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L'shanah Tovah U'metukah



Cover art by
Karin Foreman
(see About the Cover, p.3).

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SAVING LIVES IN ISRAEL

Editorial

If I had gone to a fortune teller 20 years ago and she had told me one day I will not only be managing, editing, and publishing a newspaper, but also writing a column for it, I would have laughed at her. I would have told her that her crystal ball must be off kilter because she was reading the fortune of someone else, not me.

My seven siblings and I had not been interested in taking over my father's newspaper partly because we saw that it took all of his free time and then some. But that gradually changed for me when I moved back to Indianapolis to help my aging parents. My mother was then 82, and my father 90. I figured I would mostly be helping them with household chores, but a year later my mother passed away.

My father lived and worked in a generation where the men left the house to go to work while their wives stayed home and took care of the cooking, cleaning and childrearing. For him the kitchen was like being in a foreign country. Without my mother in it, he was lost.

Since we were both mourning the loss of my mother, I thought it would be best if I stayed with my father. At that time I was told when a man reaches 90 and his wife of 60 years dies, chances are he will not live more than a year. I thought I could manage to care for him for at least that long. No one believed then, he would live seven more years.

As my father's health declined, I started getting more and more calls from his office workers to help with small tasks. Although I had grown up stuffing envelopes at my father's newspaper office, I had no experience in any of the other positions, nor had I taken any classes on publishing except one in college titled, "Journalism for Non-majors".

As my father was not able to keep up, I had to learn all the positions, on-the-job from the other employees. The reason I was able to accomplish this was because it was a gradual process. No sooner had I gotten one area under my belt, a new one arose. Eventually I had done every possible job except graphic design. That gave me the confidence to assume that whatever else new came my way I would be able to handle it.

An example of how this took place was when one employee gave a two week notice. He had been working at the newspaper for 21 years in design and production. I had to hire and help train a replacement.

The next year the two editors came to me with a major concern. We were still publishing weekly then and my father's

About the Cover

Rosh HaShanah
By Karin Foreman



K. Foreman

"Rosh HaShanah" is a Mixed Media piece and was crafted by using acrylic paint and textured paper. The white outlines were created in Illustrator.

The Jewish NewYear marks the beginning of a 10-day long period of planning to better one's life through self-examination, (see Cover, page 4)



editorials had been on the same subject for five weeks in a row. My father believed strongly that officers of boards of congregations should be present at their Sabbath services every week.

I did not know how many times previously he had written on this topic but I was told complaints were coming in from readers who said they would cancel their subscription if this continued.

My father was 94 at the time and no longer had the sharp memory he once did. I thought if I simply showed him his past five editorials, he would understand and write on a different topic. Instead he said he felt the message was so important it needed to be repeated over and over again.

At that point I had never written an editorial but I told the editors I would write one for the upcoming edition and then find another writer to fill that spot. It took me all week to write and rewrite the short editorial, but it turned out better than I expected and that was gratifying. Together with the help of the editors who looked at what I wrote and made additional corrections, I realized I could write. That was the beginning of approximately 300 editorials I have written over the years.

By the time my father passed away four years later, I was already doing all the managing and deciding what went in the paper and where. I still had two editors with 50 years editing experience between them. They helped correct the columns that came to me by email from our writers from all over the country, Canada and Israel. I paid close attention to what they did. By the time the last editor was gone, I had learned enough that I could do it by myself, though not as well as either of them.

I admit that I have made a few big blunders and a million smaller ones in these past several years but I learned so much because every day a new challenge arose. This is all good because as it turns out, I am always grateful when I learn something new.

When I was in the middle of all these

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challenges and also caring for my ailing father, I was not always a happy camper. However, as I look back I realize – crystal ball or not – we cannot always imagine where the road will take us. If all of the above occurrences beginning with me moving back to help my parents had not taken place, I may not have achieved what I did.

My advice to you, dear readers, is to dream big and do not underestimate what you can accomplish. I am in awe of all that has transpired. We wish all of our reader an awesome New Year 5778!

Jennie Cohen, August 9, 2017 ✨

Chassidic Rabbi

BY RABBI BENZION COHEN

I was born in Indianapolis in 1950. Our family lived in a quiet middle class urban neighborhood called Broad Ripple. I attended elementary school at PS (public school) 59 and graduated from Broad Ripple High School.

We were comfortable. Not rich and not poor. I was number 5 of 8 children, but we owned a nice two story house, so we were not cramped. Our life was peaceful. My parents got along well. My mother did not go out to work while I was growing up. She devoted herself to raising our big family.

The atmosphere at home was liberal. We attended a liberal synagogue, called Beth El-Zedeck.

My problems began – you guessed it – when I became a teenager. I wanted very much to be popular and have girlfriends. However, I was shy, and didn't know how to make friends. This caused me a lot of frustration.

I figured that if I would succeed in sports I would be popular. I spent hours practicing basketball, but failed to make the school team. I tried to make the football team. I understood that to be on the football team I would have to be much stronger. I would have to put on 50 pounds of muscles. For many months I lifted weights and drank protein supplements. Again I was disappointed. My muscles became stronger, but they refused to grow.

I did have some pleasure. I rather enjoyed some of the science classes, especially chemistry. I liked to play chess. One year I was number 2 on our high school chess team, and won a few games. However we didn't have even one spectator. Eating and reading were my main pleasures. I enjoyed reading, especially science fiction. I would read for hours, all the while munching away. I would eat sunflower seeds, candies, pickles, olives, or whatever I found in the kitchen or freezer. However, all of this munching had a bad effect on my health, especially the white sugar, and caused me a lot of cavities in my teeth.

In my senior year, I applied to eight universities. Again, I was disappointed. My grades in high school were not the best, and the schools that I really wanted to go to turned me down. The only one that accepted me was Indiana University. It was only 60 miles from home, and I was not very excited about going there.

When I graduated high school I was offered a free trip to Israel. I joined a group of 200 young people from all over the country, and we spent two months of the summer vacation touring Israel. We

arrived in Israel in June, 1967, two weeks after the Six Day War.

Wherever we went, we met happy people. I was really surprised and curious. I didn't know anyone this happy in Indianapolis. I asked them what they are so happy about. They explained that for six months they had been living in fear. Three of the neighboring Arab countries had gotten together and were preparing to attack. They loudly declared that they would throw every last Israeli into the sea! The Israeli army was vastly outnumbered, and Russia was supplying the Arab armies with all of the modern weapons of destruction.

Then, in only six days Israel defeated all of the Arabs! The Israeli casualties were very low, much lower than even the most optimistic of predictions. Israel now had new borders, much more secure than the older ones.

At that time my older brother Teddy was living in Jerusalem. He had left America five years earlier. He had married an Israeli girl, and was studying at Hebrew University. I came up with a brilliant idea. I would stay in Israel with all of these happy people. Hopefully, some of this happiness would rub off on me. I would study at Hebrew University. Indiana University didn't appeal to me anymore.

I was accepted by Hebrew University, and started to work on my Bachelor of Science degree. One day I went to a local bookstore, to find something interesting to read. I went straight to the shelf marked science fiction. I checked out every book, and was again disappointed. I had already read all of them!

Well, if I had come all of this way to the book store, I decided to look around. Maybe I would find something else interesting. After a few minutes I picked up a book about yoga. At that time I knew that yoga was a way of life practiced in India. And in those days, 50 years ago, our planet seemed much larger than it seems today. So instead of reading science fiction and life on other planets, I settled to read about life in India. I bought the book and read it with interest.

What are the rules of yoga? Be careful not to hurt any human being or any other living creature. Be a vegetarian. Don't kill and eat any cows, chickens or fish. Amazing! This was pretty much opposite to the rules that I had adopted while growing up. I remember sitting in the locker room in high school and hearing boys bragging about taking advantage of this one or that one. Now yoga says that my purpose in life is not to take advantage of anyone or anything, but the opposite, to help however I can.

People told me that I had a good head, and could learn a good profession and

COVER

(continued from page 3)

reflection, prayer and repentance. This journey is represented by ten swirly elements that resemble pathways.

The artwork includes some traditional elements associated with the holiday. One is the *shofar* (ram's horn), which is to be sounded on this day. The other is the pomegranate. It is customarily consumed and represents fruitfulness, knowledge, learning and wisdom as well as symbolizing righteousness.

One ritual of this holiday is *Tashlich* – the symbolic casting off of sins by throwing bread crumbs into a natural body of flowing water like a lake or sea. This body of water is represented in this piece with the blue oval. The circle stands for the round *challah* to be eaten for a sweet New Year.

Karin creates artwork, graphic designs, and award-winning inspirational nature photography. Foreman has won *The Exposure Award* and is featured in *The Nature Collection*. Her photography was honored at a private reception at the Louvre Museum in 2015. Her work was also featured at 4Times Square in New York (2016) and will be displayed in August 2017 at the Amsterdam International Art Fair held at the *Beurs van Berlage*. See much more of her beautiful art on her website at www.karinforeman.com. She can be reached by email at karin_foreman@yahoo.com. ✨



earn a lot of money. Then I would be able to buy a fancy car and a beautiful house. The message I got was “look out for #1 (myself)” and to heck with everyone else.

Well, at that point in my life I was not especially happy. My daily life gave me many frustrations. I decided to give yoga a try. I became a vegetarian. I started to do yoga exercises, relaxation and meditation. Every day I would meditate for a few minutes on my soul, and on G-d, who gave me my soul.

After a few months I noticed a strange feeling. I tried to figure it out. Eventually I realized what it was. I was experiencing happiness! For the first time in my life every day had happiness and positive experiences. No more frustration. Before yoga my goals in life were physical pleasures. When I didn't get them I was frustrated. Now my goals were spiritual. I wanted to be nice and helpful and found many opportunities to do so. Here I found a lot of success.

Before yoga I suffered a lot from jealousy. I was jealous of those who were popular, who had girlfriends, who had a car or a motorcycle, who were rich and

(see Benzion, page 5)

Jewish Educator



BY AMY HIRSHBERG LEDERMAN

A High Holiday Knock-Knock Joke

“Knock knock!”

“Who’s there?”

“Me.”

“Me who?”

A silly childhood joke, right? Perhaps, but it could also be viewed as one of the most compelling questions of all time.

Because, if asked differently, the question “Me who?” is actually: “Who am I?”

Since the beginning of time, we have been attempting to understand and articulate who we are as individuals. In the Bible, human nature was defined by our relationship to God and creation. The ancient Greeks and Romans understood human temperaments by adopting the four humors of Hippocratic medicine. The Hindus developed *Ayurveda*, a medical system still used today, basing human nature on three *doshas*, or elements. And Shakespeare crafted characters like Hamlet and Romeo and Juliet with the four bodily humors in mind. Each one of these systems attempted to define the “essentials” that make us human.

Who am I? A difficult, complex question to answer for sure, because at any given time in life, we are many things and those things change, ebb and flow, over the course of our lives.

Perhaps, then, the better question to ask is: “Who am I at this age and stage of my life?”

Recently, while hiking in Montana, I thought a lot about this question. At 63, I am a very different person than I was at 23, before I had even met my husband or given birth to my children. In my 40s, I was just coming into my own professionally and everything seemed possible as I shifted careers from law to Jewish studies and my family blossomed. And now, as I enter the golden years, I bring with me the wisdom of the first six decades as well as the awareness of the precariousness of life and the uncertainties inherent in growing older.

As I climbed higher toward the peak through a hillside blanketed in a tapestry of flowers, I found myself wondering: “If I had only a year to live, how would I want to live my life?”

Contrary to what this might suggest, I wasn’t feeling the slightest bit depressed or morbid. Rather, the question came from sheer appreciation for my good health,

family and friends; it arose from a desire to clarify my priorities as I approach the final third of my life.

A decade ago in the movie *The Bucket List*, two terminal cancer patients, played by Morgan Freeman and Jack Nicholson, escaped their cancer ward to take a road trip to do the things on their “wish list” of life. The movie got people talking and set off a rash of skydiving, kite surfing and out of the box road trips that had tourism booming for a while. But we shouldn’t wait for an illness to inspire us to fulfill our hearts desires, because by then, it is often too late.

The bucket list focused on what two dying men wanted to do in the time they had left. But at this time of year, as we approach the Jewish High Holidays, we are called upon to reflect on who we want to be in the year ahead.

Rosh Hashanah and *Yom Kippur* beckon us to take a hard look at our life in order to assess our relationships, goals, successes and failures. In a sense, it’s a Jewish bucket list of the soul. We ask ourselves questions like: What do I want to change in the coming year? What relationships do I want to repair that remain damaged? Can I be a better person, a more compassionate friend, a more caring daughter, a more supportive spouse? This type of hard questioning is called a *Heshbon Nefesh*, which in Hebrew literally means “an accounting of the soul.”

This sort of introspection demands that we stop and listen to that inner voice that guides us to make choices that are consistent with our most essential self. It helps us consciously prioritize our time, relationships and resources so that we live a more meaningful life. And it requires a type of mindfulness that I call “paying attention to our intentions.”

Living with intention, or *kavannah* in Hebrew, is a gift we can give ourselves regardless of our health, financial status or even emotional well-being for the simple reason that it is based on personal, autonomous choice. Even in the midst of a crisis or serious illness, we can still choose to live with dignity, honesty, love and compassion. In fact, doing so often gives meaning to an otherwise seemingly meaningless act of fate or unexpected tragedy.

It is so easy to be distracted from paying attention to our intentions. Cell phones ring and we are off and running; work demands our time and attention at the expense of the family and friends we love. *Rosh Hashanah* presents us with an annual opportunity to engage in meaningful introspection that can help us not only answer the question “who am I?” but also, “who do I want to be?” And if we choose, (see Lederman, page 6)

BENZION

(continued from page 4)

belonged to the country club. Now all of this meant nothing to me. I understood that popularity, cars and riches do not bring happiness.

My efforts were richly rewarded. For the first time in my life I started to make many friends. I was nice and helpful to my fellow students, and lo and behold, they reciprocated! Friendships blossomed. When I help someone, that person feels better and happier, and that makes me feel happy.

Soon I noticed another change in my life. My belief in G-d was becoming stronger. Before yoga, there were times that I believed in G-d, and other times that I did not believe. But even in the times that I did believe, the belief had little or no effect on my life. G-d was only somewhere there in the background.

Now G-d was real. I was thinking about Him and meditating about Him every day, and He was having a wonderful effect on my life. I was trying hard to live by His rules and commandments. Very soon I saw results. I saw beautiful and real improvements in the quality of my life.

Here is one proof that we have a Creator who loves us. When you buy a new car, the people who made it provide you with a booklet of instructions how to take care of it. If you are careful to follow these instructions you can enjoy your car for many years. If you ignore them, the car will break down sooner than it would have.

So too, our Creator gave us rules and instructions how to live. If we follow His rules we will have a good and happy life.

This is part of the first chapter of a book that I am writing, about how to live a good and happy life. So far this was the story of my life until the age of 18. Yoga was the first stage of my spiritual journey and helped me to begin to live a more spiritual life and believe in *Hashem*. This assisted me later to appreciate the beauty of Judaism and eventually become a follower of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

We believe that the Rebbe is our long awaited *Moshiach* (Messiah). The Rebbe and his followers are bringing us closer to our complete and final redemption. At that time there will be no evil in the world, only good.

Look around and see that this is really happening. Most of the countries of the world, including many Arab nations, are fighting terrorism. And even the White House has a *kosher* kitchen! So it is up to all of us to learn more *Torah* and do more *Mitzvahs* to bring *Moshiach* now!

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Kabbalah of the Month



BY MELINDA RIBNER

Tu B'Av – Jewish Sadie Hawkins Day

Tu B'Av, the full moon in the Hebrew month of *Av*, is one of the most hidden, joyous and spiritually beautiful days. According to the Jewish calendar, this year *Tu B'Av* began at sunset on Aug. 6 and ended at sunset Aug. 7. Unlike other Biblical holidays *Tu B'Av* has no ritual garments at this time in the form of *mitzvot* to display or publicize her beauty.

Many people do not even know of her special blessings. My teacher Reb Shlomo Carlebach, of blessed memory, used to say the following about holidays like *Tu B'Av*. The higher the holiday, the fewer people know about it and even how to celebrate and honor it.

Tu B'Av is spiritually a day of deepening our connection with the hidden light of our own soul. It is a day of opening our heart to greater love. It is a day to see through the veil of physicality to perceive Godliness, the *Shechinah* within all of creation. *Tu B'Av* is a day celebrating the rise of the feminine. *Tu B'Av* has even been called a Jewish Sadie Hawkins Day.

In the times of the holy Temple, the Jewish maidens wore white dresses and danced before the men. They would flirt with their eyes to say "Look at me". In one look, marriages would be made. It was on this joyous day that people from the various tribes would meet for the purpose of marriage.

Tu B'Av is 40 days before the 15th day of *Elul*, the day that marks the beginning of creation. Forty days is a mystical number in Judaism. The Oral teachings tell us that soul mates are called to each other 40 days before their birth.

Tu B'Av is a day to meditate and pray in order to receive the special vibrations and blessings, to purify your eyes to see Godliness around you. For those who are single, it is a day to call forth your soul mate energetically. For those who are blessed to be married, it is a day to gaze upon your beloved and see him or her with the eyes and heart as you did when it was revealed to you that this person was your beloved. Marriage to this person is a gift for your soul correction and purification.

Tu B'Av may be a most joyous and even miraculous day. After *Tu B'Av* the days begin to get shorter. The weather begins to shift and the scent of fall is in the air, even

Wiener's Wisdom



BY RABBI IRWIN WIENER, D.D.

There is light in darkness

Most of us, when we think of darkness cannot understand that there is light in darkness. We tend to concentrate on the concept and perception that darkness leaves us blind to the world around us. Perhaps we could relate better if we were actually blind. People who have lost their sight find the light of day in the emptiness of space – a never-ending journey in the quest for the brightness of life.

Such thoughts ran through my mind as I read the following written by an eleven year old girl and read at her graduation from elementary school to the entire graduating class and visitors:

"The darkness is the warm comfort of silence.

It is the beautiful color that puts every child to sleep.

It is not death, but life.

It is the time of rest and relaxation. Darkness is the kiss I receive meaning goodnight.

though there may be more hot days ahead. All of nature including ourselves will once again turn inward. This is the natural order now.

The Jewish calendar turns on an axis of *Tu B'Shevat* and *Tu B'Av*, masculine and feminine energies. *Tu B'Shevat*, occurring in the winter, the full moon of the Hebrew month of *Shevat*, signals the flow of blessing from above, a time for expansiveness, with holidays like Passover and *Shavuot*. *Tu B'Av*, the full moon in this month of *Av*, signals a time for the awakening of blessing from below, a time of turning inward, with holidays like *Rosh Hashanah*, *Yom Kippur* and *Succot*.

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

LEDERMAN

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it can inspire us to live with kavannah so that we can become our best and most essential self.

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



It is the covers pulled over my head as I think of sleep.

It is the comfort of the pillow resting below my head.

Darkness is my eyes slowly closing.

It makes the darkness of the day form into the light of the night.

It is the lights turning off meaning sleep and rest.

Happiness swims into dreams.

It is waking up from a nightmare and sneaking into my parent's room to sleep once more.

It is the dreams that form that will soon be fading from my memory.

It is the relief of ending and forming of a new day, and a new opportunity."

~ Maddie Scharf

I read and re-read these words and understood the value of dreams and the marvel of light emanating from darkness – the darkness of our minds as they wander from fantasy to reality.

How many of us dream, wake up and cannot remember the dream? How many of us have dreams of a better life and a better tomorrow? How many of us find our lives shattered because our dreams are not realized? How many of us truly understand that the darkness surrounding us represents the gloom that seems to overpower us?

All of life is about dreams. We dream of what could have been, what might have been, what should have been. Perhaps these lead us into a darkness that never seems to fade. The truth is that dreams change with time, but still we continue to dream because, life as we know it, is filled with all sorts of dreams.

This young girl can teach us a very valuable lesson: Darkness may engulf us, but then we reach for the comfort of those whom we love and who love us. The young among us are filled with so many dreams, but they all concentrate on living, and growing, and feeling secure. Are these not the dreams of all ages, not just the young?

(see Wiener, page 7)

Maggid



BY RABBI HERBERT HOROWITZ

As the summer turns

A Jewish couple decided to travel by car and tour southern states during the summer. One Friday afternoon they stopped in a southern town and searched for a synagogue to attend *Shabbat* services. They found a synagogue and tried to enter, it was closed. The custodian told them the temple was closed for the summer. They looked up and saw the name “*Shaarey Shamayim*”. They mused to each other, the “Gates of Heaven” are closed for the summer. I guess God really needed a vacation!

The summer is a time of “lazy, hazy, hot days,” a time of escapism and “chill out”. Yet the rhythm of Jewish life continues as the “summer turns”. There is only a limited time for escapism this year. The “three weeks” began on July 12th with the fast of *Shiva Assar B’Tamuz* (the 17th day of *Tammuz*) and culminated with *Tisha B’Av* (the 9th of *Av*) which is the most serious historical fast day on the Jewish calendar. Jews who take Jewish history and Jewish practice seriously are aware of the sadness. The time commemorates the destruction of both Holy Temples in Jerusalem. After *Tisha B’Av* the summer turns back to joy with *Shabbat Nachamu* (Sabbath of Comfort). “Comfort yee, comfort yee” voiced the Prophet Isaiah, and the enjoyment of summer returns.

Rabbi Samson Rafael Hirsch, the great German Jewish teacher, once remarked, “*the Almighty has created many wonders in nature. If I don’t take in the beauty of the Alps I will have ignored God’s greatness in all His creations*”.

How can we show our gratitude for God’s creation in the summer months? The challenge is to understand the beauty and bounty of the summer months. The *Kabbalists of Tzoat* created the major parts of *Kabbalat Shabbat* Services. They reached out to King David’s Psalms and praised God for the beauty and power of nature. Psalm 98 sings God’s praises, “*Let the sea and all its fullness thunder praise, the world and those living in it. Let the rivers applaud, let the mountains sing in chorus before the Lord who comes to rule the earth.*”

Imagine the feeling of God’s presence when kayaking down a river and mountain climbing. Echo these words of the Psalmist reverberating in your mind and heart while enjoying the great outdoors on vacation.

Technology has advanced our lifestyles and comforts at a dizzying speed in the last few decades. We rely on new technologies to advance our leisure time and pleasures of life. Sometimes we lose sight of the source of our advanced lifestyles. We must remain cognizant of our limitations and the awesome unrestricted power that the Almighty has and continues to release to the world.

Psalm 29 poignantly discusses this awesome power of God in nature, “*The voice of the Lord peaks across the waters: it is the God of glory thundering! The Lord is over the vast waters. The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars: The Lord shatters the cedars of Lebanon. The voice of the Lord strikes flames of fire. The voice of the Lord causes the desert to tremble. The Lord sat enthroned at this flood. The Lord remains King forever*”.

The warmth of summer and many hours of daylight is a healing balm for our bodies and reinvigorates us from within, emotionally and psychologically. At the same time, we must also recharge our spiritual side through deeper reflection of God’s part in our lives. There is no better way of keeping the “Gates of Heaven” open in the summer. As the Kutzker Rebbe reminds us, “Where is God?, he asked. He answers, Wherever you let Him in.”

While we enjoy the turning of the summer months let us continue to let God into our lives. Then and only then will the words of the Psalmist ring true, “*The Lord will give strength to the people: The Lord will bless His people with peace*”.

High Holy Days Thoughts

Astronomers have ascertained that there will be a full eclipse throughout North America on August 21st. There will not be such an event again until the year 2045. Coincidentally, or maybe by design, the month of Elul begins the following day. The fun of the summer morphs into the introductory period of the High Holy Days with the recitation of Psalm 27. This Psalm is recited morning and evening at all traditional synagogues through *Shmini Atzeret*. Psalm 27 which was composed by King David must have a specific connection to the High Holy Day period since it was chosen by our sages. What is the connection?

Upon studying Psalm 27, I believe King David passionately described his personal relationship with God. King David begins the Psalm with these words: “*God is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?*” King David derives his source of protection in God’s light and not from any human being’s actions. King David’s faith is complete when he says: “*For He conceals me in His tent on the day of calamity; He keeps me from being found in the covert of His tent; He lifts me on high upon a rock*”.

WIENER

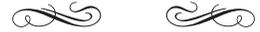
(continued from page 6)

We may find darkness when our eyes close, but when morning arrives, the light of a new day enhances our belief that light leads us into the true meaning of life, the purpose for which we were created, and the value we bring to those around us.

This eleven-year-old is my granddaughter. She has taught me a valuable lesson about happiness and sweetness. Her innocence is a testament to the lessons we can all learn from a child reaching for light at the end of the darkness of life. She has taught me, and possibly you as well, that dreams can and do become reality because of perseverance and the will to live.

And even when we are gone, the dreams do not disappear – they just become memories. So, as we learn from an eleven-year old – dream on!

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



King David feels God’s protection and his faith in God’s presence sustains him through times of adversity and doubt. His faith is strong as he works through any doubt: “*For even if my father and mother would have forsaken me. The Lord would still lift me up*”.

This Psalm appeals to us as individuals during the High Holy Day period, especially when we need strength and fortitude. During this period of introspection we seek to overcome the fears, doubts and challenges that confront our lives. That is why King David ends this Psalm with the words, “*Kavei El Adonai Chazak Ametz Libecha V’Kaveh El Adonai*” (*Hope is in the Lord, be of strong courage, hope is in the Lord*).

Therefore, as the month of August turns into September we witness the dramatic change in the day. Sunset comes earlier and the night takes over earlier and earlier serving as a harbinger of the twilight days of summer. The High Holy Days are in the air and our souls yearn to turn to God. The “Gates of Heaven” are open wide and draw us to enter God’s presence.

An old fisherman was watching a young boy picking up starfish and throwing them back into the water. The old fisherman approached the young boy and questioned “why are you doing that? There are so many starfish on the beach, what does it matter to you if you throw some of them back into the water?” The young boy replied,

(see Horowitz, page 8)

Dogs have a positive effect on humans

BY ARNIE GOLDBERG

Ancient Jewish history provides various opinions regarding dogs. Stern warnings are evident against having vicious dogs in one's household, yet guard dogs are favorable as stated in the *Midrash* that God gave Cain a dog to protect him in his wanderings.

In Exodus, dogs were praised for keeping quiet so Jews could escape quietly. A rabbi from the 16th century wrote that a dog is called "kelev" which means "like the heart." This is very similar to the modern expression "man's best friend."



Rabbi Robin Nafshi has performed memorial services for dogs, and estimates that these services have become more prevalent in Jewish life these past few years. This shows the elevation of dogs to family status in Jewish families.

Lisa Freeman, director of the Tufts Institute for Human-Animal Interaction says, "Some research suggests when children who struggle with reading, read aloud to a trained dog handler, they show fewer anxiety symptoms. Their attitudes change and their skills improve."

Researchers at the American Heart Association found that having a dog could actually reduce one's risk of getting cardiovascular disease. They find that those who have dogs have lower blood pressure and heart rate than those who do not have dogs.

Animal Assisted Therapy (ATT) has shown to reduce anxiety, pain and depression in people with those tendencies. According to Laura Bell in *Women's Health Magazine*, "Just a half an hour with your dog can trigger the brain to release chemicals linked to happiness." Dogs can be calming stress fighters.

One study discovered babies in households with dogs had fewer colds as their immune systems benefitted. College students also had benefits to their immune systems from a study of students asked to pet dogs versus those not asked.

HOROWITZ

(continued from page 7)

"It is true there are so many starfish on the beach, however, it matters a lot to that one starfish that I threw back into the water".

As the High Holy Days near, let us remember there may be seven billion people in the world, yet each of us counts and our lives have meaning and value. May the prayers we recite on the High Holy Days be heard by the Almighty. May He grant us a *Shana Tova V'Metuka* – a sweet and happy New Year.

Herbert Horowitz is Rabbi Emeritus of Shore Parkway Jewish Center, Brooklyn, NY. He can be reached at rabhh18@gmail.com. He is available to serve as a scholar-in-residence or to officiate at services on Shabbat and holidays. Currently he is looking for a cantor to serve with him at a traditional congregation in Williamsburg, Pa., for the High Holidays, and to help blow the shofar. ☆



Quotes from the book DAK-ISMS by Arnie Goldberg

"Happiness is just sitting and watching your dog be a dog..."

"Sometimes the very best part of the day is coming home to a wagging tail!"

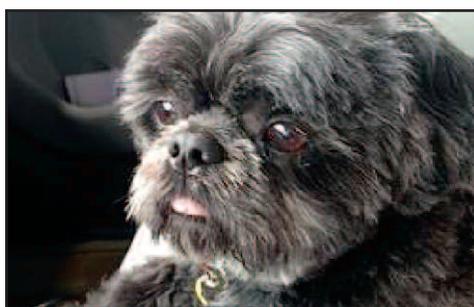
"A dog is such a comfort when you are feeling blue, because he never tries to find out why."

"Dogs are the most amazing creatures. They give unconditional love. They are the role model for me being alive." ~ Gilda Radner

"Petting and cuddling a dog can sometimes be as soothing to the mind and heart as deep medication is to the soul..."

The Journal of Alternative and Complimentary Medicine had an article by Deborah L. Wells, PhD, Shaun W. Lawson, PhD, and A. Niroshan Siriwardena, PhD.

Their research showed some dogs could be trained to warn of Hypoglycemia in patients. Catharine Paddock PhD, stated in *Medical News*, that once children get involved with dogs in a classroom, they were more positive towards one another and worked better together. Recent studies found pet owners have higher self-



Writing for Wellness

BY JENNIE COHEN

While at the printers waiting to pick up a previous edition, I glanced at one of their other printing jobs because the title caught my attention. It was a brochure by IU Health North Cancer Center titled, "The Wellness Series: Mind, Body, Spirit".

It was a schedule of classes for cancer patients offering alternative classes and therapies besides the usual doctor appointments, drugs, surgeries, chemo and radiation. At least one class was scheduled every Tuesday evening on topics such as Cooking for Health, Yoga, Reiki and Healing Touch and Spiritual Offerings.

The relationship between physical health and the environment, a supportive network of friends and family, and having faith was not well established thirty years ago but it was obvious from the brochure that today those outside influences are considered very important to one's health. I came across one class titled, "Writing for Wellness".

Since we have published 22 special editions that focus on healing, I was looking for something new that we had not already covered. I checked with the (see Cohen, page 18)



esteem, feel more conscientious, and even bounce back from social rejection better.

On a personal note, my wife has had a few health issues in the past two years and was in the hospital a year ago for nine days. Our little rescue dog, DAK (photo below middle) loved to curl up next to her on the couch, either to take naps or simply watch TV. He often sleeps on the couch at night instead of one of his three beds in the house. The whole nine days my wife was away, I could not get him to come on the couch at all. When she returned home he was anxious to again enjoy being on the couch. This says something about dogs understanding more than we know or expect.

We have enjoyed our DAK, rescued from the local humane society, and we decided to pay it forward by founding The DAK Foundation with Cissi Sherlock. Our mission is to aid families who rescue dogs and dog rescue organizations, when they need help with their veterinarian bills. Those wishing to support us with donations and/or to volunteer can go to www.thedakfoundation.org or email: cissi@thedakcompanies.com.

The reason so many of us have dogs – 43 million households in the United States – is because of one word ...LOVE!

Arnie Goldberg is an author, entrepreneur, speaker, trainer, and university instructor. Find out more at the following links: www.arniegoldberg.com, www.dakisms.com. ☆

Shabbat Shalom



BY RABBI JON ADLAND

Pirke Avot 2:6 – “Hillel used to say, a boor cannot fear sin, nor can an unlearned person be pious. A bashful person cannot learn, nor can an impatient one teach. Those who are occupied excessively with business will not become wise in Torah. In a place where there are no men, endeavor to be a man.”

**July 28, 2017, Devarim
Deuteronomy 1:1–3:22, 5 Av 5777**

In my last *Shabbat Shalom*, I wrote about those decisions made by Prime Minister Netanyahu not to move forward with an expanded egalitarian prayer space at the *Kotel* (The Western Wall) and the move to solidify the conversion process in the hands of the ultra-right wing Orthodox rabbinate in Israel. This week, in just the last few days, we have witnessed our government’s move to roll back the rights of the LGBTQ community.

While my stomach is turning over at these decisions, up pops a picture on my Facebook timeline from three years ago of the first (and only) same-sex wedding at which I have officiated. Why is our current administration so afraid of maintaining the rights gained by members of the LGBTQ community?

After the recent tweet to say that transgender people weren’t going to be welcome in our armed forces, it was beautiful to see pictures posted by transgender people who volunteered to defend and fight for our country. An article about the Israel Defense Force’s (IDF) wonderful, welcoming attitude toward transgender people’s ability to defend Israel was inspiring.

As has happened so often, I am amazed that the right *perek* from *Pirke Avot* is next in line for me to put at the top of this writing. The very end of this saying became the text for one of my favorite songs sung at GUCI – “*B’makom sh’ein anashim, Hillel omer hishtadel l’hiyot ish* – In a place where there aren’t any men, Hillel said strive to be a man.” This saying is for us. As we witness the crumbling of the fabric of our society around us – kindness toward others, support, tolerance, love, respect – it is up to you and me to step forward and persevere towards a better day.

We need to learn to respect winning and losing. We need to not call each other names. We need to respect religious and cultural differences. We need to find ways to work together. This doesn’t begin with

Let’s stop putting people in boxes

BY RABBI SANDY E. SASSO



A few years ago we needed to redo our basement after a fire caused significant damage. We engaged in the unpleasant task of removing the furniture and putting everything else in boxes, which were appropriately labeled. The floor was replaced and new drywall was installed. The restoration work was finally completed. Slowly, we began emptying the boxes and putting items in their proper places. Actually, we did not empty all of the boxes. We made a conscious decision to leave some of them unopened, thinking



the other person, we need to strive and be the one who takes the first step.

In less than two months, we will be celebrating our High Holy Days. I know, don’t rush the summer. I am not rushing the summer away, but encouraging you to begin the process of finding the path toward not only being the best person you can be, but using that attitude to restore this nation toward a community where newcomers, and all of our families were newcomers once, are welcome. We must not discriminate against those who have a gender identity different from our own. We must use language that is positive and uplifting and try not to bully or put people down. We can be kind to each other and, at the same time, stop trying to hurt each other.

There is a lot of pain right now in our country for any number of reasons and this pain is causing a huge rift in the social fabric of our society. Hillel nailed this 2,000 years ago by reminding us that each of us must strive to be the best person we can be even in a place where we can’t find this in others. If we are ever to continue moving toward the messianic age, then we must each take, as singer-songwriter Peri Smilow wrote, “one small step for freedom.” How we act, how we talk, how we behave, how we treat others are all part of this “one small step for freedom.” Strive to be the best you can be – each and every day.

When you light your *Shabbat* candles this week, light one for the enduring wisdom and vision of Hillel. Light the other candle and may its flame guide us toward a better day.

Rabbi Adland has been a Reform rabbi for more than 30 years with pulpits in Lexington, Ky., Indianapolis, Ind., and currently at Temple Israel in Canton, Ohio. He may be reached at j.adland@gmail.com. ☆

that if we ever moved to a smaller place, we could get rid of these.

This is exactly what is happening in our country. We have had a major shake-up in government and we are putting everyone in boxes with labels. We seal them shut and hope against hope that we will never have to engage with what or who is inside. This is not just coming from the right, but from the left as well.

One easy way of dismissing a group of people is to put them in a box, to label them with a derogatory name. Once we call someone fascist or socialist, a sexist or a racist, we immediately shut off any possibility of dialogue or engagement. All Republicans are in one box; all Democrats in another. There is a box for Muslims and another for Jews. There is a box for young black males and one for single mothers on food stamps.

We take the words of the people in the boxes out of context, twist them and amplify them in order to get larger groups of people to agree with us. When people we label try to explain themselves, we dismiss them, because after all, they come from people in the box we have “branded.” And so, we end up living in a country of “little boxes made out of ticky tacky.”

None of this name-calling allows for a conversation in which different people can ever get to know one another, to understand each other’s fears, their dreams, and what they really believe. We think the worst of each other, and make enemies out of friends, and antagonists out of partners. When leaders do this, they make war.

We are highly polarized. We read the news, but only the news in our box. Internet algorithms make certain that the more we read one kind of post, the more we see posts that are of similar nature. We tend to be friends with people who think the same way we do. We are inclined to listen to the radio and television news that agrees with us. We rarely step outside our boxes.

Our brains are set up to seek out evidence that endorses what we already think. This confirmation bias leads us to search only for evidence that reaffirms what we already believe to be true. We suspect and criticize any evidence to the contrary, regardless of fact.

If we are going to move forward as a country, we need to ask ourselves – what would disprove what we think to be true? What would cause us to look for that evidence and take it seriously? We need to stop putting whole groups of people in boxes and labeling them.

I am reminded of an ancient Jewish story that tells of two friends in a boat. One starts drilling a hole under his space. His companion asks, “What are you

(see Sasso, page 10)

Holocaust Educator



BY DR. MIRIAM L. ZIMMERMAN

Sunrise, sunset, swiftly fly the years

Time warp: we were playing with her beautiful children, Ziva (3-1/2) and Maya (1) (see photo right) in the playroom, which had been her bedroom until she went off to college. Has 20 years really elapsed since she left? Her name is Leah, and she is my youngest child.

Passover 2017: a new generation searches for *Chometz*, for the *Afikomen*, and experiences the comforting family ties that will last a lifetime – our six grandchildren – ages five, three (three-year-olds), and two (one-year-olds). I had forgotten how much fun it is to have young children at *Seder*. Did Leah's eyes mist over when I asked her if she would miss our family *Seders*? The following is a letter to Leah, written after that fateful family *Seder* of April 15, 2017.

Dearest Leah,

Next Passover, you and your family will not be in your hometown of San Mateo; nor in Jerusalem, the "City of Peace"; but in the "City of Monks," München (Munich), Germany. Your husband has accepted a professorship in Munich, a permanent position.

Your children will become bilingual, and, like their *Urgroßvater* (great-grandfather), will speak *Hochdeutsch* (high German). Unlike my dad, z"l, they will not speak English with a thick German accent, since you intend to speak English at home. Even so, I want to learn German so that I can speak with them when we visit. It is a profound transition, and I can imagine there is considerable emotion behind your decision. No wonder I saw tears when I asked you if you would miss our family Passovers.

It is ironic that you will be returning willingly to the ancestral homeland of my dad, your *Opa* (grandfather), which revoked his citizenship, expelled him, and destroyed much of his family. It was a distant relative who enabled Opa to emigrate from Germany, which is one of the reasons I always want as many family members as possible at our *Seders*, no matter how remotely related. Ida E. Schott, z"l, of Shaker Heights, Ohio, signed the necessary papers and helped Opa in so many ways. He thus arrived at Ellis Island, thanks to *mishpochre* (family) whom he barely knew, on April 15, 1937.



Aug. 1, 2017, at San Francisco International Airport: It took two Toyotas, six suitcases, and assorted carry-ons, but my daughter, Leah, and her family are now safely ensconced in their new apartment in Munich. Pictured is Leah holding Maya, and her husband, Ian, holding Ziva.

Opa used to say that he did not mind tax day because he considered April 15 his day of liberation. Eighty years later, his granddaughter will return to Germany, a living statement of our family's resilience and our ultimate triumph over evil.

Opa took Aunt Ruth and me to Germany sometime in the early 1980s, a pilgrimage to show us our roots. Dad wanted to pray over the graves of his grandparents, in the little towns of Brilon, whence the Loewensteins came; and Abterode, ancestral home of the Katzensteins, the family name of my *Oma* (grandmother).

Small towns in Germany, as in the United States, are so different from the big cities. Passersby on the street helped us find pensions (small hotels), places to eat, and directions to various sites. In Brilon and Abterode, when they realized who we were and why we had come, they were very eager to help us find the Jewish cemeteries.

Word spreads quickly in small towns. By the time we had finished praying over the graves of my great-grandparents and had made our way to the *Stadtmitte* (city center) of Brilon, the proprietor of the only inn invited us to sit in the back room at the *Stammtisch*. The *Stammtisch* is a table reserved for the "regulars," the local men who frequent a drinking establishment. Opa explained that it was very unusual, an honor, to be asked to join them. They were younger than Opa, but older than Ruth and I, the generation in between.

It was quite a conversation. After talking about our family and what happened to

SASSO

(continued from page 9)

doing?" The friend replies, "Why does it bother you? I am only drilling under my own seat!"

We are all in the same boat; we are really all in the same box. It is time we recognized this.

Sasso is rabbi emeritus of Congregation Beth-El Zedeck and director of the Religion, Spirituality and the Arts Initiative at Butler University, both in Indianapolis, Ind. Reprinted with permission from the Indianapolis Star, June 12, 2017. ☆



other Jewish families, one by one, the men claimed they did not know what was happening to the Jews. Opa shook his head between translating for us. Finally, one man said, "We knew. I was in the Hitler youth. Our unit was at a train station where we saw the cattle cars. The people were in terrible condition, moaning, begging for water. We knew. We all knew." After that speech, the other men became silent. No one disagreed.

Opa was not shy about asking for directions, especially after he got lost in his hometown of Bür, a suburb of Gelsenkirchen, near Essen. In his defense, Opa pointed out that the town had been almost completely destroyed and rebuilt after the war.

I was astonished to discover that his hometown was very similar to mine. Opa consciously or unconsciously chose to settle in Terre Haute, Ind., a place that shared the small town ambience of Bür: friendly people who are never in a hurry, surrounded by farms and a gently rolling landscape, suffused with the feeling of being nowhere.

Opa was 28 when he left Germany, with less than \$5 in his pocket, armed only with his medical school diploma. His journey to freedom calls to mind the *Torah* portion, *Lech Lechah*, which means "go forth," or more literally, "go for you." Our sages understood that this journey was both physical and spiritual. This *parshah* always moves me for it begins the journey of our patriarch, Father Abraham, to the Promised Land, and reminds me of Opa's escape from the Nazi inferno to the United States.

Genesis Chapter 12: "And the Lord said to Abram, 'Go forth from your land and from your birthplace and from your father's house, to the land that I will show you. And I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you, and I will aggrandize your name, and [you shall] be a blessing.'" (Translation from Chabad.org.)

What did it take for Opa to leave his homeland, when his own father, a

decorated veteran of World War I, refused to do so? Did Opa respond to an inner “*Lech Lechah*,” a spiritual and physical imperative? Without language, without money, and without a job awaiting him, he somehow was able to overcome all the bureaucratic obstacles the U.S. and Nazi governments threw in his way. He departed from Hamburg on the S.S. *Manhattan* on April 7, 1937.

Perhaps, dear Leah, your return to Germany is more significant to me than it is for you. A key ingredient for me is that you are returning part of my family to our roots. You will be a Jew in Germany, part of the thriving Jewish community in Germany today.

I hope your children will not grow up as I did, attending youth group workshops on “Jewish and American: How Jewish should you be?” or “Is Judaism a Choice?” or “Jewish identity and Jewish survival,” or “Should Jews have Christmas Trees?” Workshops like these formed the agenda for Temple youth group (NFTY – National Federation of Temple Youth) conclaves and workshops during my teen years. I hope Ziva and Maya will be completely accepted by their peers and their teachers, with no angst about who they are, where they came from, why they are there, or how Jewish they want to be.

Your dad thinks that Opa, my dad, is turning over in his grave because his granddaughter is moving to Germany. I am not so sure. Six months after your dad and I married, we used our wedding money and savings to buy a Volkswagen camper in Germany. It served as our lodging for two months as we toured Europe, a delayed honeymoon.

In those days of the late 1960s, the American Automobile Association (AAA) expedited such purchases. From our end, it was a painless process since AAA handled all the paperwork. In contrast, Opa had to negotiate affidavits, visas, and steamer tickets. Timing was crucial. Would the visa expire before he could obtain tickets out of the hellhole?

I remember my hesitancy in explaining to my dad our plan, having grown up in a household in which German products, including the German language, were *verboten* (forbidden). Dad’s nuanced response surprised me. “Volkswagen made a favorable trade treaty with Israel after the war, making Volkswagens affordable to the average Israeli.” Dad said he had no problem with our buying a Volkswagen, despite knowing that the company had used slave Jewish labor during World War II.

Similarly, I hesitated to explain my newfound feelings for Germany as a result of our pilgrimage. The tension between telling him and not telling him became too great; I could not continue to conceal

how I felt. Although I do not remember exactly where or when this conversation took place, I can recall the scene vividly, in our little room in a *pension* somewhere in small town Germany.

“Dad, I’m having a little trouble here –.” He was instantly concerned. “I mean, I don’t know how to tell you this, but (I blurted out), I *like* Germany.” I had not expected to have positive feelings about the country that served, in my formative years, as the epitome of all things evil. I had no logical rationale; my reasons, trivial: the cleanliness of the public bathrooms on the Autobahns, the fresh crisp sweetness of the apples in vending machines, the friendly politeness of the people, and the fact that his *Gymnasium* was still functioning while my high school in Terre Haute had been condemned and torn down. Germans build things to last.

Opa said he liked Germany, too, when he was growing up. He pointed out that I did not experience what he had experienced. It was a new generation. The people we encountered, for the most part, were too young to have been part of it. It was a long conversation, and I am so relieved we had it. He pointed out that Germany made reparations to many survivors and supported Israel. Although my dad refused to apply for money from the German government, his brother, my Uncle Kurt, *z”l*, received a pension from Germany because Uncle Kurt had lost his judgeship.

In the 1970s, responding to an announcement by the German consulate in the *Aufbau* (a German-Jewish newspaper that arrived weekly in our home while I grew up), Opa was able to obtain his German license to practice medicine, denied him in 1934 because he was a Jew. When people asked him why he bothered, he replied that it was his; he earned it; and it was unfairly taken from him. Thus, he wanted it.

Ruth became sick during our travels in Germany. At the *Apotheke* (pharmacy), Dad was surprised that the medicine he wanted required a prescription. He opened his wallet and showed the pharmacist his German medical license. Thus, he actually used it in Germany, once.

When people ask me why I reclaimed my German citizenship, I recite the same rationale Dad had for obtaining his German medical license. Leah, these experiences, especially the conversation about my liking Germany, help me feel OK about your return to Germany.

Despite my positive feelings, my inner child wants to say to Germany: “Neener, neener, you did not get us all. Jews are still here; we are thriving, and my daughter is proof. She has a Ph.D. in physics, the epitome of the German Jew you tried to obliterate.”

That you obtained your Ph.D. at TUM (Technische Universität München), that you received a stipend from a German institution for your research, that you learned to speak German, and that you conducted a Passover *Seder* for you and your friends in Munich – each clause warrants a hearty “*Dayenu!*” You already have a support network in Munich, educated young people who, like you and your husband Ian, are starting their families.

And now, it seems as if you are responding to your own *Lech Lechah*, to go forth. Since I am not a Talmudic scholar, I turned to “Reb Jeff,” whose blog comes closest to my understanding of the meaning of this phrase. Reb Jeff cites Rashi to elucidate a more literal interpretation of *Lech Lechah*.

“The great medieval commentator Rashi understood *Lech Lechah* in absolutely literal terms. He read it as, ‘Go for you.’ Rashi wrote that the command means, ‘Go for your own enjoyment and for your own good.’ God is telling Abram that this is not just a command to leave home, it is an invitation to adventure, wonder, and self-discovery.

“*Lech Lechah* is the command that stands at the beginning of Jewish identity. It is the two-word phrase that God uses to set Abram onto the journey toward becoming Abraham and the foundation of God’s covenant with the Jewish people. If Rashi is right, it is a journey that does not serve God’s purposes alone. It is a journey that serves Abram’s own interests, his own enjoyment, and his own good.”

Darling Leah – not that you need it – you have my permission and my blessing to make this journey. I hope you will always listen to your inner *Lech Lechah*. Applying Rashi’s interpretation, it is the beginning of your new identity, from an American German-Russian Jew to a German-Russian Jew in Germany. May your new life bring you peace, prosperity, and a new sense of who you are – not only for you, but for your whole family.

With much love, *deine Mutti* (your Mom)

To read Rabbi Jeff Goldwasser’s complete blog on *Lech Lechah*, browse to www.rebjeff.com/blog/lech-lecha-get-yourself-going. Rabbi Goldwasser is rabbi of Temple Sinai in Cranston, RI.

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

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My Kosher Kitchen

BY SYBIL KAPLAN
PHOTO BY BARRY A. KAPLAN



Sybil Kaplan (R) with Joan Nathan.

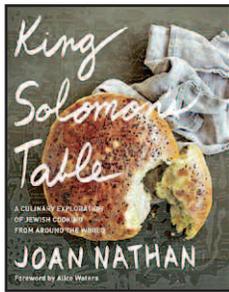
A review, an interview and recipes

[Note: Joan Nathan was in Israel recently and agreed to speak before my English-speaking chapter of Hadassah-Israel for a fundraiser. We conducted the program with my interviewing her. Her remarks are at the end of the review.]

King Solomon's Table. By Joan Nathan. Knopf. 416 pp., April 2017. \$35 hardcover.

Before I review this cookbook, I have to admit, I am prejudiced. I have known Joan for around 40 years, and every cookbook she writes is great.

In *King Solomon's Table*, Joan traces, through recipes and stories, the journey of many of the dishes which Jews ate, people she has meet over the years and places she has visited.



Alice Waters, well-known chef, food activist, owner and founder of Chez Panisse Restaurant in Berkeley and cookbook author, writes in the foreword: "Joan has become the most important preservationist of Jewish food traditions, researching and honoring the rich heritage that has connected people for millennia."

Joan's introduction is an amazing history of the roots of Jewish food. This is followed by "The Pantry", a discussion of spices and other items. The chapters and recipes follow. Every recipe has a fascinating story, and there are 171 such recipes in 12 chapters.

One can find recipes from Azerbaijan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Denmark, Ethiopia, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, India, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Kurdistan, Libya, Lithuania, Mexico, North Africa, Persia, Poland, Rhodes, Romania, Russia, Siberia, Sicily, Sri Lanka, Syria, Turkey, the U.S., Uzbekistan, and Yemen.

The "Morning" chapter has 17 recipes including Tunisian Brik, Hungarian Apple Pancakes and Sri Lankan Breakfast Buns. The "Starters" chapter has 21 recipes like French Buttery Olive Biscuits, Italian Fried Jewish Style Artichokes, and Greek Long-cooked Hard-boiled Eggs with Spinach.

"Salads" number 16, for example, Georgian Spinach Salad, Tunisian Carrot Salad and Greek Eggplant Salad. Thirteen "Soups and Dumplings" include Jerusalem Sunchoke Soup, Russian Minestrone, and Uzbek Noodle Soup.

Eleven "Breads" include American Vegan Challah, Ethiopian Sabbath Bread, and Bukharian Dome-Shaped Crisp Flatbread. There are 10 recipes in "Grains and Such", some of which are Moroccan Hand-Rolled Couscous, Rhodes Toasted Pasta, and Italian Orecchiette.

Fifteen "Vegetable" recipes include Italian Crispy Fried Zucchini, El Salvador Yuca Latkes and Hungarian Roasted Potatoes. The "Fish" chapter has 15 recipes including Indian Fish Curry, Nova Scotian Fried Haddock Cakes and Brazilian-Belarusian Grouper.

"Poultry" recipes number 10 such as Iraqi Overnight Spiced Chicken, Syrian-Mexican Chicken, and American Roast Turkey. Fourteen "Meat" recipes include Balkan Leek and Meat Patties, Moroccan Lamb Shanks and Iraqi Layered Swiss Chard, Beets and Meat.

Finally, there are 23 "Sweets" such as Sephardic Almond Brittle, Israeli Quince Babka and Brazilian Cashew Nut Strudel. Scattered throughout the book are fascinating essays such as The Wandering Eggplant, Chicken – the exotic bird, Paprika and Sugar. After acknowledgments is a bibliography and index.

When Joan guest blogged for the Jewish Book Council, soon after the publication of the cookbook, she wrote: "One of the ideas that I have wrestled with throughout my career is the question of what is 'Jewish food.' Working on my latest cookbook, *King Solomon's Table: A Culinary Exploration of Jewish Cooking* around the World, has at last answered that question for me."

Cookbook collectors, those interested in learning about all aspects of Jewish food in different countries, and fans of Joan will be fascinated by this collection, like a summary of her 40-year-old career. Below are a few of the recipes from this book.

Smoky Shakshuka (8 servings)

The name *shakshuka* comes from an Arabic and Hebrew word meaning "all mixed up," and was made in North Africa. It was born in Ottoman North Africa in the mid-16th century.

- 4 red bell peppers
- 1 (1 pound) eggplant
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 3 lamb, beef or chicken chorizo, sliced in rounds (optional)
- 5 chopped garlic cloves
- 12 chopped tomatoes or 28 ounces chopped canned tomatoes
- 1 Tbsp. smoked Spanish paprika
- 2 tsp. salt or to taste
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper or to taste
- 1 Tbsp. sugar or to taste
- 1 bunch chopped cilantro
- 8 large eggs
- Crumbled Bulgarian feta cheese

Preheat the oven to 450° and line a jelly roll pan with parchment paper. Cook the peppers and eggplant, pricking them first with a fork, turning occasionally with tongs until slightly soft and blackened, about 20 minutes. Heat the oil in a pot over medium heat. Add peppers and fry about 3 minutes then add chorizo if using and garlic and cook 6–7 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add tomatoes and simmer, uncovered, over medium-low heat for 30 minutes stirring occasionally. When the mixture is thickened, add the smoked paprika, salt, pepper, sugar, eggplant and all but 3 tablespoons of the cilantro. Stir to combine, Add seasonings to taste and add a little water if the mixture is too thick.

With the back of a spoon, make 8 shallow wells in the *shakshuka*. Gently crack the eggs into the wells, cover the pot and poach over medium-low heat for 5–10 minutes until egg whites are set. Serve sprinkled with remaining cilantro and, if you like, Bulgarian feta cheese.

Pickled Herring Spread (6–8 servings)

- 2 Tbsp. chopped red onion
- 1 Tbsp. almonds
- 1/2 Granny Smith or other tart apple, peeled and cored
- 1 large peeled hard-boiled egg
- 1 12-ounce jar marinated herring tidbits
- 1 Tbsp. fresh chopped dill

Pulse onion and almonds in food processor. Then add apple and egg to combine. Pour off sauce and onions from marinated herring and add to food processor to chop. Place mixture in serving dish and sprinkle with dill to garnish.

(see Kaplan/recipes, page 13)

Why civilizations die and we don't

BY RABBI STANLEY HALPERN



Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks recently wrote about a very interesting piece by Rebecca Costa entitled "The Watchman's Rattle" and subtitled "Thinking Our Way Out of Extinction". I, too, had read this fascinating work. Costa gives a simple and challenging account of how civilizations die. Simply put, their problems become too complex, and societies reach what she calls a cognitive threshold. They cannot chart a path from the present to the future.

The example she focuses on is the Maya in Central America. For 3500 years they developed an extraordinary civilization with an estimated population of more than 15 million people. They were masters at pottery, weaving and architecture, as well as developing an intricate calendar system, charts that tracked the movement of the stars, their own unique system of writing and an advanced mathematical system. In addition, they developed a water supply infrastructure involving a complex network of reservoirs, canals, dams and levees.

Then, for reasons we still do not totally understand, the entire system collapsed. Sometime between the eighth and ninth centuries the majority of the Mayan people simply disappeared.

Costa's explanation is that whatever caused the Mayan collapse, like the fall of the Roman Empire and the Khmer Empire of 13th-century Cambodia, occurred because problems became too numerous and too complicated for the people of that time and place to resolve. There was cognitive overload, and the system broke down.

The first sign of this breakdown was gridlock. Instead of dealing with what everyone could see were the major problems, it was easier to pass them down to the next generation. The second sign of the breakdown was a retreat into irrationality. Since people could no longer cope with the facts, they took refuge in religious consolations and extreme behavior. The Maya, just like the Khmer, chose to placate the gods by gruesome levels of human sacrifice. The problems remained unresolved, and the civilizations died.

This is what makes the case of the Jews and Judaism so fascinating. Judaism faced two centuries of extreme crises under Roman rule between Pompey's conquest in 63 BCE and the collapse of Bar Kochba's rebellion in 135 CE. Hopelessly divided, they awaited a cataclysmic destruction.

But unlike the Maya and the Khmer, they did not focus obsessively on sacrifice.

KAPLAN/RECIPES

(continued from page 12)

Leek and Meat Patties (12 patties)

The original 100-year-old recipe from Macedonia was a holiday staple for Balkan Jews which Joan tampered with a bit.

- 1-1/4 cup olive oil
- 6-8 chopped leeks
- 2-1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 2 pounds chopped lamb, beef or boiled potatoes
- 3 large eggs
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. allspice
- 1/2 cup chopped parsley
- 1/2 cup *matzo* meal

Preheat oven to 425° and rub a rimmed baking sheet with oil. Toss leeks with more oil, 1 tsp., salt and pepper. Spread leeks in single layer and roast, tossing frequently until golden brown and crisp at edges, about 20 minutes. Cool. Chop leeks and mix with meat or boiled potatoes, eggs, cinnamon, allspice, parsley, *matzo* meal and salt. Form into 12 patties. Heat a frying pan with a thin film of oil. Brown the patties until golden brown on each side, making sure they cook through. If using potatoes instead of meat, add a little Parmesan cheese for extra flavor.

An Interview with Joan Nathan, Jerusalem, June 15, 2017

These comments are as close to verbatim



Rather, they transformed Judaism into a faith that focused on *gemillat chasadim* – the doing of acts of righteousness, the study of *Torah*, prayer, both private and communal, *teshuvah* – repentance for what we had done wrong – and fasting.

What was so striking about this, particularly from the point of hindsight, is that rather than clinging obsessively to the past, our Sages thought forward to the possibility of a worst case scenario. How do we shape and redefine Judaism, even if everything horrible happens? How do we answer the questions? How do we avoid the gridlock? How do we take our past and, rather than wallow in it, make it into a meaningful future?

Perhaps it is time for the Jews and Judaism of today to emulate the Jews and Judaism of 1900 years ago. Our survival may depend upon it.

Rabbi Halpern serves Congregation Beth Shalom in Carmel, Ind., a suburb of Indianapolis. It is the first new Reform congregation in the area in more than 160 years. ✨

as possible, as the author was also taking notes while acting as interviewer.

SRK: How did you decide to continue in food writing after you left Israel in the 1970s?

JN: We moved to the Boston area and I met with an editor at the Boston Globe. He asked me to write about food. I also had a scholarship to the Kennedy School at Harvard to do a Master's in Public Administration. I also met Dov Noy, z"l, the world's renowned Jewish folklorist, who said, "I'll help you if you decide to write a cookbook," because he knew a lot about ethnic groups.

[At some point] I told Julia Child's editor I wanted to write a cookbook, but my father wanted me to go to Schocken Publishers.

[Schocken published *The Jewish Holiday Kitchen* in 1979, *An American Folklife Cookbook* in 1985, *The Children's Jewish Holiday Kitchen* in 1988, *The Jewish Holiday Baker* in 1997 and *Joan Nathan's Jewish Holiday Cookbook* in 2004. Knopf published *Jewish Cooking in America* in 1994, *The Foods of Israel Today* in 2001, *The New American Cooking* in 2005, and *Quiches, Kugels and Couscous: My Search for Jewish Cooking in France* in 2010.]

SRK: How long does it take you to write a cookbook?

JN: *King Solomon's Tables* took six years. On a trip to India, I saw a sign 'since the time of Solomon,' and got the idea although the title to write about my journeys everywhere was my editor's idea.

SRK: How did you acquire the recipes?

JN: I sent out to all the 'tribes.'

[Joan digressed here to say the three essentials for Jewish food are: the dietary laws; that the Jews went out to look, for example, for spices, and adaptations to local food.]

SRK: Who does the various elements of a cookbook?

JN: I have people help me in testing and I do my research. In the process of putting together a book, professional photographs are essential today. For *King Solomons Tables*, I knew where I would go in the world so I found other places than the original countries for substitutes. If I went to a country, I would plan trips for 10 days and when I returned I got the material typed quickly; the whole book comes together with the introduction. Each of my books is like a big term paper.

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

Media Watch



BY RABBI ELLIOT B. GERTEL

Jimmy Kimmel and Adam Sandler raise the bar of Jewish humor in tribute to Don Rickles, z"l



Jimmy Kimmel (R) interviewing Don Rickles.

Everyone has been talking about the late night TV host/comics, and the extent to which they have or have not fanned the flames of political divisiveness in our country. But in the TV season of last spring, at least one late night TV host raised the bar of Jewish humor – on the small screen, at least.

This past Passover season was ushered in by one of television's sweetest and most touching hours ever. On Thursday night, April 9, Jimmy Kimmel paid tearful but eloquent and appropriately humorous and witty tribute to Don Rickles (1926–2017), who had passed away that very morning in his 90th year. When I first heard the news while driving in my car earlier that day, I teared up, too, surprising myself with the extent of the sense of loss that I felt.

Rickles was fun. His appearance on a talk show or at a roast was an event. Though he was not mean and he never wanted to hurt people or even insult them in any stinging or lingering way, there were times, mainly in the early talk show years, when his lines could be hit-or-miss, or off-color or uncomfortably centered on color and ethnicity. But he made everyone laugh repeatedly and long, with his mockery of political correctness way before the term was coined. His ad hominem jokes echoed classical Jewish humor, which provides much self-mockery and not a little mockery of others, either as part of self-deprecation or in all-out satire.

The persona that Rickles conjured on the stage, different from his real life generosity, kindness and, believe it or not, sensitivity, was, after all, the sarcastic Jewish uncle in everyone's family, Jewish and non-Jewish families alike, whose humor everyone enjoys though not everyone will admit it.

In a beautiful eulogy for Rickles, his rabbi, David Wolpe, related that Don spoke of the influence of his father, Max, who, although he did not consider himself religious, supported the work of his local

synagogue in every detail (time.com/4731430/don-rickles-obituary-rabbi/).

Part of the reason that I felt Rickles' death so profoundly is that I've known him and his wife Barbara to be devoted supporters of the Jewish community and of their synagogue in Los Angeles, which named the gymnasium used by the Day School and Hebrew School and the congregation in their honor because of their fund-raising efforts. They lived the age-old values of "belonging" to the community and doing *zedekah*, giving.

Like many fans, I always wondered how I would respond to Rickles if the opportunity ever arose. I always admired Rickles for his serious dramatic roles as well as for his comedy in film and on television. I recall his TV series, which I enjoyed. Unfortunately, those TV series were quite short-lived.

Just as many considered it an honor to be insulted by Rickles, it certainly would have been an achievement to have come back at him with a zinger. In his eulogy Rabbi Wolpe noted that Don Rickles would say things to him like, "Don't give us a long spiel, ok? I'm due at the track." Should answering Don Rickles-like congregants be an aspect of rabbinical education? Would I have been able to resist retorting something like, "No sermon could be shorter than the duration of one of your TV series. Your costars stole your shows. They must have because those shows disappeared so quickly." Would I have been able to have delivered those lines so they didn't sound nasty, and done so without meanness, as he did?

I knew instinctively that I had to watch Kimmel on the night of April 9 because his eulogies and tributes through the years have been heartfelt and beautiful, beginning with his ode to his Uncle Frank, a warm, friendly and sincere member of the *Jimmy Kimmel Live* ensemble, who was a real life New York policeman and a security guard. Frank had worked in the latter capacity with Rickles and Sinatra and others in Vegas, where Jimmy grew up.

What I had not expected was that single-handedly, Kimmel would raise the

bar of Jewish humor in America on that show, both in his moving tribute to Rickles and in his ensuing delightful interview of Adam Sandler.

That night, Kimmel related a wonderful story told to him by Rickles' best friend, Bob Newhart, about Don and Barbara and Bob and his wife Ginny joining Frank Sinatra for dinner at an elegant Los Angeles restaurant with completely white décor from the tablecloths to the walls. Frank was in a vile mood, and when a waiter plunked down the ketchup in front of him it was like a toreador waving a red cape in front of a bull. In a rage, Sinatra grabbed the ketchup bottle and threw it against the wall, sending red splatters all over. Everyone in the restaurant stopped talking and just gasped. Without missing a beat, Don Rickles asked, in a stage whisper: "Frank, would you pass the ketchup?" This caused everybody, including Frank Sinatra, to burst into laughter.

Now that, I thought, is a very Jewish joke, rooted in Jewish values and teachings which regard the *yetzer ha-ra* or evil inclination, especially such angry displays, as foolish and wasteful. What better way to communicate the classical Jewish concern, rooted in the Bible and Talmud and in Yiddish lore, regarding waste or *bal tashhit* ("Don't destroy!"), wanton breakage or destruction of objects that could still be useful and beneficial. Hearing this story about Rickles, I thought of Rabbi Ben Zion Bokser's poetic description of Jewish law and ethics, including *bal tashhit*, in his classic book, *Judaism: Profile of a Faith* (1963).

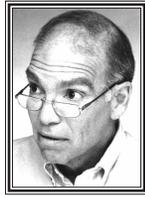
More directly related to Jewish rituals was a warm and witty note, among some others, written by Rickles to Kimmel and read during Kimmel's eulogy: "Jimmy, Thanks so much for the bottle of wine. We've been so busy crushing grapes with our bare feet, hoping to have wine for the holidays, and you came to our rescue just in time." Here images of Italian wine-making (Kimmel is part Italian) merge with Jewish holiday blessings. The letters cited and the video clips shown testify to Rickles' capacity for a gentle humor which offered engaging images and metaphors. In one exchange when Rickles was paying tribute to Kimmel's Uncle Frank, Don asked Kimmel if he was talking too fast for him to follow, adding: "You're looking at me like I'm a chemistry set."

Kimmel's show was filled with many more laughs than tears; its laughs flourished under the dew of bittersweet tears. The humor was heartfelt and uplifting.

That spirit continued in fine segments with Adam Sandler, whom Kimmel queried about his friends and daughters, and even about his Passover observance.

(see Gertel, page 15)

Shipley Speaks



BY JIM SHIPLEY

Science and religion: Compatible

There is an interesting documentary on YouTube about a recent archeological expedition in Iraq and Iran – what was ancient Persia and before that Babylonia. In ancient texts and evidence in excavations there are stories about Sodom, Gomorrah and the big flood.

That area of Persia/Iran was and is susceptible to flooding. They use round bottom boats of the type described in *Torah* in the story of Noah. But, there is no history of a great flood – plenty of floods, but not one big enough to bring penguins from Antarctica and giraffes from Africa.

A lot of what we read in *Torah* was written during the Babylonian exile. Not that there is anything wrong with that. But...like the song says “The things that you’re liable to read in the Bible, they ain’t necessarily so”. Much of our *Torah* and the New Testament consist of stories to illustrate the existence of a Higher Power and are necessary to get the reader’s attention.

People need to believe in something greater than themselves to deal with life and what it throws at them. Without faith, we would as a world, be in even worse shape than we are.

But faith, like Joseph’s coat, comes in many colors. At one time it was stone idols and fire. Faith. Without it we would not have electricity, Einstein’s theory, automobiles or trips to the moon. No, faith should never be a problem. Religion on the other hand...

Religious leaders take faith and fashion it into a regimented program of belief and discipline. Some of them throughout history take off on their own route through faith to religion. Sometimes, strong leaders – up to dictators, use God to tell their followers what God told them or what he meant.

Sometimes, to do this, some religious leaders have to defy reality to keep the faithful in line. Judaism started with a set of rules that all these millennium later still make incredible sense. The Ten Commandments by themselves set rules that adjusted in their wording to modern situations would make this a most delightful world in which to live.

There is not nor is there ever a conflict between faith and reality. God, whatever or whoever he may be probably has a plan...but we nor any religious leader is

prescient enough to know what that is. The problems arise when the people who are appointed or in some cases self-appointed start interpreting scripture to suit their own purposes and ignore history and science.

Can religion and science exist together. Of course they can! Look at a spider web – chimpanzees have 98% of our human DNA – how can you not believe that a Higher Power, something beyond our own narrow experience had something to do with that? In 1844 when Samuel F.B. Morse sent the first telegraph message – what did he transmit? “What has God wrought?”

I have failed over the years to picture some bearded figure, surrounded by a mystic light sitting on a high throne somewhere “up” in heaven, handling every little problem – not just on earth but in the billions and billions of stars that you can only see on a clear night away from civilization.

William Shakespeare wrote: “There are more things in heaven and earth than are in our philosophy”. I believe there is a Higher Power of some kind and perhaps even a grand plan. And, maybe humans are just a teeny part of that plan. If it is a plan for peace and goodwill we certainly are not the answer.

Is there any question that religious wars have killed and are killing more people than all the plagues and floods in history? Every war has started through the will and purpose of some “Strong Man”. Too many times these tyrants call upon religion to justify their means. Religion, not faith.

Could we have faith without religion? Maybe. Probably. But humans tend to question and seek simple answers. Jews? Vey! We are the greatest questioners of all. Go to any city with a solid population of Orthodox Jews. They (we) do not accept the word of any fellow human just because he stands on a pulpit or a speaker’s podium. Study and discussion – okay, argument – over *Torah* is going on as I write and as you read, as it has for centuries. Interpretation of *Torah* or the New Testament is varied and difficult because it should be. It is the reason we have seminaries to train our rabbis and our priests and reverends.

They need that base. That base comes from Human faith. They read and study and interpret. But when they carry that interpretation to reverse the actual facts of human development, science and evolution – facts that are more and more indisputable as science gains new insights and modern tools – they are doing a disservice to their congregation, mankind as a whole and to God – whomever he may be.

Jim Shipley has had careers in broadcasting, distribution, advertising, and telecommunications. He began his working life in radio

GERTEL

(continued from page 14)

(Kimmel has referred regularly to the Jewish Festivals in his monologues, skits and interviews.) On the night of the Rickles memorial, he asked Sandler outright, “Do you observe Passover?” He then asked Sandler if the children are involved in the holiday. Sandler replied, “We do.” Then Sandler elaborated memorably: “You can’t have bread. You get rid of all the bread in the house. My mother used to wrap all the bread in a paper towel...and burn it so the bread was gone. But to carry on the tradition, and the new Adam Sandler wealth, different than the past, I will do the same, but I just burn my house down. I bring the kids to a new house every year to celebrate.”

What a clever, even brilliant, play on the biblically-rooted Jewish custom of *biur chametz*, the removal or burning of leaven before Passover. Sandler noted the importance of the children seeing this custom, including himself as a child. He paid tribute to his mother. He also poked fun at throwaway culture as generations become more affluent. But most pointed of all, he noted how difficult it is for traditional Jews, especially the women, to prepare for the Passover festival with all its cleaning and cooking and literal scouring of the house.

The suggestion that it is easier to get another house would not be lost on untold generations of Jews. It’s a modern update of the old joke about Jews who were forced to convert to Christianity in medieval times and were finally allowed by the local bishop to return to Judaism, but whose wives protested, “Couldn’t we wait until after Passover?” Even in an age of (hopefully) egalitarian Passover preparations in many Jewish households, these old jokes ring true, and Sandler, with Kimmel’s help, updated them beautifully.

It is a great tribute to Don Rickles, of blessed memory, and to Kimmel and Sandler, that Rickles was fondly recalled in a talk show hour that raised the bar of “Jewish humor” which, in many films and TV shows, is often vulgar and silly.

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



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. ✨

Summer pilgrimage to Poland, Lithuania, and Israel

BY RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN



Examining the June 2017 Ayelet Tours advertised trip to Poland and Lithuania, I couldn't help but notice that my father's hometown of Zamosc in southeastern Poland was on the itinerary. We were accompanied by Professor Natan Meir of Portland State University which was an added bonus to a transforming adventure!

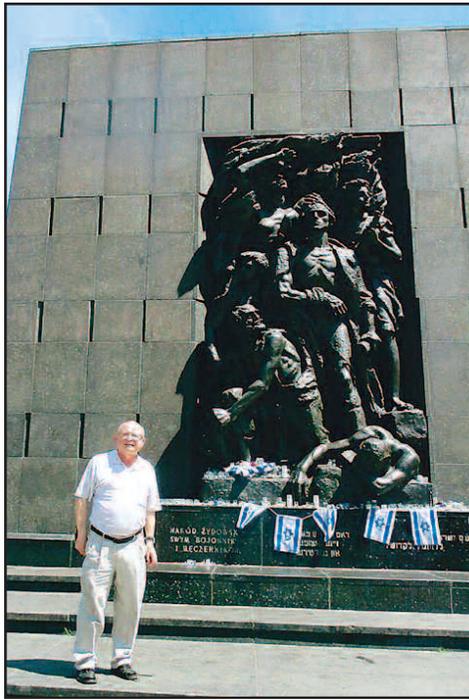
My first exposure to Poland was at age six months in 1946 when my family of Polish Holocaust survivors returned home from Siberia and Kazakhstan (then USSR) where I was born. However, we left after only four months. Some 1500 Jews were murdered by Poles who begrudged our survival and eyed our properties.

I visited Poland in February 1992 for a packed three days sponsored by the Chicago Board of Rabbis. I recall seeing the sign leading to Zamosc and my frustration of not going there. This time I was in Zamosc and I am still overtaken by breathing the air of generations of my ancestors who lived, loved and labored till the tragic onslaught of Nazi terror.

Imagine my speechless elation at being in the restored Sephardic "Renaissance Synagogue" built in the early 17th century. The only such edifice in Poland officially opened on April 5, 2011 with Poland's President Bronislaw Komorowski in attendance as Honorary Patron.

After all, my great-grandma Dina Menzis Zoberman was a descendent of Spanish and Portuguese Jews, whose industrial and communal leadership in Zamosc was immense. Dina and her husband Rabbi Yaakov Zoberman perished in the Belzec death camp along with other family members and many of Zamosc's 14,000 Jews. Half a million entered this latest of the six major Nazi death camps to be cared for (the American Jewish Committee played a pivotal role) and only three survived at war's end with two of them murdered following testifying in court!

Poland was the world center of Jewish life before WWII. Less than half a million Polish Jews survived out of 3.5 million. Warsaw, Poland's capital has been rebuilt from its ruins and is now a thriving international metropolis. Its new Museum of the History of Polish Jews is called The Polin Museum. *Polin* is the Hebrew word for Poland meaning "here we sleep and stay." This state-of-the-art museum is promising testimony to the new Poland



Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman at the Warsaw Ghetto Monument at the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw Poland.

which is free from both Nazism and Communism, proudly acknowledging its 1,000 years of Jewish life which contributed so much to Poland.

It is significantly located next to the imposing Warsaw Ghetto Monument. How moved I was that after emerging from the breathtaking museum tour, the large Israel Defense Forces (IDF) annual delegation in uniform conducted a memorial ceremony at the monument. It is an educational attempt to bond Israelis with past heroism and sacrifice. The servicemen and women also assist in cemetery work.

We welcomed *Shabbat* at the Progressive synagogue of Beit Warszawa. In the morning we attended the Orthodox Nozyk Synagogue, the only one that survived the war, and met there Poland's Chief Rabbi Michael Schudrich, an American. We encountered Israeli tourists who took the three and a half hour flight from Tel Aviv to Warsaw on attractive "deals" with also a shopping spree in mind. The Chopin piano recital by Anna Kubicz was an elegant touch of Polish culture.

I had a memorable visit to Lodz with its reminders of a great industrial past of Jewish input. The former large Litzmannstadt Ghetto, the last of Poland's to be liquidated and the second in size, is a stark reminder of a tragic end. Controversial Chaim Rumkowski was the head of the Judenrat, the Jewish Council appointed by the Germans.

In Lublin, we were at the once renowned Chachmei Lublin Yeshiva and the touching Brama Grozdka-NN Theater in the old Jewish quarter where

the rich Jewish past is preserved by very dedicated Gentile Poles. I'm still haunted by the photo of a Lublin Jewish boy who resembles by own grandson Danny, and the grim struggle and fate of the Jewish children in the ghettos and camps.

At the Majdanek death camp, the first major one to be liberated by the Russians as part of the Allied Forces, I mentioned in Hebrew to a number of Israeli officers from the delegation that they arrived 70 plus years too late. They responded that there was then no State of Israel, "that's the point" I retorted. Of the 360,000 lost lives there, 120,000 were Jewish.

In Krakow I was enchanted by the largest Market Square in Europe, Wawel Castle, the Jagiellonian University with its Institute of Jewish Studies, the Cathedral which was home to Pope John Paul II and more. In the medieval Jewish Quarter of Kazimierz are restaurants offering Jewish dishes and Klezmer music in Yiddish and Hebrew offered by Poles who capture the Jewish spirit.

I was moved by hundreds of American Jewish youth who celebrated Jewish life, connecting to both a glorious and painful past as they continued to Israel's Jewish rebirth. Being in Oskar Schindler's life-saving factory turned museum was an important reminder of those Righteous Gentiles who heroically stood by us.

The Krakow JCC established with the aid of Prince Charles of England is uplifting indeed, as was the instructive Galicia Jewish Museum where Professor Edyta Gaworn addressed us. The city is host to the famous annual Jewish Culture Festival. Visiting vast Auschwitz-Birkenau (symbol of evil's essence) where the Nazi death machine claimed a million and one-half Jewish lives was an eerie experience of shock and numbness. How monstrously deceptive is its infamous welcoming sign in German, "*Arbeit Macht Frei*" (work makes you free)!

We witnessed the sites of once vibrant small Jewish communities in Poland's pastoral countryside, and the creative and noble synagogues' restoration as Jewish museums and cultural centers thou sadly without Jews; Sejny's neo-Baroque synagogue is home to the Borderland Foundation dedicated to Poland's rich multi-cultural heritage that is Polish, Jewish, Lithuanian, Belaurussian and Russian; Tykocin's 17th century Baroque synagogue; picturesque Sandomierz with its cathedral depicting a medieval blood-libel painting of rabbis sacrificing a Christian baby for *matza* baking. However, following much Jewish protest there is a recently placed plaque testifying that the alleged never took place; Chmielnik with its uniquely renovated synagogue-museum,

(see Zoberman, page 17)

Jewish America



BY HOWARD W. KARSH

Mindfulness, meaningfulness and relevancy

In 1978, after five fulfilling years as a Hillel Director at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, the Jewish Community Center of Milwaukee asked me to accept a move to their Senior Adult Department. The US Government had a wide array of funded programs for seniors, and they wanted both the money and the programs. I accepted. In all of these positions we referred to ourselves as Social Group Workers. None of us had any specific geriatric training, but it was expected that if we could program for college students, we could make the move upward to seniors. It turned out to be a pleasant journey and a fairly long learning curve.

In 1978 I was in my early 40s, and this was my initial experience with this age group. Every day was a new experience. The participants were mostly put together women, who knew how to socialize, cope and successfully manage their lives, whether married or single. In contrast the men were fewer, had dramatically less social skills, and the single men and widowers were, in the main, floundering. Without work and without their mates, they seemed to be just treading water. We tried all kinds of interventions, but despite some attractive programming there was a very big difference in their sense of being alive and more importantly feeling relevant.

Now I am in my 80's and experiencing some of what they were facing. Friends are dying, your life seems less relevant in a society where everyone worships youth and new ideas, and while there were exceptions, the majority of men were not experiencing anything talked about in their "Golden Years."

Large parts of being "aged out of life" offend me, but with a very large family, a lively marriage, and writing, I am mostly bothered by doctors who believe that all of my pains and complaints are age appropriate. But there is hope if you look.

The daily programming on "Ted" introduces one to new and exciting research in 20 minute presentations. It is not only what one learns, but the fact that this kind of daily exposure to new ideas restores many of our brain's synapses, which have retired and are still open to

being replenished. Learning is indicated to be better than crossword puzzles and memory games.

Three of the most meaningful areas of research to look into are "mindfulness-mindlessness, meaningfulness-meaningless and relevancy". Mindfulness has been looked at for over 20 years and is well researched. The premier work has been done by Dr. Ellen Langer, a tenured Professor at Harvard, who has developed a fascinating series of studies on the effect of simply being mindful.

If you Google her name, up comes a significant series of "You Tube" interviews she has given. (If you don't "Google" and can't use "You Tube," you are doing yourself a disservice and not adding anything to your sense of "self relevancy." Our sages teach that the Almighty invested each of us with potential. You need to test it out. You need to look in the mirror and ask some hard questions about the richness of your life, and what you can do to maximize it. We were not created just to sit and warehouse ourselves.

Some time ago National Geographic did a very interesting series on thriving senior communities. The key to each community was involvement, and retirement did not mean retiring from life. The only community that was in the United States was in Loma Linda, Calif., and was mostly Seventh Day Adventists.

The famous Dr. Oz, who is a cardiac surgeon, was asked to go to Loma Linda to interview a 90+ year old cardiac surgeon who was in still practicing and regularly doing involved surgery. His experience was eye opening, but what I remember most was the doctors instructions to his associates to intervene if they ever felt his patients were at risk. Dr. Oz reported that his skills were intact and exceptional.

When they had a chance to visit, Dr. Oz asked him if had some secret that had allowed him to perform so well at this advanced age. The doctor replied that there was no stress in his life, because G-d ran the world perfectly without him, and allowed him to tend his garden, enjoy life with his wife, children and community, and to do the work he loved most, giving life to others.

Each day science is suggesting that they have the way to extend our lives. For many people that is not a positive, unless there is a promise of quality and dignity; just living longer isn't their goal. Your brain is still the most magnificent "machine" in the world. We all need to keep in touch with it, and challenge it to help us to enrich our lives.

Update: Eretz Yisroel (The Land of Israel)

I am in Israel attending a granddaughter's wedding. Because of having a large family

ZOBERMAN

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a *bima* encased in glass and memorabilia of a once flourishing community.

Captivating Vilnius (Vilna), Lithuania's capital, evokes memories of Jewish religious and cultural heights. We attended the burial place of the Vilna Gaon, delighted that one of our fellow travelers from New York had recently discovered he was a descendent of this great rabbi. We visited the former ghetto as well as the Ponar Forest where 70,000 Jews were murdered, and the site of the famous escape tunnel dug by Jews who were ordered to burn the exhumed bodies.

The calm forest belies the indescribable slaughter that should have shaken heaven and earth. At the Genocide Museum (a former KGB prison) we were exposed to the bloody brutalities of the Soviets toward Lithuanians in general, along with mass deportations to Siberia, all regarded by Lithuania as genocidal policy. Lakeside Trakai, the medieval capital of Lithuania, offered us a respite, and we were enlightened at the Karaite museum, learning how this sect escaped Nazi persecution.

We are grateful to The Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage in Poland for its remarkable initiatives and accomplishments! The observed signs of Jewish renewal are encouraging and heartwarming, but surely this amazing journey was bound to stir deep and mixed emotions.

I continued by myself to Israel. How rewarding it was to know that there is a welcoming Jewish state following unfathomable destruction! To top it all, the aircraft carrier USS H. W. Bush whose homeport is Norfolk arrived in Haifa, my hometown, with close to 6,000 sailors and pilots aboard following bombing ISIS targets. It was the first American carrier to arrive in Israel in 17 years, spending July 4th in Israel. It was greeted enthusiastically, reaffirming the special bond between the two democratic allies. I fondly recall being present when a *Torah* Scroll originally from Germany was presented to this incredible vessel.

Rabbi Israel Zoberman is the founding rabbi of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach. He is Honorary Senior Rabbi Scholar at Eastern Shore Chapel Episcopal Church. ✨



here, two married children, 21 grandchildren and nearly 31 great-grandchildren, we need the three weeks we're here to check everyone out, hold the new babies, and feel that we are finally on Israeli time. I need time to walk and ride around Jerusalem, clearly the city that touches my soul.

(see Karsh, page 18)

COHEN

(continued from page 8)

coordinator of these programs and asked if I could attend this class and write about it here. She connected me with the instructor Hilene Flanzbaum, Ph.D., a Professor of English and the Director of the MFA Program in Creative Writing at Butler University.

The class met six times, once a week for an hour and half. During the class, copies of poetry and prose by different authors were distributed and read aloud in advance of writing assignments to help give the student ideas about what to write. Also lists of “writing prompts” were passed around with questions and topics to help get one’s creative juices flowing when one has writer’s block. To see a list of 650 prompts, go to (nytimes.com/2016/10/20/learning/lesson-plans/650-prompts-for-narrative-and-personal-writing.html?_r=0). Then at the end of each class, we were given a writing assignment to do during the week to discuss in the next class.

Some examples of writing prompts with the additional advice of including sensory details were: Describe your favorite song. Where would you travel if you could go anywhere? What keeps you up at night? If you were stranded on a desert island what one other person would you like to be with you or what one book would you like to have and why? Begin a story with these words: “In my mother’s kitchen” or “In my father’s garage”.

In the first class at the top of page of the first handout of writing prompts was this sentence. “According to psychological research, the practice of writing 20 minutes a day is as effective as prescription medication in altering mood.”

One of the first writing assignments was to make a list of personal pet peeves or things that annoy you. Then the class was given about 15 minutes to write and at the end of that time the students could share what they had written if they felt moved to. After doing this exercise I could understand why this would help improve one’s mood. Instead of stewing about a problem, this gives one the opportunity to express it and unburden oneself.

Some examples of those pet peeves that others listed were the steady stream of loud noisy leaf blowers and lawn mowers that continue all summer disturbing the peace and quiet. Some had to do with challenges with our current healthcare system such as not being able to talk to one’s doctor on the phone or to get an appointment when needed. Also having an unfamiliar pain and not being able to figure out the cause of it. One of my dislikes is people who are biased and prejudiced, even though I can be that way at times.

The next writing assignment was to make a list of the things you appreciate. I wrote: when I read something well written by someone else that I was thinking but not able to articulate. Others wrote: when someone else makes my dinner, taking a walk on a spring day seeing and smelling all the flowers, dressing with warm clothes right from the dryer on a cold winter morning, and when my children enjoy one another. Again I could see how this would help improve one’s sense of wellbeing. When one is not feeling well, one tends to forget that many good things are also concurrently taking place.

One of the challenges of poor health is loneliness. A person who is ill often feels like no one else understands him or her and frequently people are not comfortable burdening others with their problems. Everyone wants to be the strong one and not have to ask or count on others for help. This class was the perfect antidote to that. It was very comforting to both share challenges with the class and also to hear that others had experienced them as well.

The class was held at the Efroymson Center for Creative Writing on the Butler campus. Professor Flanzbaum teaches undergrad and grad writing courses at Butler, but for non-students she teaches writing for wellness courses, also for well folks, who want stress relief. You can reach her at hflanzba@butler.edu. ✨

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KARSH

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But I like to be the journalist who can still be objective about Israel. I have a long past here. Beginning in 1972 when I studied Hebrew for the summer in Netanyah, at *Ulpan Akiva*, I have been fortunate to have been here almost 50 times, and I took photographs and notes.

While I was at Milwaukee’s Jewish Community Center, I led ten trips to Israel and Europe, and one in the 1990s for pastors and their wives from Wisconsin for the Israeli Tourism Board. Over the years, three of my children have lived here. Currently one has returned to Northbrook, Ill., where he is an outreach teacher and rabbi.

At the time we referred to them as far-away family visits, but in truth, there have been massive changes. We have both a backward and forward set of associations. The backward ones are about massive growth, apartments, condos, highways and traffic.

Some things have remained the same: the lack of a real peace with the Palestinians, the slow pace of a better life for the immigration of the people from Yemen and Ethiopia, a greater condition of life for the very poor and the very rich, and the continuing lack of peace and acceptance between the religious and the secular Jews.

It is interesting to understand that they are living with the issues of 69 years ago, but now in the highly technocratic age, that they are players in all of the big stakes world markets, healthcare, munitions, and infrastructure, but simply can’t address some of the day-to-day issues that have plagued them.

In the first part of this column about growing older successfully, I mention my fascination with “TED TALKS.” I hope that you are inspired enough to look them up on your computer or Smartphone, or that you will look at the 20 minute presentation by Ari Wallace, a self-proclaimed “Futurist,” a fascinating occupation that I thought had lost its battle with and against living in a time-rushed present, where thinking and working for a better world seems obsolete.

The environment, our crumbling infrastructure and healthcare now are being regarded as needing temporary fixes rather than long range planning and implementation. We need to begin by supporting any effort to close the United Nations. It does not work, never did and never will. It is a Black Bureaucratic hole that sucks money and energy.

We need to open conversations with Palestinians on the basis of moving forward because it won’t work any other way. The two parties don’t need anyone else’s help. Make the plan doable and do it.

The rift between the religious and secular populations is doable. They are faced with having an impossible form of government which cannot amass enough votes to move forward. They simply have to find a way to live together before an “enlightened Palestinian leadership” simply gives up holding them in unity because they dislike the Palestinians more than each other. Maybe, just maybe, that will bring a new reality to their determination that the only victory is when they can win everything. In America there is not always enmity on this scale, but Jews are a “stiff-necked” people.

Karsh lives and writes in Milwaukee, Wisc., and can be reached at hkarsh@gmail.com. ✨

KAPLAN/IS*(continued from page 20)*

duced and toured in puppet-and-people performances of Jewish tales throughout Israel and in North America and Great Britain. He is a founder of Encore Educational Theatre Company, for whom he wrote and directed *The Keys to the City*, and staged *The Mikado*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *The Yeomen of the Guard*, *Oklahoma!*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Ruddigore*, *The Pianist*, *Carousel*, *HMS Pinafore*, *The Grand Tour*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Gondoliers*, *The Secret Garden*, *The Sorcerer/Trial by Jury*, *Oliver*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Guys and Dolls*, and *Aladdin*.

Musical Director Paul Salter is a graduate of the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, England, where he won several prizes and scholarships in piano accompaniment. Paul has performed widely, with concerts in Manchester, London, Antwerp, and Strasbourg. He has accompanied many of the world's leading cantors, has broadcast on the BBC and Independent Television, and appeared in cabaret with Ron Moody (Fagin in the film *Oliver!*). For several years, Salter was musical director of Manchester's Jewish Theatre Group, for whom he conducted eleven shows. In Israel, he served as musical director of Capital Musical Theatre's productions of *Guys and Dolls* and *Any Dream Will Do*. A resident of Alon Shvut, a community in the Gush Etzion, Salter is active as a musical arranger, composer and conductor.

In the *Times of Israel* (May 15, 2017) Binder was interviewed by Fred Casdan, who asked why they created this musical:

"This is a project that has been several years in gestation. A number of years ago, I made several visits to Zichron Yaakov for a project I was doing at the time, and I visited the Aaronsohn house. I was very much taken with the story of Sarah Aaronsohn and especially that of Avshalom Feinberg being buried in the desert and his grave being identified 50 years later thanks to a tree that had grown from the dates he carried in his pocket.

"We met with a patron of ours, the late Sam Sylvester, who told us that he too was intrigued by the story and had one time written a film script that he was unable to sell. But we both had the same idea of starting the story with the discovery of the palm tree in the desert. That led us to do some more research and writing on the project, and after Sam passed away a couple of years ago, we spoke to his family about creating a living memorial to him by writing this story as a serious musical."

"The Sylvester family very kindly commissioned us to do so." The result was an opera, a serious musical, in the way *Les*



Michael Sacofsky, Aviella Trapido and Rafael Apfel as members of the NILI spy ring examine a map of Eretz Yisrael to determine where their colleagues can gather military information.

Miz or *Phantom of the Opera* or the works of Stephen Sondheim would be described.

Binder describes the story of *Intrepid*:

"The story is a marvelous, thrilling chapter of early Zionist history, the fact that a group of young Zionists, who had grown up in *Eretz Yisrael*, children of the First *Aliyah*, were determined to drive the Turks from the country and help the British conquer it and establish a Jewish homeland, which in fact they did, even though individually they came to rather sticky ends. In this particular story, there's the intrigue of the spy ring, there's the romance of the Aaronsohn sisters with Avshalom Feinberg, there's the mystery and the surprise of finding the palm tree in the desert. It's really a very complex story....

"The only thing in the script that is not based on an historical event is a little romantic touch we added at the suggestion of Sam's widow, Carol Sylvester. She said that she had read somewhere that Rivka Aaronsohn, the fiancée of Avshalom Feinberg, gave him a brass button, which he carried with him as a good luck charm....When Rivka and Avshalom part, they exchange a button and a flower. And the button is found on Avshalom's body 50 years later. His body was re-interred in the military cemetery on Har Hertzl. Rivka Aaronsohn was there, having waited 50 years for her lover to return. And in presenting the flag from his coffin to Ms. Aaronsohn, they also returned the button to her as a token of love."

Asked how he thought people would respond, Binder said, "I think they'll find it very significant, seeing the colossal pioneering efforts of these young people, who against incalculable odds, were determined to achieve their goal of a Jewish nation.... there. It's a very serious tale that is so important to us today."

Binder was then asked how the show was written. "I first produced an outline of the script and discussed it with Salter. When he was satisfied with the dramatic outline, then I started to write lyrics for

various songs and sent them to him. Basically, the words come first and are then set by the composer. Salter has written the most fabulous music for this show. The score is absolutely wonderful."

Explaining the format of the production, Binder said, "For the leads, there are five major parts for which we had people in mind. All the other characters come in and out and play the British or the Egyptians or the Turks. We have a cast of 18 performers, all of whom are top caliber. Most of them have performed with us a number of times in Encore! productions. We know their individual strengths, and we wrote to fit their particular vocal and dramatic talents. I should also mention that, as usual, we will have a top-notch orchestra for Salter to conduct."

Slides projected on the back wall of the stage replace actual scenery.

The story begins with a place in the Sinai desert where Arabs told soldiers after the Six-Day War in 1967 there was a palm tree and area they called "the Jew's grave." Dates from Avshalom Feinberg's pocket had produced the tree, and his bones were found underneath.

The focus is then a flashback to 1915 when the hero, Aaron Aaronsohn, tells his friend, Avshalom, of a plan he has to set up a Jewish spy ring to assist the British in conquering Palestine from the Ottoman Turks.

Over the next few months Aaron's sister, Sarah, becomes involved. The spy headquarters is the Agricultural Experimental Station at Atlit, and the group awaits British ships which bring supplies to them. The group chooses the name *NILI* (acronym for *Netzach Yisrael Lo Yishaker* – "The Eternal One of Israel will not be false").

Later, they begin to use carrier pigeons to send messages and, on one occasion, one lands near a Turkish officer, exposing the spy ring. Spy members are revealed, and two are hung. Avshalom is killed while trying to reach Egypt via the Sinai to deliver information to the British. Sarah is arrested but will not give the Turks any information. Before being sent to Damascus prison, she is allowed to go home to change clothes. While there, she chooses to commit suicide rather than be taken to prison. Aaron survives but dies in a plane crash in 1919.

The operatic presentation is dramatic and meaningful and the lyrics and songs are respectful of the seriousness of the plot. For those who know and those who don't know, this is a significant part of Israel history.

Additional performances are scheduled for Jerusalem on Oct. 29 and 31, and in Zichron Ya'acov at the Elma Arts Complex on Nov. 1 – www.Encore-etc.com, phone: (054) 578-9006 or Mr. Binder: (054) 546-4215.

See Kaplan bio page 13. ★

Seen on the Israel Scene



The Jewish Post & Opinion

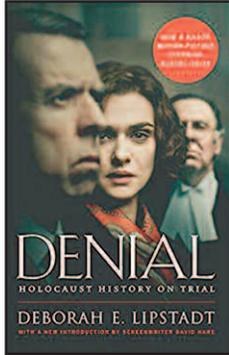
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BY SYBIL KAPLAN

Deborah Lipstadt speaks and NILI spy ring goes musical

Many people have seen the 2016 film, *Denial*, based on Deborah Lipstadt's 2005 book, *History on Trial: My Day in Court with David Irving*. This is just one of Lipstadt's four books on her specialty on the Holocaust as an American historian. She is also the author of *Beyond Belief: The American Press and the Coming of the Holocaust, 1933-1945* (1986), *Denying the Holocaust* (1992), and *The Eichmann Trial* (2011). She is currently professor of Modern Jewish History and Holocaust Studies at Emory University in Atlanta, Ga.



Lipstadt spoke at the International Book Fair in June in Jerusalem. Leading the discussion with her was Tom Segev, Israeli historian, author and journalist; he currently writes a column for the newspaper, *Haaretz*. Segev had covered the trial in detail and visited Irving in his London home in February 2000.

"From behind his desk, Irving came across as full of himself, a condescending man, a consummate egocentric, an indefatigable chatterer," Segev described. "He drank his tea with milk, and did not offer us any. One shelf in the room is lined with the personal diaries that he has been writing since 1959. They will be his secret weapon in this case, Irving said. Fifty-five volumes, somewhere between 20 and 30 million words, of which a mere 13 words bear unmistakably clear anti-Semitic character."

Lipstadt is well known today for having taken Holocaust denier, David Irving to court in London when he sued her and her publisher for libel for characterizing him and some of his writing and public statements as a Holocaust denier, falsifier and bigot who manipulated and distorted real documents, in her book, *Denying the Holocaust*.



D. Lipstadt

In that book, she relates that she probably wrote a total of 300 words about Irving because she knew he "knew the material and twisted it to fit his own conclusions." She then said that "Holocaust denial is a form of anti-Semitism...people see the world through an anti-Semitic prism."

When Irving wrote his book, *Hitler's War* in 1988, it was clear he was a denier but by the time his book was revised in 1991, "all mention of the Holocaust had been edited out," said Ms. Lipstadt. "He was quite proud of being a denier. He twisted evidence, convoluted evidence, but if you are a Holocaust denier," said Ms. Lipstadt, "you are anti-Semitic."

At the time of the trial (January to April 2000), Irving represented himself. "He loved to do the outrageous. The whole thing [trial] was very strange, surrealistic, an out of body experience."

Lipstadt explained that to use documents or survivors as proof would have "created a level playing field"; instead, her lawyer followed Irving's footnotes back to the sources. "You have to be careful when you fight people like them that you don't elevate them."

Lipstadt won the case proving that her accusations were true and not libelous. Irving was also ordered to pay all of her publisher's costs. He was declared bankrupt in 2002 and lost his home.

At the conclusion of her presentation, Ms Lipstadt was asked about the BDS movement. "People behind the BDS movement are against the existence of the State of Israel," she remarked. "Be careful calling them anti-Semitic. The BDS movement is more effective speaking a hostile view and against interpretations of Israel's policies."

The saga of the NILI spy ring becomes an Operatic Musical

Last *chol hamoed Pesach*, we took a trip up north. We stopped in Zichron Yaacov because on previous trips, knowing the Aaronsohn saga, we had been unable to get through the Aaronsohn homes. This



Aviella Trapido as Sarah Aaronsohn searches the pocket Bible of Avshalom Feinberg to find a suitable name for the Zionist spy ring, NILI, in *Intrepid*. Photos by Brian Negin.

time, we took the tour. Upon returning, since I had read the book about the Aaronsohn family and the spy ring, Nili, I created a lecture to present at the senior citizen residences.

When I saw the first notice that the English-language theatre company, Encore!, was presenting a premiere, *Intrepid: The Saga of the Nili Spy Ring* as a musical, I knew I had to see it. To even imagine this tragic story as a musical is incredible, but this production was unbelievable in its story of "romance, intrigue, bravery and tragedy," with an "operatic treatment in the grand tradition" on the centennial of the Nili spy ring.

Robert Binder wrote and directed this production; Paul Salter, composed the music.

Binder has been involved in the creation of educational media for Israel television, the JNF, and other places. As artistic director of Bimadaf ("Page on the Stage"), he pro-

(see Kaplan/IS, page 19)