sasso	4
Amy Hirshberg Lederman (Jewish Educator).....	5
Rabbi Irwin Wiener (Wiener's Wisdom).....	6
Melinda Ribner (Kabbalah of the Month).....	6
Howard Karsh (Jewish America).....	7
Rabbi Moshe ben Asher and Magidah Khulda bat Sarah (Gather the People).....	8
Rabbi Avi Shafran (An Observant Eye).....	8
Ted Roberts (Spoonful of Humor).....	9
Jim Shipley (Shipley Speaks).....	10
Seth Ben-Mordecai (The Roads from Babel).....	10
Sybil Kaplan (Seen on the Israel Scene).....	11
Irene Backalenick (Jewish Theater).....	12
Morton Gold (As I Heard It).....	14
Rabbi Elliot B. Gertel (Media Watch).....	15
Rabbi Israel Zoberman (Book Review).....	16
On This Day in Jewish History	16
Dr. Morton I. Teicher (Book Reviews).....	17
Sybil Kaplan (My Kosher Kitchen).....	18
Jews in Sports	20

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their mother showed up to take her daughters with her. Kor pleaded to those twins to please ask their mother to also take Kor and her sister. That mother eventually agreed and was able to take them by telling those in charge that she was their aunt.

Kor stated that she did not treat those twins well because she was so jealous of them. They had a mother and Kor desperately longed for hers. As she said
(see Editorial, page 3)

Chassidic Rabbi

BY RABBI BENZION COHEN

Marriage Part 2

In my last column in the July 25, 2012 edition, I wrote about marriage. One of my readers asked to hear more about the meaning of marriage. I am devoting this column to marriage, with the hope that it will inspire those who are not married to get married, and those who are not happily married to make their marriage happy, and those who are happily married to make their marriage even better.

According to *Chassidic* thought, marrying the right person unifies two halves of one soul. When a boy is born the masculine side of this soul comes down to earth and is in clothed in his body. The feminine half of this soul enters the body of one of the baby girls out there somewhere. When the right boy meets the right girl and they get married, then a most amazing and wonderful thing can happen. All of their life they have been only a half. Now they can be part of one whole.

Here we can see some of the ingredients of a happy marriage. First, you have to realize that you have a soul. Have you concluded that marriage is not for you? Are you thinking about marriage? Are you unhappy with your marriage? Go to your local Chabad house and discover your soul. This is not always easy. Our soul is hidden deep in our heart. Our soul is truly a part of G-d above. This is really big-time. When we consider the greatness of *Hashem*, who created the entire universe, we can begin to understand the greatness of our soul, which is a part of Him. This in turn enables us to truly love our fellow man who also has a precious soul. And especially to love our spouse, who has the other half of our own soul.

Even though we are living in a material and mundane world, we can sometimes feel holiness, sometimes feel our soul. This can happen when we learn Torah and do *mitzvahs*, when we are deep in prayer, when we are sitting at the *Shabbos* table, when we hear the *shofar*.

Second, learn about the importance of getting married. If you are single, you are missing your other half. Also, it can be very lonely living by yourself. If two people are working together to run and support a household, it is usually much easier. A strong marriage is the best place to raise children.

It is true that in the secular world marriages usually aren't successful. Even those which don't end in divorce are often difficult. However, once you find your soul

About the Cover Welcoming Rosh Hashanah

(Oil on canvas 40" x 30")
by Alex Levin, Art Levin Studio –
www.ArtLevin.com.

Alex Levin comes from Kiev, the capital of Ukraine, where he was born in 1975 and later attended Art Academy, from which he graduated with honors.

In 1990 Levin immigrated to Israel, where he continues to live in the city of Herzeliya.

With a most productive and hectic schedule, Levin finds additional time to grow as an artist and studies new techniques with Professor Baruch Elron who was the Chairman of Israel Artist Association.

His main painting styles are Surrealism and Realism – featuring a range of works in oil, acrylic, pencil, charcoal, and tempera paints – practicing the original manner of 16th century technique, which is the multilayered use of tempera and oil (no brush strokes).

Artworks of Levin are admired worldwide and were purchased for numerous private, corporate, and institutional collections in



and start learning Torah and doing mitzvahs, you aren't secular any more. Spend some time in Chassidic communities. There about 90 percent of the children are married by their early 20s and live happily ever after, *baruch Hashem*. Even in Chassidic marriages difficulties and disagreements come up. If we are not able to come to a solution, we consult with a wise and experienced rabbi, who can usually solve the problem. If the problem is too serious or complicated for our local rabbi, we ask the Rebbe for a blessing. I know of some marriages that were saved by the Rebbe's blessing.

Every successful marriage brings us a step closer to our complete and final redemption. Our sages said that when a man and his wife live a life of Torah and dwell together in peace and love, the Divine Presence dwells together with them. The more good marriages, the more Divine Presence. Soon we will reach the final redemption and the Divine Presence will fill the world. As it is written: "And the world will be filled with the knowledge of Hashem."

We wish all of our readers and all of Israel to be inscribed and sealed for a good and sweet year, a year of redemption. We want *Moshiach* now!

Rabbi Cohen lives in K'far Chabad, Israel. He can be reached by email at bzcohen@orange.net.il. ✨



the United States, Israel, France, Italy, Ukraine, Switzerland, and Belgium. This young artist, who just turned thirty years old, was directly acknowledged by many influential figures including actor and producer Richard Gere, Madonna, Canadian Jazz player Oscar Peterson and former president of Israel Ezer Weizman.

After serving 3 years in the Israeli Army, in 1997 Levin entered the industrial and web design program which was a great benefit to his artwork.

He is currently working on two themes: "Tradition of Jewish Heritage" and "Venice through the mask's eyes".

"Tradition of Jewish Heritage" is a collection of works of Jerusalem's holy Western Wall and it's surrounding religious neighborhood. Through the strokes of his brush, Levin has captured the residents of Jerusalem's ultra-Orthodox neighborhood of Mea Shearim, Jewish attributes, and people at the Western Wall, one of Judaism

(see Cover, page 6)



EDITORIAL

(continued from page 2)

that, she started crying as if this scenario had taken place last week, not 67 years ago.

Kor also mentioned that her book, *Surviving the Angel of Death* has been translated into German and is now #1 on their best seller list. She has been in Germany talking to young people there about not feeling guilty for the actions of their grandparents. She tells them to go and do something productive instead.

Eva Kor is hoping to create a Forgiveness garden in Terre Haute. Eli Lily & Co. has awarded a feasibility grant for \$50,000 toward this goal. We hope to have more about this in a future issue.

I came away from this conversation feeling inspired. If Eva Mozes Kor can live through what happened to her and become such an achieving, charming, and life-affirming woman, then I can cope with lesser problems. Each challenge that a person has is difficult for that person, but after meeting Kor, I believe that it is possible to not only cope with mine, but to come out a better person for having experienced them. *L'Shana Tova*,
Jennie Cohen, August 29, 2012 ✨



Shabbat Shalom

By RABBI JON ADLAND

Pirke Avot 3:19 – Rabbi Akiva said: All is foreseen, but freedom of choice is given. The world is judged in goodness, yet all is proportioned to one's work.

**August 24, 2012, Shoftim
Deuteronomy 16:18–21:9, 6 Elul 5772**

“Seven Israeli teenagers were in custody on Monday, accused of what a police official and several witnesses described as an attempted lynching of several Palestinian youths, laying bare the undercurrent of tension in this ethnically mixed but politically divided city. A 15-year-old suspect standing outside court said, ‘For my part he can die, he’s an Arab.’”

This quote began an article in the Aug. 21, 2012 *New York Times*. I read it with sadness and asked myself where this outrageous act came from. It wasn’t the first time I had asked these questions to myself this summer. First there was Aurora, Colo., and then there was the hate crime in Milwaukee. Now we see teenage hate in the center of Jerusalem where mounting tensions exist between Palestinians Arabs and Israeli Jews. My heart ached for the beaten Arab boy and my soul wept for the City of Peace. I did read this morning that the Arab boy is out of critical care and has been moved to a normal hospital room.

A report in the *Jerusalem Post* said, “Jerusalem Mayor, Nir Barkat, on Sunday came out strongly against violence in the nation’s capital, releasing a statement saying, ‘I unequivocally condemn any expression of violence, both verbal or physical, by any party.’ The mayor added that he is confident police will bring the attackers to justice, while calling for continued co-existence in the city.”

I applaud his remarks, but much more needs to be done to find a way for these two communities to co-exist. I can cite too many examples that condemn either side for hate crimes against the other. Hate is a learned behavior. We aren’t born with it, but acquire it from others who learned it as well. As a Jew and a Zionist, I am ashamed of my people when I read of these incidents. This is not what Torah teaches. This is not what our tradition teaches. It doesn’t matter to me whether it is an Israeli hate crime against an Arab or a *Haredi* crime against a fellow Jew. Torah teaches us to “Love our neighbor” and to “Embrace the

Nation needs stronger rules on purchasing guns, ammo

By RABBI SANDY EISENBERG SASSO



My mother recently moved to Indianapolis from Philadelphia. She needed to change her address and obtain a new identity card.

Naively, I thought this would be easy. After all, she didn’t drive; all we required was a new card to prove she was who she said she was. We went to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, waited in line for half an hour, only to find that we did not have the correct paper work. We were told to return after we had collected appropriate documentation. I told the clerk that my mother was elderly; it was difficult for her to have to wait in line, but there was no sympathy. I explained that all we wanted was proof of her identity and her old card with her photo and her presence should be sufficient. “There are rules,” the lady behind the counter insisted.

However, if my mother and I had wanted to purchase thousands of rounds of ammunitions for an assault rifle, shotgun and semiautomatic pistol, we wouldn’t have to stand in line, but could have gone online and done it in a matter of minutes.



stranger in our midst.”

That this article appeared during the week of *Parshat Shoftim* is even more ironic. We read at the beginning of the *parashah*, “Justice, justice shall you pursue.” These words have motivated us to seek to create a better world for more than 2,000 years. It hasn’t always been easy as for much of this time in most of the places we did well just to take care of ourselves. Yet, when the opportunities existed, we followed this Deuteronomic principle and worked to create a better society remembering and teaching the ethical *mitzvot* of the Torah.

When we learned that a Jew deviated from this path the whole community felt shame and when a Jew was rewarded for the justice he or she pursued we were exalted. As Rabbi Akiva said in the *Pirke Avot* at the top of the page, “...freedom of choice is given.” Teaching the path of justice, the path of goodness, kindness, compassion, and mercy, is the responsibility of one generation to the next. When teens in Jerusalem beat an Arab boy or any person is hurt by another, then we must hang our heads and acknowledge our failure. Whether we like someone or not,

(see Adland, page 5)

There is something seriously wrong with this picture. There need to be rules.

Objectors would say that gun ownership is a constitutionally protected right. True, but every right has sensible limits. We can drive a car, but we can’t drive drunk and we need to obey traffic signs. We can travel by plane, but we need to go through security, take off our shoes and put 3-ounce liquids in a small plastic bag. I can’t take my Starbucks latte through airport security nor pack my favorite aerosol can of mousse in my carry-on, all in the name of safety.

We have free speech, but we can’t yell fire in a crowded room. There are rules. Somehow when it comes to guns many want the rules to be as few and as lax as possible.

Objectors say, “Guns don’t kill, people do. If guns were outlawed, deranged individuals would find other means to terrorize and to kill innocent people.” But we know that people with guns are more apt to murder than people without firepower. People may find other means to destroy life, but guns make it easier. Shouldn’t we make it harder?

There are a few things we should be able to agree upon. No one requires an assault rifle in his or her home. For those who practice target shooting, a safe and secure place at a shooting range could be provided. No one should be able to buy thousands of rounds of ammunition within a short period of time. There are those who claim that it is cheaper and more convenient to buy in bulk. It also is more convenient to buy prescription medication in bulk, but the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has determined that it is unsafe and may lead to potential abuse. There are rules. Amassing large amounts of ammunition should require at least as much supervision.

If my mother needs four pieces of identification and has to be physically present to prove that she exists and that she lives where she says she does, shouldn’t someone who wishes to order ammunition be required to submit to rigorous background checks, and not simply provide an anonymous e-mail address?

It is not enough to express deep sympathy and grieve for the loss of life whenever tragedy occurs. A reasonable form of gun control might not eradicate such calamities, but it might make them less likely and less deadly. There need to be rules, and we need legislators with enough courage to make them.

Mazel Tov to Rabbi Sasso and her husband Rabbi Dennis C. Sasso as they begin their 35th year as senior rabbis at Congregation Beth-El Zedeck in Indianapolis. This column is reprinted from the Indianapolis Star, August 1, 2012. ✨



Jewish Educator

BY AMY HIRSHBERG LEDERMAN

Rosh Hashanah reminds us: we have the power to change

It's that time of year again. Backpacks and school binders tumble off the shelves at Target, crossing guards in bright orange vests patrol the road and parents are bemoaning the frenzied schedule that "back to school" requires. But there's a positive energy in the air as kids, tanned and freckled from the summer, greet each other in the school yard as they begin a new school year.

The fall is a time for new beginnings and the Jewish calendar is right on track. *Rosh Hashanah*, which in Hebrew literally means "head of the year," kicks off the parade of holidays with a spirit of perennial optimism. When we wish one another *L'shanah tovah tikatevu v'taihatemu* (May you be inscribed and sealed for a good life), we are saying that we hope this year will be a good one all around; a year of good health and well-being in relationships, family, work and life.

But if that isn't enough, we are given another ten days between Rosh Hashanah and *Yom Kippur* (called the Days of Awe or *Yomim Noraim*), to reflect on where we have been, where we are going, and what we want to do differently in the coming year. It's a time of personal and spiritual introspection grounded in the idea that we have the continuing capacity, each and every year, to change the way we live. Judaism promotes and is based upon this powerful idea: that in each one of us, at every age and stage of life, is the capacity to change. This power of personal transformation is not beyond us but within us, and Judaism gives us guidance by which to make it real.

We encounter this wisdom in a prayer that is unique to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur called the *Unetaneh Tokef*, which inscribes our fate for the coming year on Rosh Hashanah and seals it on Yom Kippur. This prayer tells us that through repentance, prayer and charity (*teshuvah*, *tefillah*, and *tzedakah*), we can change the severity of God's decree and alter our own fate.

I ask you: If repentance, prayer and charity are strong enough to change God's mind, then shouldn't we consider them as worthy tools to help us change our own

minds and lives in the year ahead? And if so, doesn't it require us to take a closer look at what each word means and how together, they can help us in our own efforts to change?

Repentance requires us to recognize that we have done something hurtful or wrong and to feel badly, maybe even guilty, about it. But awareness is not enough. Repentance demands that we commit to behaving differently in the future. In essence, it demands that we become a "new" person the next time we are tempted to gossip, cheat on our taxes or misrepresent the truth.

Prayer means different things to different people but many of us intuitively feel that prayer has the power to heal, comfort and even change circumstances. Whether we pray formally using the words of our liturgy or informally with words from the heart, prayer is a language and a pathway that lets us be in relationship with the Divine.

Prayer also helps us focus our attention on what is most important to us at any point in life. A sick parent or a marriage on the rocks, the birth of a child or the purchase of a new home; all of these can elicit an urge to speak to God. Words of gratitude, requests for healing, prayers for strength or comfort, all give us an opportunity to articulate and affirm the feelings we have deep inside. But even more than this, prayer can help us change our perceptions about what is possible in life because it enables us to be in conversation with something much greater than ourselves, a divine source in a universe where anything is possible.

Tzedakah is most often translated in English to mean charity, but in truth, it is much more than that. Charity suggests benevolence and generosity and is purely a voluntary act. *Tzedakah* comes from the Hebrew word *Tzedek*, which means righteousness or justice. The justice we speak of stems from the idea that everything we have or possess comes from God who is, in a sense, the Ultimate Landlord of the earth. As tenants, we don't really "own" anything we have; rather, we are given the gift of using it for our benefit during our lives. But this privilege comes with responsibility and we are commanded by God to care for the world and those in need. That's why in Judaism, we don't give to the poor because we want to. We give *tzedakah* because we are *obligated* and *have to*, whether we want to or not.

In its broadest sense, *Tzedakah* means acting righteously, which in the Jewish tradition means following the commandments. *Tzedakah* reinforces our humility and our humanity; it reminds us that regardless of what we want to do, we

ADLAND

(continued from page 4)

hurting someone undermines everything Judaism believes and teaches.

The *Jerusalem Post* reported, "At a conference held in Jerusalem ahead of the new school year, the Minister of Education Gideon Sa'ar said: 'This is a very serious event, both in terms of violence and racism. The high number of teenagers that participated in the incident adds to that concern. The education system must and will put out an educational and ethical statement on the subject which will be sharp and clear,' Sa'ar asserted." We must teach the values that have sustained us and root out the hate that is permeating too much of the modern Israeli community.

Shabbat liturgy is a great place to begin. Whether you read the traditional prayers of the *siddur* or modern interpretations in contemporary *siddurim*, the words will remind us of God, peace, kindness, love, and working toward a better world. Racism, intolerance, hate are not words that should be a part of our vocabulary as when they are we can see the results and impact it can have. Thank God the young man didn't die, but a part of the Israeli soul suffered a terrible bruise that will take some time to heal. I hope that this bruise never returns.

When you light your Shabbat candles this week, light one to be a symbol that reminds us of the words of Torah that help move us toward the messianic age. Light the other for all those who have suffered because of hate in this world. May the candle be a sign of hope for a better day.

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



must do more simply because it is the right thing to do. Knowing that we can and must do the right thing requires us to admit to ourselves what we already know: that we have the power to become the person we want to be.

No one ever said change is easy, because ...it isn't! But knowing that there is a time each year to think about the changes we want to make and commit to making them is the first step. Repentance, prayer, and charity are part of our tradition that can help us in the process.

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



Wiener's Wisdom

BY RABBI IRWIN WIENER, D.D.

How it all began

When *Rosh Hashanah* arrives, our thoughts go to something that is new and renewed. Our imaginations travel even further by wondering how it all began. In the Book of Genesis, we read, "When God created heaven and earth – the earth being unformed and void, with darkness over the surface of the deep and a wind from God sweeping over the water..." (Genesis 1-2, *Etz Hayim* translation) The summary of creation explains that everything started from nothing to form what we know or think we know.

The Book about origins captures the imagination and has been debated time and again, from the beginning until this very day. We learn about hope and dreams because our lives are involved with various wishes and desires. Will I be healthy? Will I accumulate wealth? Will I be happy?

Our lives not only center on others but mainly involve our desires for a good and long life. It is no wonder that the Book containing the origins of all we see and know and those yet to be born, gives us a sense of wonderment as well as bewilderment.

Then we read further:

"Oh, let me behold Your Presence!" And He answered, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim before you the name Lord, and the grace that I grant and the compassion that I show. But," He said, "you cannot see My face, for man may not see Me and live." And the Lord said, "See, there is a place near Me, station yourself on the rock and, as My Presence passes by, I will put you in a cleft of the rock and shield you with My hand until I have passed by. Then I will take My hand away and you will see My back; but My face must not be seen." (Exodus 33:18-23, *Etz Haim* translation)

I thought of these passages as I read the newspaper and learned that scientists have discovered what they describe as the God particle. This particle supposedly contains the answer to the universe's origin. The article continues to describe that the vast amount of data compiled show the footprint and shadow of the particle, even though it has never actually been glimpsed.

The term God particle, the article continues to say, was introduced by Nobel Prize-winning physicist Leon Lederman is not really used by physicists, but more as an explanation for how the subatomic universe works.

Just imagine, the secrets of creation contained in this discovery. Yet, it reminds us that the shadow is seen, not the actual particle. Is the Biblical rendering an accurate description of what science is now declaring? Can it be that the truth is that man can never really see God, but not stop trying to reach out to catch a glimpse, even a shadow?

How extraordinary! Throughout history, humans have endeavored to not only describe God but also to understand the universe and our part in the "Grand Design." We have gone from idols, to an invisible spirit to those who proclaim that God does not exist but is a figment of our imagination. We have heard repeatedly that man created God, God did not create man. However, it is inherent in us to believe in someone, something that is stronger than we are to give us faith.

Creationism vs. evolution is the classic debate. Trials have taken place to determine the validity of both. Passions take hold and sides are drawn. There are the "literalists," those who claim that everything found in the Bible is to be understood as written. There are those who proclaim that the Bible is a living book that requires interpretation and reinterpretation for each generation so that it remains relevant.

Then we read in a simple news article that if the calculations are correct regarding the God particle, then perhaps, in a sense, we may have reached the mountaintop. Sound familiar? Moses reaches the top of the mountain and witnesses the Glory that is God. The Biblical text dramatizes this revelation by describing thunder and lightning. The picture is mesmerizing and has captured the imagination of humanity since its introduction. Moreover, here, in an obscure news release, we see spiritual history come alive.

To me, it is proof that science and religion are compatible. One describes the process and the other outlines the results. It can be compared to a builder and an architect. The architect lays out the plans and the builder produces the finished product using the designs given to him. The only difference is that God is both the architect and builder. There are always modifications and that is similar to creation. Because creation is a never ending process and is evolutionary in its effort to mold itself to the constant changes that occur in the universe.

Stars explode and new ones are formed. Creatures are not the same as they were in earlier times. There are no more dinosaurs but there are Geckos. Humans no longer have body hair covering all areas. Continents are no longer connected but are independent. Things do not stay the same and are in constant flux. Such is the process of creation.



Kabbalah of the Month

BY MELINDA RIBNER

Who is in charge of your gates?

"Judges and officers shall you appoint for your gates." With these words the Torah portion *Shoftim* (Judges) begins. For a few moments, close your eyes and envision yourself as a city with seven gates. These gates are your two eyes, your two ears, your nostrils and your mouth. These are the seven passageways to the soul, according to Rebbe Nachman.

Are your gates open or closed? What do you allow to enter you? On what basis do you make that determination? Who is in charge of your gates? The ego or the soul.

When our ego is in charge, we are judgmental, frightened, careless or too lenient. Whatever happiness we experience does not last long. When our ego is in charge, we are self critical and even harsh with ourselves for our imagined failures. We berate ourselves with "I could have, I should have, I would have". We worry, and are filled with all kinds of fears, doubts, and regrets. We judge ourselves and others. But, when we 'beat up' on ourselves, who will carry the torch forward for us? This is not the kind of judge that God wants to be appointed for our gates.

I reminded an ongoing client yesterday who began his session by engaging in an old pattern of self criticism with words something like this. "Let go of the limiting ideas of the kind of person you thought you were. You are no longer that person. You have become a *mensch*, a leader, a giver. Celebrate the person that you now are. There is no need to worry. You are no longer the powerless person you are imagining yourself to be. Remember after *Tu B'Av* of this year, we are in a new cycle."

(see Ribner, page 7)



Now we are on the verge of truly understanding how it all began. But one thing is clear: "You will not see My face." We will never completely understand it all, but we never stop trying. That is the message of the Scripture and that is the message we receive as we venture into the God particle. This is *Rosh Hashanah* in all its glory.

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



Jewish America

BY HOWARD W. KARSH

On the beginning of another year

The Jewish calendar gives us the first alert to the coming of the new year. And then at the beginning of *Elul*, the *shofar* is sounded every morning at the end of *Shachrit*, and it never fails to bring the special kind of focus, that getting ready for the High Holidays demands of each of us. It is not a time for remembering, but of using the same creative forces that were there in the building of our world, to rebuild ourselves.

This brings me to talk about the past Olympics, the Olympians themselves, and then throwing in some observations about being an Eagle Scout. I do this knowing after all these years, that readers of the *Jewish Post & Opinion* have wonderful sources for getting ready, and fewer opportunities to see everything through "Jewish lenses."

I loved the Olympics. I watched as much as I could, which was more that I should have. I marveled mostly at the determination of the contestants to do their very best to win the gold and bring pride to their countries. It is no easy goal. No one, it seems, is good enough to depend on their natural talent only. They give years of their lives, sweat and strain, and come as close as anyone about whom we read to performing at their maximum level. Then they need poise and luck, because the games are unforgiving, and there is often no second chance.

I must admit to you that I watch with a great deal of self introspection, because I have never believed that I gave anything-everything. I tried to give my best effort, but my efforts paled when compared to what I came to see. I cannot even imagine what I might have accomplished in my life up to now and in the future with that kind of focus and determination.

I never wanted to be okay or mediocre. I wanted life-options and success, but, never strove with that intensity.

Interestingly, at least for me, was the effort I made when I taught to make sure that my students were pushed to their limits. I wanted them to know what they could accomplish if they willed it. That goal resulted in moaning, groaning and not being everyone's favorite teacher. But I did persist, and after ten years or so, when the memories softened, former

RIBNER

(continued from page 6)

After Adam ate of the tree of Good and Evil, God asked him, "Where are you?" Adam was given an opportunity to repent. But Adam was hiding because he now realized that he was naked. God then asked him, "Who told you that you are naked? Have you eaten of the Tree which I commanded you not to eat?" Adam responded, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the Tree and I ate."



students recognized that the forced effort had brought rewards, and some even shared the results with me.

From a Jewish standpoint, my interest is kindled because the Almighty is constantly trying to push us toward our full effort, and this time of the year is when we come to terms with how we are doing with His goal. The results, well each one of us has the sole propriety over that man-G-d relationship, and each year I do a great deal of heavy sighing.

What fascinates me most about these young great athletes is that once they retire, the majority do not use the same tools in other parts of their lives. I would expect them to understand how rare their focus and willingness to gain through pain is, but it doesn't seem to happen.

But it does happen regularly with Eagle Scouts. I never made it through Cub Scouts. The moment that I sensed that it was every week and demanding, it was only a matter of time until my Mother would let me quit. But I can tell you, because I watch, that the young men who become Eagle Scouts maximize their experience. I haven't seen the statistics, but it is there.

So what is the difference we can measure. The goals are personal, create self pride, and are integrated as life skills. On the other hand, when the practice in the pool just hurts, and the medals and records are within sight, the athletes created time lines and move on to their other goals, but not with the same fervor.

Our sages teach us that G-d would have created the world only for us. I do not find that particular lesson comforting, because the challenge is so clear. Chose life, we are taught. Do the right thing. Dedicate yourself to achieving everything.

Everything? I have begun in these last years to include "productive" into my wishes for the *Yom Tov*. I am not sure that anyone hears it or understands it, but what I am saying to them and myself is clear. We have this one chance. Make it happen.

Howard W. Karsh lives in Milwaukee, Wisc., and can be reached at hkarsh@gmail.com. He is a community columnist for the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel. ✨

Adam did not tell a lie. It was the truth, but he blamed Eve and he blamed God for giving him Eve. For this act of blaming, Adam was cast out of the Garden. When we blame others for the ways we ourselves have sabotaged our capacity to receive life's goodness, we are cast out of the garden. We can no longer appreciate the gifts of life. By blaming ourselves or others we have forfeited the opportunity to grow and heal. We have denied the existence of God.

When our soul is our gatekeeper, we live with faith, trust and acceptance. We take responsibility for our actions. We do not blame others or ourselves. We see that everything is good, even the difficult challenges we face. God is within us and beyond us and we know everything that happens is designed to take us closer to God and to our true selves. With the soul as our gatekeeper, we see, we hear, we smell and we speak words of Godliness. We are transported back in time, before the eating of the Tree. We are given a glimpse of the Garden of Eden.

In the Torah portion *Shoftim*, God is telling us to be conscious and careful of how we judge ourselves and how we execute that judgment upon ourselves as well. Let the soul, the spark of God within you, be your gatekeeper and judge oneself and others with love and compassion. Now wouldn't it be great if our politicians learned to not blame others?

Melinda (Mindy) Ribner, L.C.S.W. is a spiritual psychotherapist and healer in private practice (www.kabbalahoftheheart.com). She is a teacher of Jewish meditation and Kabbalah for more than 25 years. Author of Kabbalah Month by Month, New Age Judaism, and Everyday Kabbalah, she is also the founder and director of Beit Miriam (www.Beitmiriam.org). She can be reached by email at Beitmiriam@msn.com or Miriam@kabbalahoftheheart.com. ✨



COVER

(continued from page 3)

most holy places.

The artist's new vision of a Venice Carnival takes a completely unique approach and presents the viewer with a lavish and most prominent feature of Venetian Carnival – the Mask.

The earlier paintings from the "Mask collection" were introduced in 2002 in Venice and were awarded with a scholarship to the Venice Academy of Art to support the artist's continuing artistic development and enable him to devote substantial time to the creation of new work.

In 2007 Levin received the Medal Award for the Contribution to the Judaic Art from the Knesset. ✨

Gather the People



BY RABBI MOSHE
BEN ASHER, PH.D.
AND MAGIDAH
KHULDA BAT SARAH

Striving upwards together next year

Let's say you're an active member of your congregation – or you're not. Maybe you come to synagogue regularly – maybe not. Maybe it's your time, energy, and spirit that keep the synagogue going – maybe it's not.

But whichever categories you're in, the time of year is approaching when all of us come together again in a congregation. The ostensible purpose of our congregating is *teshuvah*, which is the necessary condition to improve both the coming year and us. Presumably, the ideal motivation for attending High Holy Day services is to turn our lives to those ends. Hopefully, each of us individually comes with the intention to somehow use the liturgy and ritual of these Days of Awe to become a better *Jewish* human being.

That's not the same, of course, as being a better Christian or Muslim. Torah and Judaism present us with a very unique vision and path for our lives. Those of us who have studied that vision and path, even superficially, know that they are distinguished by substantive differences from other spiritual traditions. We could write at length about those differences, but there's one in particular that we want to highlight here.

As the *B'nei Yisrael*, the children of Israel, we are counted before God as individual human beings, as well as members of our families. But our standing before God at Mount Sinai, when we became the Jewish *people*, was affirmed when we said "*na'aseh v'nishmah*" – we will do and we will hear – with one voice. We began our life as the plural Children of Israel in a covenant with God, emerging as a whole people, not simply a collection of individuals. And as they teach in Gestalt psychology, the whole is greater than the sum of the individual parts.

If we want to claim Jewish identity, for whatever intellectual or emotional reason or practical purpose, but we have no investment and stake in the past and future of the Jewish people and its Torah, then our claim is bogus and self-serving. At best it's hardly more than camouflage for the unfortunate loss of *midot*, the

moral, spiritual, and religious character traits that define a Jewish life.

Authentic Jewish identity has each of us not only counted *in*, but also counted *upon* as a member of a Torah-centered community and the Jewish people. If we come to High Holy Day services with the narrow intention of improving only our own lives and those of our family members, indifferent for all practical purposes to the welfare of our congregational community and people, then we're not behaving as Jews. That kind of behavior doesn't fit the tradition that we're claiming in order to affirm our identity.

In the Torah reading *parashat Yitro* there is a verse that reads: "And Moses came down from the mountain to the people." Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo ben Yitzchak, 1040–1105) comments, "This verse teaches us that Moses did not [then] turn to his affairs, but [turned] from the mountain to the people."

Rabbi Yehezkel of Kozmir (Ezekiel ben Zevi-Hirsch Taub of Kazimierz, d. 1856) inquires: "And what business affairs did Moses our teacher have besides the teaching of Torah? What then can I understand when it says, 'he did not turn to his affairs'?" This comes to teach you that, even 'his affairs,' which were the affairs of Torah and the desires of Heaven, were not turned to by Moses our teacher as long as he dealt with the needs of the community and the nation. From here we learn that the affairs of the community are more important to be dealt with publicly than the affairs of Heaven dealt with privately."

We propose that this year we come to High Holy Day services not as private consumers of religious services, but with the public *kavanah* – that is, with a focused communal spiritual intention – to raise, support, and sustain our congregation by attending not only to our own needs, but potentially to the needs of every other member.

How could we do that? Much depends on our attitudes. We could begin by giving every other person the benefit of the doubt, especially those people whom we've judged too quickly and harshly in the past. We could focus our judgmental eyes on ourselves, on our own missteps and misdeeds, not those of others. We could act *b'tzelem Adoshem*, in the image of God, by looking for, valuing, and encouraging the unique contribution that each person is able to make to our community and our people. And we could reach a high point by consciously committing ourselves to *strive upwards together as a spiritual community* in all these ways this coming year.

We look forward to striving upwards together with you next year.

L'Shanah Tovah!

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(see Ben Asher/Bat Sarah, page 9)



An Observant Eye

BY RABBI AVI SHAFRAN

What was happening there?

With a few predictable exceptions, media coverage of the mammoth *Siyum HaShas* at MetLife Stadium on Aug. 1, was remarkably positive.

Yes, the *New York Times* tried hard to find some woman at the event who felt slighted at being seated separately from the men, or who had boldly undertaken *Daf Yomi*. But it came up empty. (So it resorted to *shlepping* into its story a liberal rabbi in Riverdale who delivers a *Gemara shiur* to women, and cited the grumbling of one of the group's members, a 70-year-old feminist, who has been "wrestling" with Talmud's "attitude toward women.")

Similarly, even before the *Siyum*, *Haaretz* tried to force a similar angle into its reportage, focusing on what it called "the female revolution in Talmud study," and highlighting a group of 30 women whose members, it reported, have completed a *Daf Yomi* cycle (well, most of them; a third of the group, it was parenthetically noted, joined in the middle of the cycle).

But the agenda-less media were straightforward in apprising the larger public of what was an unprecedented and astounding event: the gathering of some 90,000 Jews in one arena, under threat of inclement weather, to celebrate Torah. Yes, the *Siyum* marked the end of the 12th cycle of *Daf Yomi*, but the gathering was, in the end, a rejoicing in the Jewish heritage. Torrential downpours through the day reminded us all about Who, despite all our meticulous planning, is in charge in the end. But the rain suddenly stopped when the *Siyum* began, only adding to the remarkable nature of the happening.

I was pretty much stuck throughout in a room where members of the media came and went, gathering information and conducting interviews. I went outside onto the field for *Mincha*, the actual *siyum*, and *Maariv*, but most of the *Siyum* found me, among several colleagues, "entertaining" guests.

There were notable moments, though, in the press room too. Small things, perhaps, compared to what was transpiring outside on the field and in the stands, but memorable all the same. Like
(see Shafran, page 9)



Spoonful of Humor

By TED ROBERTS

Everybody wins on the High Holidays

Does anybody remember Bernard Baruch, financier – advisor to presidents, they called him. A man of great influence in the 1930s and 1940s when Jewish names like Baruch weren't common in the headlines. Well, when I was in my formative years, Bernard Baruch was held out as a great example for us Hebrew School hooligans. (The term "role model" had not yet been invented.)

He was rich and powerful, said our teachers. He could drop over to the White House – without even a phone call – for a hot cup of tea and a bagel anytime he felt like it. He'd lounge around the oval office and *kibbutz* with President Roosevelt about the economy, the stock market, banking system. And the President of this great (but financially wounded) republic – it was the early 1930s, you know – sipped his tea and listened like you listen to your doctor when he's explaining your x-rays. *That was Bernard Baruch!* We Jews – so sensitive in those years to our minority status – gloried in the financier's success.

Well, this paragon, our Sunday School teachers explained, was not only a *hochem*, but a reverent *hochem*. And they went on to offer the most famous tribute to his character: It's October 1929. Crash time. Bernie's staff, with flaming faces and 185/120 blood pressure, rush to his office. "Bernie, Bernie," they scream. "The market's so far South that penguins are working as brokers and Merrill has moved their corporate offices to Antarctica." Then they shout the word "sell" loud and long until Bernie silences them with an upraised hand.

"Gentlemen," he says, "it's *Yom Kippur*. I dare not transact any business on this holy day."

"Bernie," says one of his minions. "You don't have to profane yourself. I'll make the call. Just wink and I'll pass the sell word. Or scratch your ear – I'll do the interpretation and the phone calling."

But Bernard Baruch doesn't wink and he doesn't scratch his ear. One presumes he went to synagogue or temple and asked the rabbi to do a passionate *meshuberach* for the market. Bernie the Blessed did NOT sell. Then, miracle of miracles – the market recovers, at least temporarily. So, now he can sell at better than fire sale

BEN ASHER/BAT SARAH

(continued from page 8)

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prices. He ends up rich as King Solomon and even better, since he has only one wife to help him spend his fortune.

You doubt me? Look it up in Jewish Encyclopedia.

This old chestnut of a story popped in my head last week – a few days before Rosh Hashonah. Rosh Hashonah fell on a weekend – rich in college and pro football contests. Contests that an adventurous type like myself usually enliven with a wager. So, midweek I punched up my bookie's number – but halfway done I remembered Bernard Baruch. No baby – I thought – no way I'm gonna wager on Rosh Hashonah games. How will I focus my mind on my few ethical errors this past year while the Southern Cal (favored by 17 over Stanford) fight song is echoing in my limited cranium. I want to visualize the Book of Life (with a short, sweet entry about me) not the scoreboard in Los Angeles, with "40" by Southern Cal and "0" next to Stanford. A small winged creature in my mind, radiantly clothed in white – I could see him clearly – said, "Right, Teddy, remember Bernard Baruch." Another creature with a spiky tail, carrying a little miniature pitchfork laughed out. "Don't be silly, Teddy. This is not a business transaction – it's charity. You always lose. Bet 'em."

Then it came to me. Why not a test. Why not make my picks – but place no bets. Then check the results *afterwards*.

As a reward for my abstinence, I figured if there was any justice in this vale of tears, I should lose every bet. Right? In other words, by not violating the holiday, my wallet had several sizable bills that would have gone to my partner in crime had I yielded to the urge. In the time honored tradition of Abraham and Moses, I would challenge "you know who". Okay, don't send a thunderbolt, part no rivers, or tidal marshes; you don't even have to straighten my cousin Rachel's nose and lower jaw so she can get married – just show me I'd have lost my hindquarters had I placed the bets.

So I note my make-believe bets, then Sunday morning I checked the paper. That's okay. Nobody says you can't read the paper the second day of Rosh Hashonah. Well, the test was not conclusive.

(see Roberts, page 11)

SHAFRAN

(continued from page 8)

the tall, ramrod stiff, light-haired state police sergeant who mentioned in passing that he had some "ethnic Jewish" blood, since his mother's mother's mother had been Jewish. (Yes, he was informed that that made him fully Jewish.) Or the young, non-observant, Conservative-raised documentary filmmaker who was visibly moved by talking about *Yiddishkeit* with two observant women, one, a grandmother, the other a great-grandmother and well-known *rebbetzin*.

And then there was a television reporter's puzzlement at my response to his most basic question about the Siyum: "Could you tell me what's happening here?"

It was every reporter's first question that evening, and my stock short answer "A celebration of Torah study" seemed to bewilder him. "What do you mean by 'study'?" he asked. "And why is it being celebrated?"

He wasn't being difficult, it was clear. He simply couldn't wrap his head around the idea of study as anything but the means to an end. One studies to pass a test, he (I think) was thinking, for a diploma, to advance a career. But *celebrate study*? What was this study meant to lead to?

I tried my best to introduce him to the idea of study for the sake of study, study as, in itself, a religious devotion. His next question was one I hadn't heard before.

"Do you know of any other religion," he asked, in all honest curiosity, "that treats study in a similar way?"

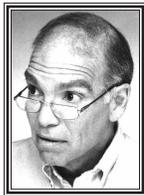
I'm no scholar of comparative religion, I admitted, but no, I told him, in fact I didn't.

It was a "teaching moment," as they say. But a learning one, too, for me. A non-Jewish reporter had made me more fully realize the uniqueness of the idea of Torah-study as a *mitzvah*, a devotion, a vocation.

The day of the Siyum was the day Israel's Tal Law's expired, authorizing the state to draft full-time Torah scholars and students into military service. I wished that the members of Israel's Supreme Court, who had brought about that crisis, could have been there in the media room with the reporter and me, and could have, like me, come to more keenly appreciate the uniqueness and inherent value of the lifeblood of *Klal Yisrael*.

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Shiplely Speaks

BY JIM SHIPLEY

What happens when they are gone?

I remember my youngest asking me some years ago, "Dad, what happens when the old Jews with accents are gone?"

I asked him what he meant. "You know," he replied, "the funny guys. And the jokes like you tell."

Well, even then I was indeed one of those "old Jews." But yeah, they are going or gone. Gone like the Borscht Belt and the Miami Beach Clubs and so much more. Myron Cohen of blessed memory, worked clubs in New York like Leon and Eddie's, also of blessed memory. TV of course shortened the life of any routine he did, but on the other hand it also exposed thousands of people of a less fortunate persuasion to the depth and beauty of Jewish humor.

Red Buttons, Buddy Hackett, all the others, gone. We got Mel Brooks, but he never made a living on Jewish humor. Sure, he used plenty of Jewish "type" gags in his writing, but no Jewish humor per se. Although, remember in *Blazing Saddles* when the Indians (led by Brooks) spoke Yiddish instead of Apache (the famous line as he decided to spare the black folk heading west "*Luzem Gay!*"...translation: "Let them go!" – oh, you knew that. *Ein shuldich mer*).

It has been said that to be a good comedian, you have to have suffered or at least have your people's suffering in your genes. So it figures that Jewish comedians would flourish from the 1940s to the 1970s. Prior to that, the Jewish humor would be mostly in Yiddish for the dwindling population that spoke Yiddish as their first language.

So, Molly Picon, Menasha Skulnik, and others brought their Yiddish language to the U.S. to flourish on Second Avenue in New York and even to the west coast, wherever that first generation settled. But – times change. That second generation grew up perhaps speaking Yiddish in the home, but English in school and on the street. Nobody, once they had come to the "*Goldenah Medinah*" wanted to sound like a "Greener" – a "Greenhorn" – a new immigrant.

Jewish humor is self effacing. We make fun of ourselves. Most great ethnic humor is like that. Jews, Blacks, Italians and Irish find humor in their foibles and idiosyncrasies of their people.

But you know, there is still an appetite for the true, self effacing, slightly obnoxious at times, insulting more than not humor that can only be labeled Jewish. You could try it in Polish or Irish or Italian, but it just wouldn't work.

And it's clean! Jewish humor can and does talk about sex and bodily functions and getting old and being rich and being poor; but it never stoops to get a laugh. Obscenities have no place in the Jewish lexicon of humor.

Two gentlemen named Sam Hoffman and Eric Spiegelman must have been thinking along these same lines when they conceived a book titled *Old Jews Telling Jokes*. You know, every group, club or lunch crowd has one person, male or female who is the designated joke teller.

Well, these guys somehow found everyone from dentists to clothing salesmen to grandmothers who tell jokes and are pretty good at it. In the book they give this talented bunch a chance to show their stuff. Problem? It loses its edge on the page.

So, what did they do? They took it to Off Broadway! No kidding! Get the *New York Times* this weekend and see for yourself. This show could run for years. The talent is out there at every Jewish country club, every "*shvitz*" (you gotta know what is a "*shvitz*"!) *Old Jews Telling Jokes* is now even on YouTube. It is becoming ubiquitous. All this talent that never came forward in the "Good Old Days" because they felt the real pros would outshine them is now coming to the fore.

The sad part? A time is coming when the foils of these classic chestnuts will be gone too long for the humor to have its impact any more. I mean, is this your mother or grandmother?:

"They're coming out with a Jewish mother (or grandmother) doll. You pull the string and it says "Again with the string?"

A Twitter, Facebook generation does not know from this kind of humor. If you are too young, or never partook – do it while you can. Find the old Jew who tells jokes among the fathers and mothers or maybe even friends of yours. Could be that maybe you?

Maybe you could tell the joke about the lady who goes into the butcher and asks for a chicken. The butcher takes one out of the cooler and gives it to her. She sticks her hand up the back of the chicken. She smells it under the wings and the legs. She squeezes it all over and says to the butcher: "Not good enough!" He replies "Lady? Could you pass a physical like that?"

Bodda – Bing!

We miss those who are gone and those who are leaving. Old Jews who tell jokes. What happens when the last one goes? May that never happen!

Jim Shipley has had careers in broadcasting,



The Roads from Babel

BY SETH BEN-MORDECAI

Cutting and grafting

It is commonly said that the nouns and verbs of Semitic languages such as Hebrew are formed mostly from three-consonant roots. For example, *S-P-R*, whose basic meaning is "to cut," yields *sappar* ("a hair-cutter"), *saphar* ("he counted" – formerly done by cutting marks into dirt or wood), *mispar* ("number"), *sipper* ("he recounted, told"), and so on.

But the Hebrew language may not have sprung fully formed from the head of Adam. Rather, the evidence suggests that in the mists of pre-history, speakers of Proto-Semitic mostly used two-consonant roots. Needing more words than they could form by combining two consonants, they grafted a third consonant onto existing two-consonant roots, creating a three-consonant root structure.

The following examples of roots that share the consonants *Aleph* and *R* illustrate the point. The root *Aleph-R-G* pertains to "weaving"; *Aleph-R-H* – "gathering food items"; *Aleph-R-Z* – "packing"; and *A-R-S* – "fiancé" (i.e., joining a man and woman). This evidence suggests that in Proto-Semitic, the root *A-R* meant approximately "joining" or "uniting," and that as people wanted to be more specific, they added a third consonant to the original root. The new three-consonant root preserved the basic original meaning, but added useful specificity.

A particularly fecund two-letter root family is *Q-Tet* and its progeny. The basic meaning of each member is "cutting off": *QaT* ("small"), *Q-T+B* ("destruction or pestilence," i.e., cutting things off from life on a large scale), *Q-T+M* ("chop down"), *Q-T+B* ("pluck fruit off a tree"), *Q-T+L* ("kill," i.e., cut off from life individually), and *Q-T+Ayin* ("amputate").

And this family has a "cousin" in Hebrew which is easily recognized when we recall that in Semitic languages, *Q* and *G* sometimes interchange (e.g., *Qadaffi* and *Gadaffi*) – just as *B* and *P* interchange in English (e.g., *triple* and *treble*) – and the

(see Ben-Mordecai, page 11)



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. ★



Seen on the Israel Scene

BY SYBIL KAPLAN

Summer doings

Despite the unseasonable high temperatures for the capital, there has been no shortage of activities in Jerusalem for the milder than normal evenings this summer.

Recently, we attended two – one indoors and one outdoors – which were utterly delightful.

The American Center (an information resource center, part of the Office of Public Affairs of the American Embassy) and Malkat Shva Center sponsored an evening of jazz and a special performance of Ethiopian traditional songs and dances.

The Malkat Shva Ethiopian Cultural Center in Jerusalem, established in 2005, is a non-profit organization which assists youth of Ethiopian origin to integrate into Israeli society from a place of pride and self-confidence by allowing them to explore and celebrate their traditional culture.

The concept was initiated by Avi Elazar, a young Ethiopian law student and current director, who enlisted a group of young professionals to create an environment where young Ethiopian Israelis could learn their culture through dance, music and theatre.

In 2010, Tracey Shipley, an American-born activist for the Ethiopian community, began to bring Ethiopian theatre, dance and music performers also to work with the youth. The program was launched in collaboration with Kidum Noar, the Jerusalem municipal organization concerned with at-risk youth, and the Theater division of the Jerusalem Arts Department.

The Malkat Shva Center hopes to expand its programs and services to the Ethiopian Israeli community by way of offering an advisory service for all legal problems experienced by new immigrants to Israel in their native language, Amharic.

On the evening we attended, a young



Malkat Shva Center Ethiopian dancers. Photos by Barry A. Kaplan/Jerusalem.



"Cube Circus" from Israel performance.

Ethiopian teenager sang a song he wrote while three other young men danced the traditional shoulder dancing with a young woman and two other young women accompanied the young song writer. Although confined to a small space, the performance was extremely professional and delighted the over-capacity audience.

Down the block from the American Center is Liberty Bell Park and an amphitheater where a preview evening highlighted the 21st International Puppet Festival. As we entered, we were greeted by a young woman playing Israeli folk music on an accordion.

Performers from Israel, England, Hungary, Spain, Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, the Netherlands and France will present 39 events and four cabaret evenings at the nearby Khan theatre in a week's time.

Before the preview, Grandma and Grandpa, an old Israeli man and woman, life-size puppets, sat in the amphitheater jabbering in Hebrew between themselves and engaging audience members to the delight of many children in the audience. All of this could be seen on a screen on the stage.

The evening's theme, Variations of Love included seven performances. A "Punch and Judy" skit was staged on the subject of various kinds of kisses by a puppeteer from England. An Israeli couple combined plastic art and dance in a "Cube Circus" with pantomime while wearing cubes.

"Troubles" was music and pantomime by a Belgium woman with miniature objects she brought out of her pocketbook. "Plansjet" were traditional wooden puppets from Belgium dancing to a "hurdy gurdy." "The Gramophone" was a musical performance by an Israeli jazz singer who sings with a gramophone and makes the sounds of a busy signal which she hears when making a call.

"Mickey Mouse and the Horrifying Alien" is an epic tale, performed by an Israeli, pantomiming while a story is read aloud, using three juggling balls as props and which he juggles. Finally, in "The Story of Dumma and Dummi," two Israeli women satirized a cooking show in India while making pancakes. These two programs are

ROBERTS

(continued from page 9)

Yes, I would have lost, but not disastrously – only 3 out of 5.

Now it occurs to me what I should have done was to remind Him – He who made me, my bookie, and the starting Alabama backfield – of my Rosh Hashonah forbearance; and prayed for prophetic vision the next week. Oh well, maybe He's got some other reward in mind for me.

Ted Roberts, a Rockover Award winner, is a syndicated Jewish columnist who looks at Jewish life with rare wit and insight. When he's not writing, Ted worships at Etz Chayim Synagogue in Huntsville, Ala., where for 25 years he has served as bar mitzvah teacher. His inspiration is his patient wife, Shirley. 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. ★



BEN-MORDECAI

(continued from page 10)

consonants "D" and "Tet" interchange. With that in mind, we note some additions to our series of consonants in the "cutting" family: G-D-Ayin ("hew rock"), G-D-M ("lop off"), G-D-Y (g'di – "a goat," i.e., vegetation-cutter), and G-D-R ("fence," i.e., a land-cutter).

Understanding the two-consonant root system can be an invaluable aid for learning whole classes of Hebrew roots and the words formed from them.

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



part of a multitude of activities which highlight the culture in Jerusalem.

New Exhibit on Ageism at Holon Children's Museum

One would not normally think of an exhibit on aging opening at a children's museum, however the Holon Children's Museum, regarded as the most popular educational museum in the Middle East is opening chapter three in their series. (Holon is a city on the coastal strip, south of Tel Aviv.)

"Dialogue in the Dark," where all guides (see Kaplan/Israel, page 13)



Jewish Theater

REVIEWED BY IRENE BACKALENICK

Three plays not to miss

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat

The Biblical tale of Joseph in Egypt may well be a reflection of Jewish history. Indeed the centuries have seen the rise and fall of Jewish fortunes – fortunes that have risen as Jews have striven and achieved success in various countries and fallen as their high visibility has met with resentment. But with Joseph in Egypt, Jewish success is obviously at its height. It is only in a later Egyptian period that the reverse is true, and Moses must rescue the Jews from slavery.

In any event, the gifted song-writing team of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice chose that very crest for *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. The show is a youthful outpouring, written by the gifted team in their salad days. With its captivating music and lyrics, this Brit musical is hard to resist. It is the Old Testament as this gifted team chose to see it – an irreverent but charming interpretation of the Biblical tale.

The show enjoyed success in the New York City tri-state area – suburban Connecticut, to be exact. The Summer Theatre of New Canaan's exuberant, joyous production is true to the Lloyd Webber/Rice intent, and then some. Director Melody Libonati (Artistic Director of the company) puts her sizeable cast through their paces, never missing a beat. The entire company is constantly

in motion, with music and song – creating a colorful, exciting festival.

As to the tale itself, Joseph is the son of the patriarch Jacob, one of 12 sons (the founders of the 12 tribes of Israel, according to the Bible.) Because Joseph is his favorite son, Jacob presents him with a gift, a coat of many colors. The brothers, incensed and jealous, seize Joseph and sell him into slavery, to a passing caravan. He is taken from Canaan to Egypt, where, after a series of adventures and misadventures, he becomes the Pharaoh's right-hand man. Why? Because Joseph has the gift of interpreting dreams, thus saving Egypt from famine. When famine overwhelms Canaan, and Joseph's brothers come to Egypt, seeking help, he forgives and rescues them. Thus, a tale of forgiveness.

In the title role, Christopher DeRosa makes a dazzling debut, with strong support from a highly professional cast. With a fine voice and strong masculine presence, this Joseph was bound to rise to the top. Who could have resisted him? Certainly not the Pharaoh of Egypt. Nor Potiphar's wife. Nor the audience.

In all, a happy experience for company and audiences alike.

Fried Chicken and Latkes

Long before bi-racial children had become commonplace in this country, Rain Flower Pryor was born. Small wonder that this daughter of Black comedian Richard Pryor and Jewish go-go dancer Shelly Bonis had her problems. But Rain Pryor grew up to be a gifted entertainer, turning the very difficulties she encountered into her strengths. And though she was rejected by both Black and Jewish communities in her early years, her multi-racial background has given her a unique perspective on each culture.

Rain has made her own mark as an acclaimed director, actor, stand-up comedian, educator, speaker, activist, and



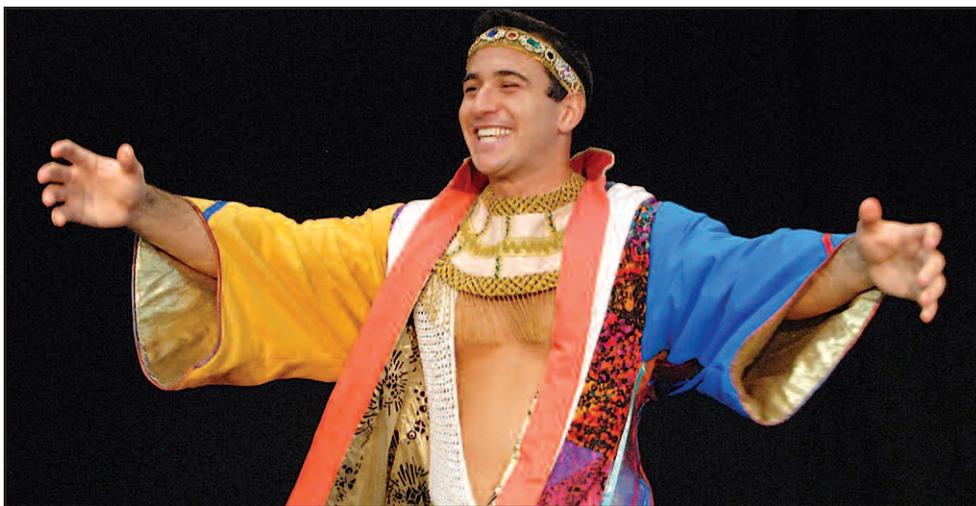
Rain Pryor in *Fried Chicken and Latkes* playing at the Actors' Temple. Photo credit: Peter Zimmern.

Artistic Director of the Strand Theater in Baltimore, Md. Now, at age 43, possessed of a substantial life, both personally and professionally, her time has come to look back, with no holds barred. Thus she has created her onstage memoir *Fried Chicken and Latkes* which is currently playing at the Actors' Temple (a synagogue/theater in the heart of the Broadway district).

Rain comes on stage like an explosion, her frizzed afro standing out a foot on either side. As she jumps into the act, she gives every appearance of a *softig* Jewish maiden. But at other moments, as her head turns a certain angle, she is clearly a Black woman. In any event, there is hardly time to reflect on illusion, as Rain commands the stage and the entire theater.

As it turns out, she has a beautiful singing voice and her rendition of Billie Holiday's "God Bless the Child" is indeed moving. And Rain has a considerable gift for impersonations – recreating those formidable forbears who affected her life. There is her very conventional Jewish grandmother, her Bubby, chiefly responsible for her early years. There is her fiercely protective mother, a strong civil rights activist. On the paternal side, there is her grandmother, a one-time prostitute. And, most memorable of all, there is her great-grandmother, a brothel-owner. Humor and poignancy mix in equal measure, as Rain recreates these characters.

How did Rain's parents ever connect, even for the two-year run of their marriage (preceded and succeeded by other Pryor marriages)? What brought them together was not only the entertainment world, but their mutual fight for civil rights. Richard Pryor, as we know, was at the top of his form in the 1970s and 80s – a stand-up comic who spoke out in a new way, providing a role model for others to come. His own troubled background (his mother a prostitute, his grandmother a brothel owner, his own sexual abuse in childhood)



Christopher DeRosa as Joseph in *The Summer Theatre of New Canaan's* production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*.

made for a troubled adult life. He chalked up illness, drugs, numerous wives and children, though his career forged ahead. And though he appeared intermittently in Rain's life, he was a beloved father. He became a memorable model, not only for Rain, but for the new wave of Black stand-up comics.

And now his daughter Rain Pryor speaks out, a voice worthy to be heard. It is her turn.

Shalom Dammit!

Who knew! Could you believe it! It turns out that David Lefkowitz – best known as editor/publisher, radio host, and playwright – is also an entertainer, specifically a stand-up comic. Well, not exactly. *Shalom Dammit!* calls to mind, not the Jewish stand-up comics of the Catskill era, but the more political, more biting, commentators of another ilk. We think of Mort Sahl, Lenny Bruce, Jackie Mason, and lately Jerry Seinfeld. A fine legacy to which to aspire.



David Lefkowitz as Rabbi Sol Solomon in *Shalom Dammit!* Photo ©2012 J. Weil.

Shalom Dammit! is now on the boards off-Broadway. And Lefkowitz himself hides behind the persona of one Rabbi Sol Solomon (the spiritual leader of the Temple Sons of Bitches in Great Neck, New York). For almost two hours, the good Rabbi, in traditional garb, hops about, sings, dances, jokes and *kvetches*. Often he is right on the mark.

Lefkowitz – or Solomon, if you will – has his own quirky voice and style. He goes along quietly for a few predictable words, then makes a sharp unexpected turn, leaving his audience stumbling behind. It is a highly effective technique. As to content, Lefkowitz tackles assimilation, anti-Semitism, Jewish guilt, the affluent suburbs, the Goyem, and anything pertinent to today's American Jew. Biblical references mix happily with modern jargon. Referring to family – Reb Solomon's family, that is – he says, "We

KAPLAN/ISRAEL

(continued from page 11)

are blind and in which participants learn what it is like to be blind, is in its eighth year and has been visited by 650,000 people. "Invitation to Silence," where all guides are deaf and in which participants learn what it is like to be deaf, is in its fifth



were so poor, Joseph's coat had only one color, and our library had only one book."

Though strong in its opening act, the show's Second Act takes a downward turn. For starters Lefkowitz offers his particular analysis of the Israeli-Arab conflict. There is hardly time to do justice to this, a paramount concern for us Jews, and the presentation, necessarily, tends to over-simplification. Better leave that for another time, another kind of occasion, and stick to the opening act format.

Moreover, Act Two tends to linger on too long while engaging in tiresome audience participation (a familiar ploy with solo shows). The good Rabbi gets his congregation to talk, clap, sing, and even ask questions of the Rabbi. Thus a professional show becomes a Temple gathering, a veritable Oneg Shabbat. Where were the rugelachs? Where was the tea with lemon?

Act One is, in fact, the redemption of *Shalom Dammit!* Rabbi Solomon focuses on what it is to be a Jew, with salient, at times hilarious, comments on that status. The show reaches its height when the good Rabbi goes after religion in general. "It's all a pile of s--t," he says, summarizing his own assessment of the numerous religions which pervade our planet, brilliantly carving up and dissecting each religion.

In fact, *Shalom Dammit!* indulges heavily in scatology (references to the lower body parts and body plumbing). S--t, in every sense, permeates the commentary. Well, why not? This is not Hollywood or Televisionland. No censors are silencing the off-Broadway shows. Still, *Shalom Dammit!* might well profit from a clean-up, literally and metaphorically. Lefkowitz has many trenchant comments to make, and he does not need bathroom humor to make it work.

But the best of Rabbi Solomon's comments do indeed work, and we welcome him to the New York scene. Long may he preach!

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

year and has had 200,000 visitors.

Although euphemistically called "Dialogue with Time," the new exhibit is totally based on ageism, discrimination because of age; it took three years to develop and is meant for anyone 14 and up. Using advanced multimedia techniques, the exhibit highlights the issue of aging and how to combat discrimination of people based upon age. All guides are over 70 years of age.

After having our photographs taken for a "passport" into time, we were put into a group of eight – two teenage cousins of one of the journalists, a woman in her 20s, a woman in her 40s, a man in his 50s, a couple in their 70s and a man in his 80s. First we walked through a room with provocative quotations about aging and then into a room with interactive issues where we were instructed to follow directions and play the "games." These included: testing hearing loss, opening a door with a key, putting pills in a box for daily administering, sending a text message wearing a glove, climbing stairs, concentrating and eye testing.

From there we entered the "club" room of our 73-year-old guide, Emanuel, a retired journalist, who worked for government agencies and now guides tours of older people. He told us about his life, having fought in all wars since 1956. He then showed us slides of his life, talked about his grandparents and family killed in the Holocaust and his grandchildren.

In another room we sat on tree stump-like stools and chose pictures of how we saw a satisfied older person and how society sees them. We played a game about someone being too old, just right or too young for several scenarios, played a trivia quiz then moved on to meet two life-size, mechanical puppets. Each spoke about their lifestyles. The older woman discussed her extensive travels; the older man, who was sitting on a park bench, talked about his daily life.

Finally, Emanuel welcomed us to his "living room," an Israel room of 30–50 years ago, with pictures on the walls from all of the guides, books on bookshelves, and chotchkas. Here he interviewed us about the exhibit. We then took a personality quiz and were able to email ourselves our "passport" photo and their analysis of our personalities.

This exhibit is being made possible through support of the Ministry for Senior Citizens, MEITAV (the organization for welfare and support services), the Joint Distribution Committee and several other funds. Since this exhibit is destined to have a long life, it is highly recommended for anyone planning a visit to Israel.

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

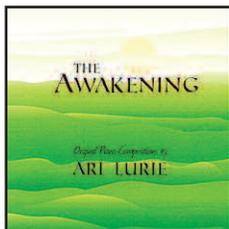


As I Heard It

REVIEWED BY MORTON GOLD

Piano music for relaxation and contemplation

Recently I received a CD called *The Awakening: Original Piano Compositions* by Ari Lurie. (C1991 and 2002) The contact information is: aripiano@comcast.net. Seventeen tracks of varying length are on the CD with the last being a reprise of the first. According to the composer, "the music can be used for relaxation, contemplation and meditation." If these were the aims of the composer, then I will state that he has achieved his purpose with these pieces admirably.



What follows should be regarded more as my observations rather than criticisms of the music. With rare exception, the treatment and style of the individual works, regardless of their titles, have a sameness about them. That is, once an idea is stated, it is repeated several times. The left hand has a constant filling movement of eighth notes and often the idea is then repeated in the upper register of the keyboard. It is this continual motion that contributes to the yoga-like (relaxation) of the pieces.

I found no apparent relationship between the titles of the individual pieces and the music itself. For example, if one exchanged the titles of the "Song for Rosh Hashanah" with the "Meditation for Kabbalat Shabbat" I could discern no difference in the relationship between the titles and the content of the pieces.

Occasionally there are a few bluesy or what used to be called "dirty notes" inserted in some of the shorter pieces which made for a much needed dose of variety to the music. While there is a difference in modality between the pieces, that is some are in major, some modal, some minor, the approach and treatment negate whatever difference these bring about.

While most of the pieces do come to a conclusion, some of them merely stop and one could notice that this happens not nearly soon enough! To my ear, these works were performed on an

electric keyboard rather than a grand piano. By itself, this is neither good nor bad. However, I believe that more variety in timbre would or could have been achieved if the compositions were performed on an acoustic rather than an electronic piano.

On the plus side, it is obvious (to me) that the composer performed his music with expression and conviction. I can envision that these pieces could be successfully performed as background music to a class in Yoga, or for any occasion for any moments of reflection or meditation; exactly the purpose for which the composer created these pieces.

There is a niche and I suspect a market for this CD and if the individual pieces may not be described as great art, or even particularly Jewish, they are nevertheless, collectively speaking, admirably suited for the purpose for which they were created.

A new tune for "El Adon"

Among the many melodies composed by Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, there is one that I have had a problem with. I am referring to the one set to the text of "El Adon" from the Shabbat service. Let me state that it is a lively, "catchy" and thus a popular melody that is probably sung in most Conservative and probably Orthodox congregations, at least in this country.

I have had negative feelings about this tune for some time now, I must confess. My problem was certainly not with the melody. My problem was that I did not feel that the melody reflected the meaning or spirit of the text. I felt no sense of the sacred when it was sung, that the melody and the text were not suited for each other.

Who am I, I said to myself to kvetch about any melody by someone like Carlebach? Wasn't that a bit presumptuous on my part? It probably was I have to admit. Furthermore the accents of the text were in *Ashkenazic*. (I am a proud member of that community.)

I do not know exactly when the good rabbi wrote this tune; I speculate that it probably was either in the late 1950s or even the early 1960s or sometime before most American Jewish congregations made the switch to *Sephardic* pronunciation.

Thus the phrase *BAW-ruch u-m'VAW-ruch* grates on the ear because the current practice is to say and sing *ba-RUCH u-m'vo-RACH* and so forth. I have truthfully stated that I have been less than happy every

Shabbat I heard "El Adon" sung to the Carlebach melody, less than happy for many years.

Blame it on the heat and/or the humidity but I heard a "still, small voice" saying: "Enough with the grumbling. If you are so unhappy, why don't you do something about it? After all, you *are* a composer, aren't you? *Nu?* So write one setting of your own! It's high time and get on with your life. I've heard enough from you. Write one now or else."

Maybe those weren't the exact words but that is the gist of what I heard. When one hears a "still, small voice" one has got to pay attention. With the heat and humidity being what it was, going to the piano and writing music was not an activity that readily came to mind. And yet, I have to admit that what I heard the "voice" say to me had merit and made sense. And the rest, as it is often said "is history."

I went to the piano, took out some manuscript paper but couldn't find the pencil I have recently been using to compose music with. (Uh, oh.) A pencil is a pencil I had to confess so I said a blessing over a different pencil and went to work. Did I have any ideas? Not at all.

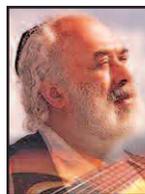
There is a Yiddish adage to the effect that one acquires an appetite while one is eating. Sure enough, one note led to another and after a few days the deed was done. There is now a new setting of mine to the text of "El Adon". The tune has an organ (or keyboard) accompaniment in four parts no less that any decent mixed choir can use, OR the melody can be sung alone without it.

Come Shabbat, I went to services and brought the music with me and asked a favor of the *hazzan*, namely to allow me to sing this newly minted tune at services. He agreed and when the time came I begged the indulgence of our "frequent flyers" and knowing no shame sang the new setting.

For the few who know the quality of my voice, I should state that while I sing from my heart, the sound often comes out through my nose. It is the feeling that counts in the end I suppose. As I neared the end I heard the sounds of some folks singing along with me. I really do not know if what I wrote is any good.

I certainly do not believe that somehow the tune will become known and eventually replace the setting by Carlebach. I do know that if I should hear that "still, small voice" again, I will tell it to go and bother someone else. It probably was the heat and/or the humidity.

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



Carlebach



Media Watch

By RABBI ELLIOT B. GERTEL

NYC 22

NYC 22, a short-lived CBS series about police rookies of various ages and backgrounds in Manhattan, has been showing some unaired episodes over the summer. One of these centered on Officer Ray "Lazarus" Harper, played by Adam Goldberg, and designates him as the Jewish voice of the ensemble.

A couple of teens have hurled bricks at an old synagogue. An African American youth called "Future" is apprehended, and Harper immediately asks him, "You got a problem with Jews, kid?"

A former crime reporter, Harper's work was read by his new colleagues, including a five part series on hate crimes, which, apparently, are often on Harper's mind. Known for his longtime investigative connections, Harper knows where one might hide in a synagogue. He suggests that they look in the Ark, and, when a colleague is unfamiliar with the term, Harper impatiently and patronizing says that he knows what a nave is.

They find a kid hiding in the Ark named Daniel Tanner (Ryan McGinnis in a creditable performance). The Tanner lad hardly needs to be interrogated by Harper. He erupts into sermon-like diatribes against the Bible. "One of the windows I broke," he declares, "was Abraham getting ready to kill his son because God told him to. God asked a man to murder his kid to give his loyalty and at the last minute says, 'Hey, I was joking,' and people think that's worthy of a stained glass memorial." Tanner dismisses this scenario as "a joke."

Tanner seems to find most, if not all, theology repulsive. "Something good happens, it's to the glory of God. Something horrible happens, it's to the glory of God. It's...his inscrutable wisdom." He asks Harper if he has another brick on him.

Harper and his partner Tonya Sanchez (Judy Marte) seek to make contact with Daniel's father. Tonya is surprised that Harper is so touchy about the brick-throwers. He asks her how she would feel if it were a church that was targeted. "My brothers used to loot the church," she replies. That bit of dialogue contributes to stereotyping and slandering Latino youth. Yet Tonya does defend the African American youth, who is known to officers as a troublemaker. She observes that he is not a Nazi but a knucklehead.



NYC 22 cast; Adam Goldberg is second from the right. ©2012 CBS Interactive.

Writer Ken Sanzel can turn an alliterative phrase, and he knows how to get Harper to mutter and even whine about anti-Semitism. (One wishes that actor Goldberg would have more clearly enunciated this material.) Harper's first rant suggests that it is unjust to attack a small synagogue left in Harlem because "it's not like...[Jews] are an invading force" there. Harper says that Harlem was the third largest Jewish settlement in the world, some 200,000 strong in the 1920s. He adds that by 1930 there were "four groups of black Jews living here [in Harlem]." Is "group" the best, most respectful term for an organization or congregation? And why the suggestion that when vandals strike a synagogue it is a statement that Jews are interlopers in Harlem.

Harper does not stop there. Assuming that synagogue vandalism is some "statement" by a "Jews go home" group, he states that it would have been preferable for the malcontents to have thrown "some rocks" at (gentrified) high rise condominiums near Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard, closer to the University. Is the purpose of his sociology "lessons" to shift the targets of malcontents or of arbitrary vandals? This is certainly not a "philosophy" I would like to see in my police force.

Harper winds down his angst-ridden soliloquy, which, I assume, represents a Jewish gut reaction of sorts, by observing, "I haven't been to a temple since my daughter's *bat mitzvah*. [I assume the word is "bat," though Goldberg makes it sound like "bar."] All I'm saying is there's a history with this garbage. I mean, Kristallnacht started with a little broken glass, too." He speculates that young Tanner's comments on the Bible may reflect "right-wing redneck" roots, and is willing to bet that "the old man's got a swastika tattoo...and his closet stuffed with Luftwaffen memorabilia."

Harper's reverie is broken by Daniel's father, Maxwell Tanner (Josh Pais) emerging

from the house. The camera focuses on his kippah, even as he declares that he is going to check the synagogue and that he is the rabbi. The police officers look shocked. I suspect that most viewers foresaw the possibility of such a turn of events.

Once led to the synagogue, the rabbi lashes into young Future with contempt, citing his "kicking garbage cans and harassing people," and the need to chase him away from the temple all the time. Future does not help matters by responding, "There you go, acting like you own the street again." The rabbi degrades both his son and Future by suggesting that Daniel was cornered into the brick-throwing because he was "hard up for friends" and "afraid of him."

Daniel sets his father straight by telling him that he had already started throwing the rocks and had not even seen Future "until he joined me." Daniel directs his anger primarily at his father's past advice regarding God, namely, that if one walks into God's house and surrenders one faith to Him, God "will carry you like a feather." (Yes, it is that pat and trite.) He then describes God as a killer, challenging his father to keep him in jail or "next time I'll burn the whole God-damned building down." Even Future is taken aback by this scene, blurting out, "I'd never talk to my pops like that." It seems that "right-wing redneck" anger is nothing compared to Jewish family banter.

We learn from the rabbi that some months before, Daniel's other brother died of leukemia, after all the family had prayed and prayed, and that Dan's mother "still hasn't recovered" and is with her sister. When one of the women officers asks the rabbi if he has considered family counseling, he says that that's what he does for a living. She wisely observes that a surgeon can't operate on himself.

The rabbi will not send his son to jail, confessing that the young man has done "exactly what I've felt like doing for the last six months myself." This cathartic statement enables the rabbi to treat Future more gently, telling him that he should love his brothers and sisters, each and every one, because you never know. Does this demean Dan further by suggesting that he did not do so?

While writer Sanzel provides a sense of the pain that afflicts families, even religious families, in the aftermath of tragic loss, his rabbinic family seems to lack any moorings in religion and in sacred texts and practices and in a meaningful faith that might provide comfort and direction. It seems that they heal and bond only after vandalizing a synagogue or admitting that they have wanted to do so.

(see Gertel, page 16)



Book Review

REVIEWED BY RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN

Holocaust poems

Contemporary Jewish Writing, Holocaust Edition. Michal Mahgerefteh, Editor-in-Chief. Poetica Magazine. 2012. Pp.55.

This second collection of Holocaust Poetry by *Poetica Magazine* is ample proof that the Shoah as a theme for reflection and contemplation is an inexhaustible wellspring promising to ever connect us to this watershed event in both Jewish and general history. I believe that as we naturally move away in time from the Shoah and World War II, they are bound to have a growing impact particularly on the Jewish people.

The genocidal assault on the Jewish people has deprived it and humanity of their full potential to creatively respond to multiple challenges and opportunities. In the case of the Jewish people and the State of Israel, the loss of progeny and talent of decimated European Jewry is potentially of grave consequence and to avert it requires extra commitment and effort.

The 36 poets (double *Chai*) represent a variety of backgrounds and some of the poets are children of survivors, but what unites them all is a profound sense of relatedness to the endless aspects and implications of the overwhelming crime of the Shoah.

Sari Friedman who earned an MFA from Columbia University and is editor of the Fearless Poetry Series, shares "At The 'Second Generation' Meeting" the burden shared by survivors and their children which, as a survivors' son, I can relate to. "I can't live my life," a woman takes up—"My father threatens to kill himself/if I do the slightest thing wrong./Says he couldn't keep living/if something were to happen to me./Wants to protect me./Won't let me cross a street by myself...and I'm 25" (p.41).

Richard Bronson from Stony Brook University Medical Center's Center for Medical Humanities, Compassionate Care & Bioethics faculty laments in his "Lament" the enormity of "fields of loss" "yet wishes to overcome justified despair

GERTEL

(continued from 15)

Touched by the rabbi's attention, Future promises to leave the synagogue alone. He is also touched by the rabbi's invitation to visit the synagogue, but declines the honor. Future, who is charmingly played by Marc John Jefferies, is given one final good line, "How am I going to keep on walking seeing that nerdy kid throwing rocks. It was



with the gift of hope's renewal," Mother, in your suit of Spring, /teach your grieving son to sing. /Father, wield your mace of light/as I walk the way of night" (p.53).

New York native, Helen Bar Lev, Senior Editor of *Cyclamets and Swords Publishing* who spent 40 years in Israel, in her "Holocaust Remembrance Day 2010" she uses chilling imagery in Jerusalem, the Jewish peoples home of eternal memories, ancient and new. "Jerusalem 2010/winter now, the skies cry/the oven is warm; a cake bakes/a siren wrenches the heart/the radio plays somber songs/and people retell of the Holocaust/of the loss" (p. 2).

Poet Michael Shorb speaks of the spirit of Polish Righteous Gentile Irena Sendler that the Nazis could not capture and of her heroic deeds and those of her comrades, "She and some friends had smuggled/Jewish children from the/ Warsaw ghetto in those days, /Sometimes in large black purses, /Sometimes in baskets covered/With blankets, slipping under/ The eyes of the German guards/Like fish sliding beneath a net" (p.28).

Prolific poet Barbara Hantman reminds all of the Jewish mission in face of inhumanity in "My Holocaust Poem for Yom Hashoah," "May the Jewish genie stay out of the bottle for an eternity:/ Divine monitor of all that is unkind,/ White-winged safeguard that roosts and flutters/Over all humanity" (p.1).

In my own poem "Old Memories" I recall my mother's traumatic recollection of memories that do not die, "Contemplating travel/From Springfield to Chicago/My mom, a Holocaust survivor/Visiting from Israel,/ Apprehensively asked me if/It was safe to board/A train filled with Gentiles" (p.48). Allen Cohen who served as a major education author for Random House, responds in "After Auschwitz... Poetry?" (Reflections on Adorno's query) "with words of meaning, After the Shoah there must be poems/because the universe is otherwise/indifferent to killing fields & ovens/& poets can't bear indifference (p.33).

Rabbi Zoberman, spiritual leader of *Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach*, is the son of Polish Holocaust survivors. ✪

practically entrapment." He is redeemable, but how about the rabbi and his son?

Harper takes Sanchez to try to offer solace and encouragement to father and son. They find them cleaning up the synagogue, together, and join in. Is the message here that the son had to break the law and desecrate a synagogue in order to engage with his father in a therapeutic activity?

NYC 22 dealt better with the relationship of a Jewish father and his daughter in the last two episodes. Part of a sting operation hunting down young drug dealers, Lazarus's daughter, Ruby, is spotted by this same rookie partner who accompanied him to the rabbi's house. It seems that Ruby's boyfriend is a drug dealer, and that she is blind to that fact; her infatuation with the young man is so overwhelming that she skipped her father's being honored as a hero at City Hall in order to spend time with this boyfriend.

The divorced Ray Lazarus Harper is the first to admit that he has not been the ideal Jewish father. Yet while there is some estrangement, there is warmth as well between father and daughter (the latter played affectingly and wisely by Lizzy Declement). Toward the end of the last episode, Lazarus, who had to be pushed a bit by his partner to confront his daughter, tells his offspring that he has "kind of forfeited the right" to discipline her. "I can't tell you what to do," he says. But Ruby spontaneously chimes in, "Yes, you can. You're my dad."

It is a wise and knowing tribute to a teenager's capacity to understand that she needs parental guidance. Writer Carter Harris ended the short-lived but well-intentioned series with a tender and rather inspiring "Jewish" moment for teenager and parent and for the viewers.

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

On this date in Jewish history

On August 29, 1897

The first World Zionist Congress opened in Basle.

~ From *The Jewish Book of Days* published by Hugh Lauter Levin Associates, Inc., New York.

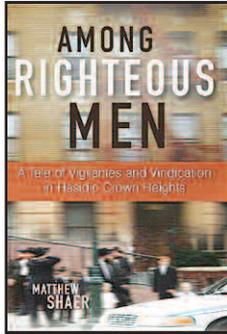
Book Reviews

REVIEWED BY MORTON I. TEICHER

Intriguing portrait of Hasidic life

Among Righteous Men. By Matthew Shaer. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2012. 243 Pages. \$25.95.

As a reporter, author Shaer covered the 2009 Brooklyn trial of six *Lubavitcher* Jews who were charged with felony gang assault. He combined his observations with inspection of documents and with numerous interviews to produce this book. He also studied the history of the Lubavitcher and the geography of their residence in the Crown Heights area of Brooklyn.



The men on trial were members of the *Shomrim*, guards who constituted an auxiliary police force. The present members of *Shomrim* are successors to the Crown Heights Maccabees and rivals with a similar organization known as *Shmira*. The need for these protective groups is related in part to the testy relations the Crown Heights Jews have with their Black neighbors. The history of these interactions, described in some detail by Shaer, includes race riots and continuing hostility. Further complicating the situation is the dispute within the Lubavitcher community as to whether or not the “rebbe,” Menachem Mendel Schneerson, who died in 1994, was the Messiah. This argument divides the Lubavitcher and prevents the appointment of a successor. It also figured significantly in a dormitory fight between the *Shomrim* and the *yeshiva* students in December, 2007 that led to the charges against the *Shomrim*.

Shaer describes in considerable detail the clash between the *Shomrim* and the students, naming the participants and specifying the injuries which were inflicted. He goes on to discuss the maneuvering that followed, involving the police, lawyers, and rabbis, leading eventually to the arrest of six *Shomrim*. Shaer constantly interrupts his account of what happened with descriptions of earlier events ranging from population movements in Brooklyn to the history of the Lubavitcher back to 1698 in the Ukraine when the *Hasidic* tradition began

with the birth of the man who came to be known as the *Baal Shem Tov* – the master of the good name. His various dynastic courts are enumerated, including the Lubavitcher, founded by Rabbi Schneur Zalman. He was succeeded by a group of Lubavitcher *rebbe*s, the seventh of whom was Menachem Mendel Schneerson, a cosmopolitan Jew, who married the daughter of the sixth *rebbe*.

Eventually, Shaer comes to October 28, 2009 when jury selection begins although, following his penchant for details, he first tells us in some detail about the six defense lawyers and the two prosecutors. He next describes the testimony that was given, coming eventually to December 2, 2009 when the prosecution finally rested. The defense attorneys then entered their pleas for dismissal of the charges and, in the majority of instances, the judge accepted their petitions and dismissed most of the charges. A week later, the jury found five of the defendants innocent of all charges. One defendant was found guilty of a misdemeanor and sentenced to probation plus enrollment in an anger management class.

Shaer has told an interesting story, enabling readers to decide for themselves which part of the book is more interesting – the brawl and the trial – or the digressions about the history and geography of the Lubavitcher. All these elements combine to provide an intriguing portrait of Hasidic life.

Jews living under Muslim rule

In Ishmael's House. By Martin Gilbert. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011. 448 Pages. \$23.

Since the birth of the State of Israel in 1948, 850,000 Jews living in 14 Muslim-ruled countries were forced to leave their homes to seek refuge from persecution. This mass exodus over a period of 20 years put a burdensome ending to the 1,400 years during which Jews lived under Muslim rule. This book carefully and thoroughly examines what happened to the Jews who were subjected to Muslim control for so long.

There are at least two general characterizations of the Jewish experience. One holds that the Jews were debased, humiliated, and persecuted by the

Muslims. The other view acknowledges that Jews experienced discrimination at the hands of the Muslims but argues that their situation wasn't as bad as what Jews went through under Christian rule. Those who hold to this latter attitude point out that there was nothing under the Muslims to compare to the Spanish expulsion and Inquisition, Russian pogroms, and the Nazi Holocaust. Readers of this book will be able to make an informed choice as which of these two judgments is more accurate.

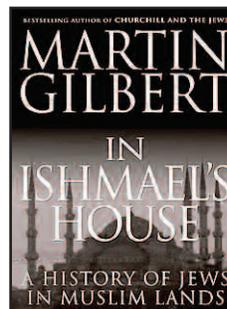
Author Martin Gilbert brings impressive talents to the difficult task of examining 1,400 years of history. He is a gifted British historian who was knighted for his outstanding six-volume biography of Winston Churchill. A prolific and versatile writer, he has written many books on Jewish history. His superlative research skill is fully demonstrated by the footnotes on almost every page of this book, often referring to esoteric resources. He also provides an 18-page bibliography and a long list of people he interviewed.

An important aspect of the Jewish experience under Muslim rule is the classification of Jews by Muslims as *dhimmi*, an inferior status applied to all non-Muslims that entailed restrictions and degradation. Gilbert explores how the interpretation of this status varied from one caliph to another although, for the most part, it led to persecution and terror, often culminating in executions and destruction of synagogues.

A systematic examination of the Jewish experience under Muslim rule is presented, both chronologically and geographically. The thoroughness of the presentation leads to the introduction of many names and places that are generally unknown. Recognition of the places is facilitated by the inclusion of 22 maps.

Among the noteworthy numbers presented in the book are the 726,000 Palestinian Arabs who became refugees during Israel's War of Independence in 1948–49 as contrasted to the 850,000 Jews who were forced to leave Muslim lands. Also, according to Gilbert, there are still 50,000 Jews living in Muslim countries and there are 25,000 Jews in Iran. It is not clear as to whether or not the Iranian Jews are included among the 50,000 in Muslim lands and, in any case, both these numbers are somewhat dubious. Similarly equivocal is Gilbert's conclusion that the 1,400 year history he has so ably presented is a “story of remarkable perseverance and considerable achievement.” Fortunately, he has provided more than enough fascinating information so that readers can reach their own decision.

(see Teicher, page 19)





My Kosher Kitchen

By SYBIL KAPLAN

Cookbook review and Rosh Hashanah recipes

The Whole Foods Kosher Kitchen. By Levana Kirschenbaum, \$39.95 hardcover, 420 pp.

This book has nothing to do with the chain of Whole Foods stores. Inasmuch as I have lived in Israel the past four years and not having gotten to the New York kosher restaurant scene over the years, I was unfamiliar with the restaurant, *Levana*, on Manhattan's Upper West Side. Apparently, she and her husband and her brothers-in-law "pioneered" upscale kosher dining in their restaurant for 32 years.

For more than 30 years, Levana also gave weekly demonstrations and she authored *Levana's Table, In Short Order* (a book/DVD based on her demo series) and *Levana Cooks Dairy Free*. Now that Lavana has closed her restaurant, she focuses on weekly demos in her Upper West Side classroom.

This cookbook explores recipes which contribute to a wholesome lifestyle. Her philosophy is minimal use of processed and packaged foods and incorporation of "all the ingredients that are good for you in your daily food preparation." She uses the "bulbous monolithic roots...homely leaves...and powerful antioxidants," advocating cooking from scratch.

There are many variations for recipes and many of the more than 350 recipes which she developed have her Moroccan origin. One of the nicest things about the recipes are the personal comments. The other special touch are the paragraphs scattered throughout the book with discussions on topics such as turmeric, sea salt, roasting garlic, orange flower and rose water, roasting peppers and many more.

Chapter 1, "The Party," includes recipes for edible gifts to yourself and beyond and includes salad dressings, home-made infused oils, condiments, sauces, marinades, preserves, liqueurs and dessert sauces. Chapter 2 contains 33 soup recipes; Chapter 3 has 23 salads; Chapter 4 consists

of 22 fish recipes; Chapter 5 has 49 poultry and fish recipes; Chapter 6 has 29 vegetable dishes; Chapter 7 has 20 grains and pasta recipes; Chapter 8 comprises 17 breakfast and brunch recipes; Chapter 9 has 12 breads and flat breads; Chapter 10 has 52 desserts.

There are menus at the end and one of the most unique ideas are three indexes – one general, one for gluten free recipes, and one for Passover. If you know a newly engaged couple, a new bride or anyone else who keeps a kosher kitchen, this will be a wonderful, valuable, user-friendly addition to their cookbook shelf. For those looking for some special recipes for *Rosh Hashanah*, try these from the cookbook.

Tri Color Fish Terrine

You will create a sensation with this dish! It will make you look like a chef without too much hard work. You will like the freedom it gives you on party day, as you can make it a day or two ahead of time and keep it chilled. If you get ambitious, layer the mixture in a dozen greased muffin tins and invert them at serving time.

Fish mixture:

- 2 pounds salmon or tilapia fillets
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 4 eggs
- 1/3 cup tapioca flour or arrowroot or potato starch
- 1/2 cup dairy-free milk, low-fat OK, or dry white wine
- 1 medium onion, quartered
- Zest of 1 lemon
- Pinch nutmeg
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup frozen spinach, squeezed thoroughly dry
- 1/4 cup basil leaves
- 1 cup sun-dry tomatoes, briefly soaked in warm water and squeezed thoroughly dry (or use 1/4 cup tomato paste)

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Grease a 1-1/2 quart rectangle mold and line it with plastic, letting the sides overhang. Grind the fish mixture ingredients in a food processor until perfectly smooth. Divide the mixture in three. Process one-third in the food processor with the spinach and the basil. Scrape the bowl of the food processor thoroughly so you won't have to wash it to mix the red layer. Pack tightly and neatly in the mold. Tightly pack the second (white) third on top of the green layer in the mold. Process the last third with the sun-dried tomatoes or tomato paste until perfectly smooth. Pack on top of the white layer in the mold gently, so as not to disturb the layers beneath. Fold the overhanging plastic over the top of the mold. Bake for 1 hour or until the top is firm. Serve chilled. Makes a dozen servings.

Chicken with Apples

The modest apple is the star of this rustic and delicious dish. Hard cider gives the dish its originality and is easy to find, but just in case you can't secure it, use 3 cups natural apple cider.

- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 4 Granny Smith (green) apples, peeled and cut in wedges
- 2 Tbsp. sugar or Sucanat
- Zest of 2 lemons
- 3 leeks, sliced
- 8 serving pieces chicken – 16 pieces total: legs, thigh, half breasts, skins on
- 2 tsp. turmeric
- 1 bottle hard cider
- 2 tsp. cinnamon
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- 3 Tbsp. Calvados, applejack, or slivovitz

Heat the oil in a heavy, wide-bottom pot. Add the apples and sauté until golden. Add the sugar and lemon peel, and cook 2 more minutes until caramelized. Remove the mixture and set aside. Place the leeks, chicken, turmeric, cider and cinnamon in the pot, and bring to a boil. Reduce the flame to medium and cook covered for 1 hour. Add the reserved apples, ground pepper and Calvados, and cook a few minutes more until just heated through. Transfer the chicken and apples to a platter and check the sauce.

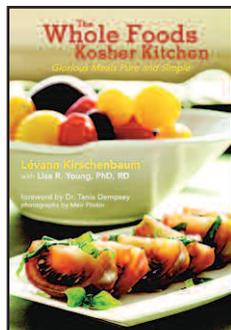
If it is too thin, reduce on a high flame 2 to 3 minutes until syrupy. Pour over the chicken and serve hot, with rice, puréed vegetables, or noodles. Makes 8 servings.

Honey Cake

Honey cake is the traditional cake of the Jewish New Year! I actually succeeded in turning quite a few people on to my honey cake. Mine is moist and spicy and easy to love; I trust it will make you forget all the indignities of past dried-out and brittle honey cakes. I make it several ways, all scrumptious, but this is one of my favorites. The secret ingredient, orange marmalade, was shared by my dear friend Leah. Some people don't use nuts during the holiday of Rosh Hashanah: No problem skipping them.

- 1 cup oil
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1 cup dark honey
- 1 cup orange marmalade, try your best for all-fruit
- 4 eggs
- 3/4 cup strong coffee at room temperature
- 3 Tbsp. rum or brandy
- 3 cups flour: all-purpose, whole wheat pastry, or spelt
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- Good pinch salt

(see Kaplan/Recipe, page 19)



TEICHER*(continued from 17)*

Story that grips our interest

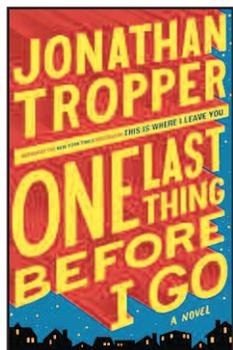
One Last Thing Before I Go. By Jonathan Tropper. New York: Dutton, 2012. 316 Pages. \$26.95.

This is Jonathan Tropper's sixth novel. In addition to being a novelist, Tropper is a successful screenwriter, and teacher of creative writing. His books tend to be set in Westchester County where he lives in New Rochelle with his wife and three children. He is on the faculty of Manhattanville College in Purchase, also in Westchester County. Originally a Catholic boarding school for girls, Manhattanville is now non-denominational as evidenced by its having Tropper, a graduate of Yeshiva College, on its faculty. He earned a master's degree in creative writing at New York University and then spent eight years in business before becoming a full-time writer. Tropper's most successful book, *This Is Where I Leave You*, published in 2009, was a best seller.

As is the case with his previous novels, this new one is set in suburbia and deals with family life. His protagonist, Drew Silver, a 44-year-old played out musician, has been divorced from Denise for almost eight years. They had one daughter, Casey, with whom Drew has a fractured relationship, although, when she becomes illegitimately pregnant at the age of 18, she turns to him for help. A further complication in Drew's life is that Denise, for whom he still feels affection, is about to get married. Her future husband is Rich Hastings, a well-to-do surgeon.

Among the other characters featured in the story are Drew's parents, Ruben and Elaine, and his younger brother, Chuck. Ruben is a rabbi in a synagogue where Drew and Chuck sat on the stage when they were youngsters. Ruben tries in vain to persuade Drew to come to services, arguing that he can meet women there. Ruben is somewhat more successful in persuading Drew to accompany him as he fulfills his rabbinical responsibilities such as officiating at a funeral and participating in a circumcision.

Occupying center stage in the story is Drew's discovery that he is dying. While he and Casey were in a waiting room before she was called in for an abortion,



he faints and winds up in a hospital. He learns that he will die unless he has an operation. This dire news, conveyed to him by Rich who is about to marry Denise, poses a dilemma for Drew. The unhappiness of his life makes him lean towards the notion of letting nature take its course and refusing the surgery. Finding the answer to this conundrum imaginatively occupies the rest of the book as he copes with the insistence of family and friends that he have the operation.

The central issue confronted by Drew belies the notion that all novels are autobiographical although parts of Tropper's fictional narrative may well be based on actual life experiences. He has managed to combine plot with character in first-rate fashion to produce a story that grips our interest and makes us care keenly about what happens to his protagonist. *One Last Thing Before I Go* deserves to emulate Tropper's 2009 success in becoming a best seller.

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

KAPLAN/RECIPE

(continued from page 18)

1 tsp. each cinnamon, allspice and ginger
1/2 cup sliced almonds (optional)

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Mix the first set of ingredients in a food processor. Mix the second set of ingredients in a bowl, and add in 3 additions to the egg mixture, using the pulse button, mixing each time only until combined. Pour the batter into a greased tube pan or 10-inch pan, or 11-by-14-inch pan. If you are using the almonds, sprinkle them evenly over the top. Bake the cake 1 hour, or a little longer, until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Invert onto a rack to cool. Makes a dozen ample servings.

Sybil Kaplan is a journalist, food and feature writer, and author of nine kosher cookbooks. ★

ROSENSTEIN

(continued from page 20)

performance. I admire the way she is protective and looks out for those around her. She sees the light in other people, and it makes her happy when they reach their ambitious, lofty goals.

Raisman was the first American woman to win the gold medal on the floor. In response to winning Gold she said, "I have always dreamed of being the Olympic Champion on floor, so I was really happy

to be able to do the floor routine of my life." Raisman paid her own tribute to the 11 Israeli sportsmen from the 1972 Munich Olympics. Alexandra Rose admitted the 40th anniversary of the Munich Games made her "Hora" Gold even more special.

Aly Raisman is a hero in my eyes, and she made watching the Olympics an invigorating, remarkable experience for me. Her expectations were above the clouds, and she elevated to reach out and touch all of us in achieving greatness at the Summer Games. She made me feel so proud to be Jewish, and it was outstanding to see success for such a compelling, dynamic athlete with a heart of Gold.

Rosenstein is a freelance writer living in Indianapolis. He is a middle school teacher and coach. ★

BERNSTEIN

(continued from page 20)

culture's Jewish identity through my career as a sports photographer."

Bernstein collaborated with former Lakers Head Coach Phil Jackson to create a photo documentary book, *Journey to the Ring*, he has photographed 30 years of NBA playoffs and 18 years of LA Kings playoffs, and he provided compelling coverage of U.S. Olympic Basketball including the 1992 Dream Team.

Previously, Bernstein was inducted into the California Jewish Sports Hall of Fame, and is among only four photographers with work permanently exhibited at The Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

Since 1983, Andrew D. Bernstein has photographed and developed a unique personal rapport with the world's leading professional athletes. Bernstein was involved in the creation of NBA Photos in 1986, which is recognized as the worldwide leader in licensing of NBA photography, and in the creation of the position of Official NBA Photographer in 1986 that he held until 2011. Bernstein's work frequently appears in *Sports Illustrated*, *ESPN*, *The Sporting News*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and more. He has covered every NBA Finals since 1982, as well as the 1992, 1996, 2000, 2008 and 2012 U.S. Olympic basketball teams. Bernstein's other recent projects include advertising campaigns featuring top athletes for Nike, Reebok, Adidas, Pepsi, Coca-Cola, and Icy Hot. (www.AndrewDBernsteinPhotography.com, www.facebook.com/ADBSportsPhoto)

The National Jewish Sports Hall of Fame and Museum is dedicated to honoring Jewish sports figures that have distinguished themselves in the field of sports (www.jewishsports.org). ★

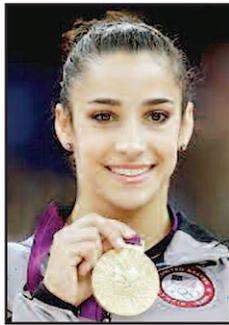
Jews in Sports

Aly Raisman's talents shine in London

By JEREMY ROSENSTEIN

Alexandra Rose Raisman represented her country and her faith very well at the 2012 Summer Olympics. Aly is a Jewish gymnast from Needham, Mass., who was captain of the gold medal-winning USA Women's Gymnastics team in London. She won a gold medal in the team all-around, a personal gold medal for her uplifting, breathtaking floor routine and bronze medal on the balance beam.

She has reaped the benefits of hard work, great desire, and a positive attitude for life. Aly comes from a Jewish family, who joined Temple Beth Avodah, a Reform synagogue in Newton, about 15 years ago. She



started Hebrew school when she was in pre-school and continued her education until her *Bat Mitzvah* at age 13. Her mother was a high-school gymnast, and got her started in tumbling at age 2 with Mommy and Me classes.

Raisman is a driven leader with a caring personality and ice in her veins. It reflected quite well at the London Olympics with her poised, gripping performances to the Hebrew folk song, "*Hava Nagila*", in the floor routine. She brought out a golden, shimmering feeling in all of us with her electrifying, memorable show of artistic genius. She combined elegance, panache and power to bring home 3 medals.

When Aly competed and found great success in the Gymnastics World Championships in 2011 she proclaimed, "Winning the team gold was the most amazing feeling ever. It's a dream come true, saying that I'm a World Champion." Raisman garnered the 2011 Pearl D. Mazor Outstanding Female Jewish High School Scholar-Athlete of the Year award.

She has always been a nurturing, charismatic and very sharp individual, who comes through in pressure situations with the spirit of a champion. She cares about other people and has always been compassionate with a warm heart. It showed with flying colors when she helped Gabby Douglas and the US Gymnastics team through some emotional moments before their all-around gold

(see Rosenstein, page 19)

The Jewish Post & Opinion

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30th JCC Maccabi Games concludes

By MARK HAYDEN

Memphis said goodbye to at least 1500 athletes from 25 U.S. communities, plus smaller contingents from Mexico, Canada, and Israel as the 30th JCC Maccabi Games ended here recently (see group photo below of some of the participants).

It was a very successful wrap-up to the games that share history with the Bluff City. Memphis hosted the first Maccabi Games in 1982 and has followed that in 2002 and 2012.

While the athletic competitions were exciting and the participants enjoyed the activities of the JCC, the emotional high occurred during the opening ceremonies when relatives of slain Israel weightlifter Yosef Romano lit the torch to open the Games. Memphis also paid proper respect to all the Jewish athletes killed in the 1972 Olympics.

"Opening activities in 1982 were held in the JCC athletic fields," said Bob Silver who was then associate director of the JCC. This year they were held in spacious FedExForum, home of the Memphis Tigers and Grizzlies.

Mark Hayden is a freelance writer in Memphis. He can be reached at marktn58@aol.com. ★

National Jewish Sports Hall of Fame Inducts legendary photographer

NEW YORK – Having played an instrumental role in the creation of NBA Photos in 1986 and with 30 years of experience as the Senior Official NBA Photographer as well as team photographer for the LA Lakers, LA Kings, LA Clippers, and LA Dodgers, Andrew D. Bernstein will be inducted into the National Jewish Sports Hall of Fame and Museum, as one of only two Jewish photographers to receive this national recognition, on Sun., April 21, 2013 at the Suffolk JCC in Commack, NY.



The National Jewish Sports Hall of Fame and Museum honors Jewish individuals who have distinguished themselves in the world of sports. Says Bernstein, "I am proud to foster my

(see Bernstein, page 19)

