

# The Jewish Post & Opinion • National Edition

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Cover Art by Dena Levie  
(see About the Cover on p. 4)

**Psalm 118:24:** "This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it." Read during Hallel on Jewish festival days.

# The Jewish Calendar – Connect, Reconnect or Stay Connected

BY ROSE KLEINER

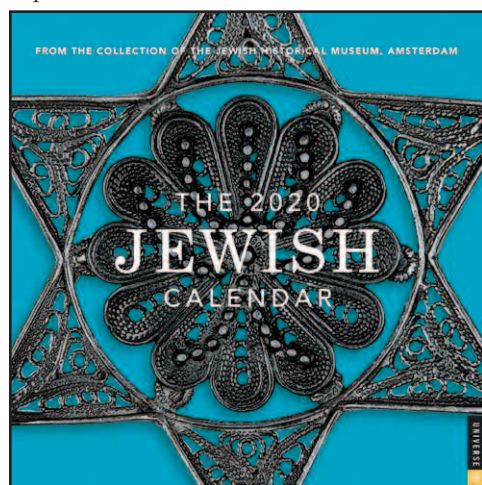
Little do we realize that as we enter the New Year, and start a new Jewish calendar, we are doing much more than marking time and following a schedule. Unlike the secular calendar, the Jewish calendar facilitates our entry, on a daily basis, into the world of our 6,000 year heritage, history, culture and civilization.

What the Jewish calendar does is to connect us, or reconnect us, each year with our roots, where we came from. Whatever the level of our observance, however busy we may be, the calendar makes available to us the rich aspects of our heritage, our environment, and, most important, our current Jewish world community.

With its Hebrew months and their special dates, its *Shabbat* and holiday candle lighting times, and its listed readings of the *Torah* and *Haftarah*, the calendar creates an environment that can keep us connected, meaningfully, all year, and can help us integrate into a community of our choice, something that is not always easy in the age of the internet.

Since Jewish calendars contain many more details than was mentioned above, and often also have an aesthetic dimension, they can serve as a means of enriching our daily life in numerous ways.

Beautifully decorated calendars engage us with the aesthetic side of our culture. The illustrations of precious, centuries old objects, or contemporary items, can enhance our home and bring to life many aspects of our culture.



In the Universe (Publishing) wall calendar (above), an illustration of a New Year Greeting from 1930s Netherlands, written in Hebrew and in Dutch, gives us a sense of kinship to the person living across the ocean who sent this card in those

ominous years before the start of war.

The above-mentioned illustration is found in the 2020 Jewish Wall Calendar whose illustrations come from the collection of the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam. In the same calendar there is a joyous illustration of a page from the Esther scroll created in the Netherlands in the 1700s.



The two wall calendars from Pomegranate both take us on a journey of discovery into our past, and into contemporary celebrations of Jewish life. Pomegranate's Jewish Museum Calendar (above) with illustrations of works from New York's Jewish Museum, features Solomon Alexander Hart's stunning oil painting (1850), The Feast of the Rejoicing of the Law at the Synagogue in Leghorn, Italy.

Another one of its illustrations presents a page from the famous Russian Jewish artist, El Lissitzky's, Had Gadya Suite (1919). The illustration comes with both Yiddish and Hebrew calligraphy.

Pomegranate's second wall calendar, Jewish Celebrations, has paintings by contemporary artist Malchah Zeldis. Her



vibrant and colorful folk-art works illustrate the union of the spiritual and domestic that characterizes Judaism. Each of the bright monthly illustrations comes with notes on the traditions which they portray. Zeldis' work is in the collections of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, and the Jewish Museum.

A lovely desk calendar (p. 2, bottom), decorated with an abundance of Judaica treasures, comes from Universe Publishing. The items on display are from the holdings of New York's Jewish Museum collection. The images in this fine desk calendar range from items that are contemporary (Marsha Penzer's *Mezuzah Carried Into Space* in 1985) to those that are centuries old, yet sparkle with their original beauty, such as the magnificent *Marriage Contract* from Trieste, Italy (1774) which is painted on cut-out parchment.

Other countries represented by Judaica treasures in this desk calendar include the Russian Empire (1900), Persia (19th century), Galicia (Poland/Ukraine 19th century), Istanbul, Turkey (1735), Germany (1550), Morocco (19th century), Uzbekistan (18th century), India (20th century), Lithuania (1800), Ireland (1863) and many more.

This desk calendar's most unusual feature is its comprehensive guide in concise form to all the Jewish holidays, feasts and fast days. Among the many categories covered in this guide to each of those dates there are columns for the theme, significance, mood and customs of each of the listed holidays, feasts and fast days.

Last but not least is *My Very Own Jewish Calendar* for youngsters, from Kar-Ben Publishing. Full of fun, facts, trivia and the joy of being Jewish, this delightful calendar is a great way for the young, and young at heart, to connect with their heritage. This calendar, too, spans the centuries while connecting us to what it means to live Jewishly.

On the same page that we learn of *Rosh Hashanah* wishes that go back to the 14th century, we also learn that September is National Honey Month. We learn that Syrian, Moroccan and Iraqi Jews recycle their *lulav's* palm branches by using them before Passover as fuel to burn the *chametz*.

With Thanksgiving almost here, the question is raised, what blessing can we offer during this most meaningful universal celebration, to give it a Jewish character? The most fitting blessing, according to the calendar's survey, is "*Shehecheyanu*." Kar-Ben Publishing produces several other calendars, among them a very handy small one for the purse. ✨



# Editorial

*Inheritance: A Memoir of Genealogy, Paternity and Love.* By Dani Shapiro. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, January 2019. 250 pages. \$24.95.

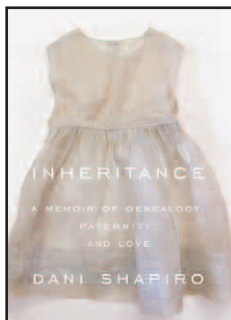
Dani Shapiro grew up an only child in a suburban Jewish neighborhood in New Jersey. Her father's family was Orthodox and her mother was Jewish but secular. Before marriage her mother agreed to follow Orthodoxy. Shapiro says her mother was a pathological narcissist who had a borderline personality disorder, which made it difficult for people (including Shapiro) to get along with her, and her father was depressed but Dani adored him.



Dani Shapiro

When Shapiro was 23, and attempting to make sense of her life, her parents were in a car accident.

Her father died from the injuries shortly afterward. Her mother was critically injured and Shapiro helped take care of her for the next two years.



Several times throughout her life Shapiro is told that she does not look Jewish. Frequently she felt out of place, as if she did not belong, did not fit in. Her pale blond hair and blue eyes amid many with dark hair and dark eyes probably did not help.

At age 25, Shapiro finds out the method of her conception was artificial insemination. Her mother said she and her father had trouble conceiving. They had gone to a world-famous institute in Philadelphia. Dani had not pursued the issue further.

Fast forward to when she is 54. Her husband Michael wants to find out more about his genealogy while his father is still mentally sharp to discuss it, and he decides to take a DNA test. On a whim she decides to follow suit.

On page 7 she writes: "The kits arrived and sat on our kitchen counter for days, perhaps weeks, unopened. ... Finally one night Michael opened the two packages and handed me a small plastic vial. 'Spit,' he said. ... Two months passed by and I gave little thought to my DNA test... until one day an email containing my results appeared."

She is puzzled, to put it mildly: "According to Ancestry, my DNA was 52% Eastern European Ashkenazi. The rest was a smattering of French, Irish, English, and German." She eventually figures out she is not at all related to her father biologically.



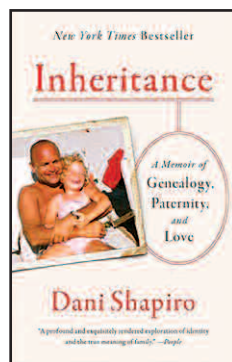
"Paperback cover reveal for *Inheritance* (below)! That loving father and his adoring daughter (above) couldn't have imagined this future. Yet here we are. Life is infinitely beautiful and strange. I'm grateful for the twists and turns that brought me here. Oh, and dad? Thank you for your huge heart. I have missed you every day for the last 33 years. The paperback of *Inheritance* launches Jan. 28, 2020." ~ Dani

This revelation is shocking to her, and the few remaining mostly elderly relatives and family friends that she asks about it have no answers for her. Although, she receives unconditional love from her 93 year old aunt who on p. 136 tells her, "I'm not giving you up." When Dani starts weeping her aunt continues, "And you'd better not be giving me up." Now Dani is sobbing and her aunt finishes, "And you are my brother's daughter."

On p. 176 she writes, "The clues screamed in neon. But I had not seen them. After all plenty of people look or feel 'other' than their parents or siblings. Biology doesn't promise similarity. Traits skip generations. Characteristics emerge, seemingly out of nowhere. Our parents seem alien to us."

The reason I loved this book might be different than why others like it. Besides being a riveting mystery and difficult to put down, it seemed as if the teachings in the book match our mission that we set forth when my father handed the publishing torch to me almost 20 years ago: "To protect, promote, and preserve time-honored Jewish values such as 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

Scattered throughout the book Shapiro includes some of these Jewish values. She writes poetically about sitting with her father in *shul* as a young girl on pgs. 170-171: "I could feel the way his body



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## The Jewish Post & Opinion

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relaxed when he *davenned*, the way his voice became stronger and fuller within the plaintive melodies of the Hebrew liturgy. The synagogue was his home. When he shook his *tallis* from his velvet pouch and wrapped it around his shoulders, he became larger, almost mystical. Here in *shul*, prayer was our secret language, our way of connecting. We had the choreography down. We knew just what to do. Here we stand. Here we sit. Here we sway. Here we close our *siddurs*. Here we sing *Ein Keloheinu*. Here we kiss each other's cheeks and say: *Good Shabbos.*"

(see Editorial, page 4)

# Chassidic Rabbi

By RABBI BENZION COHEN

B.H.

## Good News

I am happy to give over some good news. Two terrorists were recently killed. Both were leaders of big terrorist organizations, one in Iraq and one here in Israel, in the Gaza strip. The following day the terrorists fired over 200 rockets and mortar shells at Israeli cities and highways, but by many miracles, no one was killed.

Recently these and many other terrorist organizations have been losing support and power. Our world is getting better and better all of the time. Almost all of the governments and regimes that supported terror have fallen and disappeared. Now about 98% of the countries of the world are working to make all people safe, happy and healthy! In the past, the stronger nations would go to war to conquer the weaker nations. Now the stronger nations are instead making big efforts to help and strengthen the weaker nations and bring peace to the entire world.

We are witnessing the fulfillment of the words of our prophets. They told us that a time would come when there will be no evil, no war, no suffering or sickness. This period is referred to as the end of days, the days of the *Moshiach* (Messiah) who will usher in our complete and final redemption. After 2,500 years, this is finally happening!

I personally also have good news to share. My health is doing better. Three months ago I started a new diet, and I am feeling better. Fifty years ago I suffered from Hepatitis, which left me quite weak. For a year and a half I tried different diets and medicines, but nothing really helped. Then I tried macrobiotics, and right away got back on my feet, thank G-d. I have found that milk products and white flour and sugar are really bad for me.

For the last ten years I was eating mainly raw vegetables made into salads with a lot of olive oil and lemon and tahini. A few years ago I forgot the name of one of my grandchildren. That really shook me up. I told one of my friends about this problem and he suggested vitamin B12. I started taking this vitamin, and other vitamins and supplements, and that helped a little. But as time passed, my memory became weaker and weaker.

For example, after we eat we say a blessing to thank G-d for the food and sustenance with which He provides us. Many times I would wonder: did I say the blessing? My failing memory could not supply an answer. Only if I would say the blessing properly with all my heart and think about

## EDITORIAL

(continued from page 3)

I appreciate and benefit from the teachings of other traditions, but the parts of this book on Judaism strongly resonated with me. Reading these stories such as Shapiro sitting in synagogue with her father left me feeling as if someone wrapped a heated blanket around me on a bitter, cold day. It gave me that sense of belonging for which Shapiro yearned.

Shapiro has written nine other books. Her journalistic pieces have been published in prominent newspapers and magazines. She has taught in writing programs in leading universities and cofounded a writer's conference in Italy. See more at danishapiro.com.

We wish our dear readers a Happy *Hanukkah* and a Happy 2020!

Jennie Cohen, November 27, 2019 ✨



every word was I able to remember that I had said it. (This is how all blessings should really be said). Amazing! Here is an example of how everything that happens in this world always has a positive aspect. My failing memory was helping me to pray properly. I just hope that I will always remember this!

I also suffered from fatigue. I was tired a lot and needed to sleep a lot. A year ago I started to take thyroid hormones, and that helped. Then 3 months ago I read about a different diet. It is called the 80/10/10RV diet, which is short for 80% calories from carbohydrates, 10% calories from proteins, and 10% calories from fats. RV stands for raw and vegan. This diet was similar to my previous diet, but with three major differences. Before, about 70% of the calories that I was consuming were from the fat in the foods and oils that I ate. Now I try to keep my fat calories down to only 10%. Before, I ate very little sweet fresh fruit. Now this is the majority of my diet. Now I eat less cooked foods.

I decided to give this diet a try. Within three days I was feeling better. Now my memory is much better, my mind is working better, and I have more energy, without vitamins, hormones or supplements. If you want to feel better, look into this diet. And especially because it is strictly *Kosher*! Just be careful to remove any tiny bugs and worms from fruits and vegetables.

I don't keep this diet 100%. To honor the Sabbath and holidays we are commanded to make *Kiddush* and eat some bread, and a little fish and chicken.

This diet also recommends exercise. I have been exercising more, and feel that this helps. It also says that feeling good and happy is also important for good health. For this, get some advice from

(see Benzion, page 6)

## About the Cover

### Holidays

By Dena Levie



Dena Levie

This piece, has in its center the verse of Psalm 118:24: "*zeh hayom asah hashem nagila v'nismicha bo*". (This is the day G-d created, let us rejoice and be glad on it.) Read during Hallel on Jewish festival days. Around the verse starting from the top right are all the Jewish holidays of the year. From *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur* through *Shavuot*.

### About the Artist

Dena Levie, of Teaneck, N.J., designs and creates beautiful personalized paper-cut artwork. Dena has always had a love for the arts. At Stern College (Yeshiva University) she received degrees in both Computer Science and Fine Art. After a short stint as a graphic designer she worked as a computer programmer for a financial firm. However, art was always her passion and she began to experiment with papercutting when her oldest daughter was born 23 years ago. Since then she has made this her full time passion creating more than 1800 paper cuts.

Dena enjoys working with people to create a personalized piece of art that will be enjoyed for years to come. This includes hand calligraphed *ketubah* (Jewish wedding documents), family trees, wedding and *Bar Mitzvah* gifts as well as artwork for school and synagogue honorees. Ms. Levie has also designed greeting and holiday cards as well as invitations for weddings and other events. In 2004, Ms. Levie was commissioned to design a few pieces that were presented to Michael Douglas, Steven Spielberg and Bette Midler. She also created the cover of the Youth Dub CD for the musician, Matisyahu. Most recently she was commissioned to create a piece for the Jewish Children's Museum in New York City.

Dena's artwork has been exhibited in galleries across New York and she has been featured in several newspapers. She has traveled to Israel, Africa and throughout the United States to meet and exchange ideas with other papercutters. She is an active member of the Guild of American Papercutters. She can be reached through her website [www.judaicpapercuts.com](http://www.judaicpapercuts.com). ✨

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# Jewish Educator



BY AMY HIRSHBERG LEDERMAN

## To Everything There is a Season

In October of 1965, Columbia Records released a hit song by the Byrds called “Turn, Turn, Turn.” But while my friends and I loved its beautiful harmony, I never suspected that its words would accompany me through life, spanning decades of historical and personal events from the Vietnam War to the birth of my children and years later, the death of my husband.

Initially written by Pete Seeger in the late 1950s, “Turn, Turn, Turn” is derived directly from the Book of Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3:1–8. Called *Koheleth* in Hebrew, its authorship is attributed to King Solomon, and is included as one of several “Wisdom Books” in the Book of Writings (*Kitwoim*), along with Proverbs and Job. It stands as a remarkable compendium of insightful poetic prose and offers a philosophy that contemplates the cyclical nature of life and the precarious quality of human existence.

Originally written in Hebrew, *Koheleth* has been translated with varying degrees of sensitivity to its organic poetry and meaning. The King James version is most often cited as authoritative; its words forming the lyrics of the Byrd’s song. “To everything, (turn, turn, turn), there is a season (turn, turn, turn) and a time to every purpose under heaven.”

Biblical scholar and critic Robert Alter, whose translation and commentary of the *Tanach* (complete Hebrew Bible) is regarded as an unparalleled literary achievement, translates Ecclesiastes 8:1 a bit differently than the King James: “Everything has a season, and a time for every matter under the heavens.”

I like Alter’s rendition because its first four words provide a succinct message and positive spin on what has become clear to me about life: that change is inevitable and necessary, although not always easy, and if we are to evolve, we must adapt and accept this reality. Everything has a season.

When we are younger, we tend to engage in “seasons of acquisition” – attaining education and careers while building homes and families. We fill up our homes with furniture, art, toys for our kids. Friendships, too, are acquired for various reasons, from professional advancement to social intimacy.

I remember the early years of childrearing, when many of the friendships my husband and I developed were the result of the families

## The Night Before Hanukkah

’Twas the night before *Hanukkah*,  
*boychicks* and *maidels*

Not a sound could be heard,  
not even the *dreidels*.

The *Menorah* was set on the chimney, alight  
In the kitchen the *Bubbe hut gechapt* a  
*bissel* bite.



we met through our children. Hours spent at T-ball, dance recitals and rehearsals brought us together as we worried about getting the right uniforms, costumes and carpool. Some of those people remain my closest friends to this day. Others have drifted away and are no longer part of my life. A quote by Holley Gerth sums up this phenomenon beautifully: “There are friends for a reason, friends for a season, and friends for a lifetime.”

Growing older provides a perspective that comes from having lived in the trenches of life through its many “seasons.” For many baby boomers, retirement is just around the corner and with that, a new season of life begins – a season of possibility. For those fortunate enough to have the health and the means, there are limitless possibilities to spend time and resources differently – to travel, volunteer, spend more time with family and friends, exercise more regularly. Many have the privilege of watching their children marry and have children of their own. Ask any grandparent and you will hear that the season of grandparenting is one of the most cherished of all.

But age also brings an awareness of the precariousness of life as we enter a season of change that often heralds diminution and loss. For while the retirement years may offer us new possibilities, they can be accompanied by limitations as well. And while there is much written about what we can do to counter aging positively – from simplifying daily demands to engaging in physical exercise and increasing intellectual stimulation – there is no way to stop the ticking of the clock.

Everything has a season – Jewish wisdom dating back thousands of years that offers a mantra to live by at every age and stage of life and reminds us of the temporal nature of things and that change is inevitable.

**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](http://amyhirshberglederman.com). ✨

*Salami*, *pastrami*, und a *glessala tay*  
And *zayerah* pickles with bagels, *oy vay!*  
*Gezunt* and *geschmack*, the *kinderlech felt*  
While dreaming of *tagelach*  
and *Hanukkah gelt*.

The clock on the mantelpiece  
away was tickin’  
And *Bubbe* was serving a *schtickala* chicken.  
A *tumult* arose like a thousand *brauches*,  
Santa had fallen and broken his *tuches*.  
I put on my slippers, *eins, tsoy, drei*,  
While *Bubbe* was now  
on the herring and rye.  
I grabbed for my bathrobe  
and buttoned my *gotkes*  
While *Bubbe* was busy  
devouring the *latkes*.

To the window I ran and to my surprise  
A little red *yarmulka* greeted my eyes.  
When he got to the door  
and saw the *Menorah*,  
“*Yiddishe kinder*,” he said, “*Oy, Kenehora*.”  
I thought I was in a *goyisha hoise*,  
But as long as I’m here,  
I’ll leave a few toys.”  
With much *gesshray*, I asked,  
“*Du bist a Yid?*”  
“*Avada, mein numen ist*  
*Schloimey Claus*, kid.”  
“Come into the kitchen, I’ll get you a dish,  
A *guppell* and a *schtickala* fish.”  
With smacks of delight,  
he started his *fressen*,  
Chopped liver, *knaidlach*  
and *kreplach gegessen*.  
Along with his meal,  
he had a few *schnapps*,  
When it came to eating,  
this boy was the tops.

He asked for some *knishes*  
with pepper and salt,  
But they were so hot, he yelled “*Oy Gevalt*.”  
Unbuttoning his *haizen*,  
he rose from the *tisch*,  
And said, “Your *Kosher essen*  
is simply delish.”  
As he went to the door,  
he said “I’ll see you later,  
I’ll be back next *Pesach*,  
in time for the *Seder*.”

More rapid than eagles  
his prancers they came,  
As he whistled and shouted  
and called them by name:  
“Now *Izzy*, now *Morris*, now *Yitzak*,  
now *Sammy*,  
Now *Irving* and *Maxie*,  
and *Moishe* and *Mannie*.”  
He gave a *gesshray*  
as he drove out of sight:  
“*Chag Sameach* to all,  
and to all a good night.”  
HAPPY HANUKKAH!!!! ✨

# Happy Hanukkah!



BY MELINDA RIBNER

According to *Torah*, a Jewish holiday is not just a celebration of a particular historical event; rather it is a spiritual transmission of cyclical energies that were available when the historical event originally occurred. *Hanukkah* is all about light shining amidst the darkness. The main observance of *Hanukkah* is the lighting of the menorah. Taking place at the darkest time of the year, *Hanukkah* teaches us that there is light within darkness. At the darkest time, there is light and there will be light. Actually, the light shines even more brightly because of the darkness that surrounds it. *Hanukkah* restores hope and faith.

On December 21st we begin the holiday of *Hanukkah* by lighting one candle on the extreme right of the *menorah*. With each night of *Hanukkah* we add an additional candle until we have eight lights shining brightly. Eight is symbolic of that which is beyond the natural order, the level of miracles. On *Hanukkah*, we are reminded that the Jewish people live on the level of miracles.

*Hanukkah* is the world's wake up call to the True Reality. There is a God in the world! And God loves us! These eight days of *Hanukkah* are a special time to receive and bask in the light of the Divine, the light of miracles, the light of love, the light of joy. We know we are coming close to God when our hearts open and we feel gratitude for the privilege of being alive. *Hanukkah* brings joy and clarity.

Take time to meditate each night when you light candles. Sit with the candles, gaze at the candles, meditate and "Listen to Light". When we quiet the chatter of our minds, we know how to hear the message of the candles. Each night the candles have a unique message. During this time of candle gazing and meditation, take time to become aware of your gratitude for all the blessings in your life. Gratitude opens the doors of blessing. Be mindful particularly during the holiday of *Hanukkah* to express gratitude. Be mindful to not complain during this time.

Let this be a spiritual practice during the week of *Hanukkah* to spend time each day thanking God for all the good in your life, thanking others for all the good they bring to you and others, and even thanking yourself for all the good you do.

Complaining only brings harshness, pain and challenge in our life. If we complain, it is a sign that we are not happy with God, with ourselves, with others. We are not open to receive blessing in our lives. What

## BENZION

(continued from page 4)

*Chassidic* Rabbis. In general, learning *Torah* and doing good deeds will not only bring happiness to you and those near you, but will also bring closer our complete and final redemption, at which time we will all be completely healthy, forever and ever.

We wish all of our readers a very happy *Hanukkah*.

**Rabbi Benzion Cohen lives in K'far Chabad, Isarel. He can be reached by email at [benzioncohen770@gmail.com](mailto:benzioncohen770@gmail.com). ✨**



a shame to deprive ourselves and not be open to the wonderful light available during *Hanukkah*. If this reminder helps one person to refrain from complaining even one time, it is worth a lot.

With the light of *Hanukkah*, may we see the truth of who we are as individuals. May we see the truth of who the Jewish people are and the awesome privilege it is to be a Jew. With the light of *Hanukkah*, may we overcome our challenges and be ignited to do what only we can do in this world.

*Message from my beloved teacher Reb Shlomo Carlebach, z"l, on Hanukkah:*

"Everybody knows that *Hanukkah* is the culmination of the High Holidays. We are accustomed to think that joy and bliss are the highest a human being can aspire to, but our holy rabbis teach us that light is even deeper. So after *Simchas Torah*, when we experience the greatest joy in the world, we come to *Hanukkah*. *Hanukkah* is the Festival of Light. *Hanukkah* is when we initiate the Third Temple, which shall be rebuilt soon. The week of *Hanukkah* is when every Jewish home is a little bit of the Holy Temple, which gives us the strength to hold out until the Holy Temple will be here always.

"Let this *Hanukkah* open the dates for all of us – the lights of *Hanukkah* show us how holy everyone else is. Let this *Hanukkah* give us the strength to bring light to the whole world. Let the light of *Hanukkah* show the world how deep life is, how deep it is to serve God.

"The Holy Ishbitzer says the greatest blessing one Jew can give to another is to feel at home with *Torah*. So many of our generation are assimilated only because nobody made them feel at home with *Yiddishkeit*. You and I should be privileged to kindle light at the gate of everyone's heart to make everyone feel at home." Love, Shlomo

**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*

## Hanukkah Recipes

Selected for *Hanukkah* from *Jewish Cooking* by Marlena Spieler, Hermes House, 256 pp. (Reviewed by Sybil Kaplan 3/5/03.)

### Matzo Meal and Cottage Cheese Latkes (About 20)

1-1/4 cups cottage cheese  
3 eggs, separated  
1 tsp. salt  
2-1/4 cups *matzah* meal  
1 onion, coarsely grated or  
3-5 green onions, thinly sliced  
1/2 tsp. sugar  
3 Tbsp. plain yogurt or water  
vegetable oil  
ground black pepper to taste

In a bowl, mash the cottage cheese. Mix in the egg yolks, half the salt, the *matzah* meal, onion, sugar, yogurt or water and pepper.

Whisk the egg whites with the remaining salt until stiff. Fold one-third of the whisked egg whites into the batter, then fold in the remaining egg whites.

Heat oil in a heavy frying pan to the depth of about 1/2 inch, until a cube of bread added to the pan turns brown immediately. Drop tablespoonfuls of the batter into the pan; fry over a medium-high heat until the undersides are golden brown. Turn carefully and fry the second side.

When cooked, remove the latkes from the pan with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels. Serve immediately or place on a baking sheet and keep warm in the oven.

Variation: To make sweet latkes, omit the onion and add 2 Tbsp. sugar, chopped nut sand some ground cinnamon. Serve topped with a spoonful of jam or honey.

### Cranberry Apple Sauce (4 servings)

5 green cooking apples or combination of cooking and eating apples  
1 cinnamon stick  
1/4 lemon  
1/2 cup sugar  
2 cups cranberries

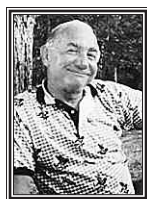
Peel, core and roughly chop the apples and place them in a heavy pan with the cinnamon stick.

Pare the rind from the lemon, then (see *Hanukkah Recipes*, page 7)



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# Spoonful of Humor



BY TED ROBERTS

## The Seeker

Since he was of the human race, troubles swarmed around his life like gnats surround a dead cow on the meadow. The rent was overdue, he had a sciatica pain in his leg, and he owed Schlomo, the bartender, 30 rubles. Even worse, he'd stolen his neighbor's plow horse. But none of this mattered when his thoughts strayed to Rachel, his sick, crippled daughter. Aha, he pondered, it must be a *dybbuk* – an evil spirit that had nestled in his soul – maybe from the tavern where he went too often. Clever *dybbuks* were known to leap from one victim/host to another. Now it possessed him. The *dybbuk* was poisoning his life. He must find the king; only he could restore him.

That's why he had been wandering for several hours now – searching, searching for his King who he knew lived in a golden palace deep in the woods. The King was his last hope to cure his young daughter, struck down with a deadly disease. Everyone knew he possessed healing powers. The seeker even brought a list of his good deeds. It was rumored that the King kept a list of his own of each of his subject's deeds. But who knew. Maybe he missed the time he had pulled Meyer Pushkin's wagon out of the mud. And he didn't even like him. But first you must find He who lived in the palace.

The grief-stricken father had read all the books – talked to all the wise men, leafed through many pages of maps, but still his head was whirling. Only the King could make his daughter well. He must find the King. The seeker had never seen him. But it was rumored that he was wise, benevolent, and all powerful. If you sought him out and obeyed his laws, your problems disappeared. But first you must find him and present your credentials; goodness, kindness, and obedience were a prerequisite of course. But how to find him?

Ah, a rustle of limbs and leaves told him someone was approaching. Maybe he would know the way. "The King – his palace?" said the seeker. "Where is it? Which of these paths will take me to the palace?"

"How fortunate you encountered me. I am the only inhabitant of the forest that knows the pathway to the palace. Oh, it's close," said the stranger, "follow the paved road till you come to the Magnolia tree – now in bloom – a huge green and white chandelier of blossom and white. You can't

miss it. Turn right there on the pebbled road and in less than half a mile there is the King's palace. I know the way since I visit the King often. Just do as I say."

Invigorated, the seeker followed his directions only to find that the pebbled road ended in a thick, impenetrable wilderness. Devastated, he sat on a stone ledge and waited for something. He knew not what. But hark, someone was coming. "Where oh where is the King's palace? I was told it was at the end of this road."

The stranger laughed softly. "How fortunate that you encountered me. I am the only inhabitant of the forest that knows the pathway to the palace. Whoever told you those directions couldn't even find his own elbow. No, no. Recall you passed a fork in the main road. You took the right fork; you must go left. At the end of the left fork, there you will find the radiant palace of the King. But listen, why wander in this dangerous wilderness – buy one of my maps – only 20 rubles."

The seeker leaped to his feet reinvigorated. "Ah, thank you, but no need. I'll follow your directions." And this time, taking the left fork, he walked many leagues only to find himself on the banks of a broad, turbulent river. No palace in sight. His spirits sank. Again, the wrong path and not the slightest glimmer of the King's palace. He lay face down on the riverside grass and shed bitter tears.

A hand tapped his shoulder. "Stranger," he said, "now is not a day for tears. The trees are as green as the grass and luscious fruit provided by the King for your journey hangs from their boughs. While above, the sun smiles upon the King's world of beauty. And not accidentally lights the path to his palace."

The seeker nodded through his tears. "Yes, I know, but I seek the King in vain. I've crossed and re-crossed the forest where in he resides – with no luck whatsoever."

"Today is your lucky day. How fortunate you encountered me. I am the only inhabitant of the forest that knows the pathway to the King's palace. This very morning I spoke to the King. You should not have listened to those other wanderers lost in the woods. They never scanned the map to the King's abode. Now listen carefully. Just continue on the left fork by the brook. You must turn off where the grove of Orange trees stands. Walk half a mile and there facing you with all of its splendor in a clearing surrounded by Pomegranate trees, there rises the palace of the one and only King. And you know he welcomes all who come to him."

Up jumped the seeker bound on this new navigational solution. Need I tell you the results? Same, same, same – nothing – a foggy swamp as different from the imperial palace as the wilderness of Cush from the

## HANUKKAH RECIPES

(continued from page 6)

squeeze the lemon juice over the apples and add the lemon rind to the pan. Cook over a low to medium heat for 15-20 minutes until they are just tender but have not disintegrated. Stir occasionally so that they apples do not burn.

Add the cranberries to the pan, cover again and cook for 5-8 minutes more or until the berries pop and are just cooked. Taste for sweetness and leave to cool. Serve with *latkes*.

### Rugelach (48-60)

Rugelach are thought to have come from Poland where they are a traditional sweet treat at *Hanukkah*.

1/2 cup unsalted butter  
1/2 cup full-fat soft white  
(farmer's cheese)

1 Tbsp. sugar  
1 egg  
1/2 tsp. salt  
2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour  
1 generous cup melted butter  
2 cups golden raisins  
1 cup chopped walnuts  
1 generous cup superfine sugar  
2 tsp. ground cinnamon

Put the butter and cheese in a bowl and beat with an electric mixer until creamy. Beat in the sugar, egg and salt.

Fold the flour into the creamed mixture, a little at a time, until the dough can be worked with the hands. Continue adding the flour. Kneading with the hands, until it is the consistency that can be rolled out.

Shape the dough into a ball, then cover and chill for at least 2 hours or overnight.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Divide the dough into six equal pieces. On a lightly floured surface, roll out each piece into around about 1/2-inch thick, then brush with a little of the melted butter and sprinkle over the raisins, nuts, a little sugar and the cinnamon.

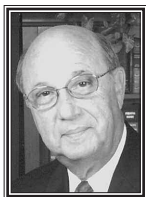
Cut the rounds into eight to ten wedges and carefully roll the large side of each wedge toward the tip. Arrange the rugelach on baking sheets, brush with a little butter, and sprinkle with the sugar. Bake for 15-30 minutes until lightly browned. Leave to cool before serving. ✨



towering Himalayas. The fool who gave him directions couldn't find the King's palace if the moon hung above it. The seeker propped himself against a fallen log and moaned. Through his lamentations he hears someone approach. He wore a *yarmulke* and a snow white *tallis* over his shoulders. And a dark suit; far different

(see Roberts, page 8)

# Wiener's Wisdom



BY RABBI IRWIN WIENER, D.D.

## Reform vs. Conform

According to Webster's Dictionary, reform means to improve or to change something for the better. And thumbing through the pages of this very same dictionary we stop at the word conform, and we learn that its meaning is to make or become similar; to be in agreement. These meanings, to me, indicate the turbulent storm that has erupted in the Judaism's Reform Movement.

On the one hand Reform Judaism was designed to give meaning to today's world. And today's world includes yesterday, today and tomorrow. As the world turns, so does our understanding of its purpose and significance. The understandings of yesterday do not fit neatly into the world we live in today.

Yesterday contained no computers or space travel. Yesterday was filled with disasters that boggle the imagination. Yesterday was good for one thing: To bring us to today with all the new discoveries and means to adapt these revelations to life as experienced right now.

Today we accept modernization and experimentation as a way of life not a figment of some dark corner of the mind that has taken us to sinister places. Today we know that the vastness of the universe reminds us that the ability to accomplish things is as endless as time and space.

We have learned through trial and error that we are not committing sins of omission but rather methods by which growth can be maintained. We are not destroying the fabric of human existence but rather enhancing its possibilities. Growth can only be maintained with continuous speculation.

Reform Judaism understood that the past is an essential ingredient in reaching for the future. One cannot assume to know the goodness or proficiencies of human endurance without regard for the past.

I, certainly, am not an expert on Reform Judaism. Nor am I a participant in its deliberations and pronouncements. What I do know of it I learned from experience and from books. But what I extracted from all the research and living as a Reform Jew and Reform rabbi was one vital fact: Reform Judaism was created to bridge the gap between traditionalism and secularism. Having been trained in traditional Judaism enables me to fully appreciate the value of Reform Judaism's approach to the universal understanding of God.

Reform Judaism's most potent weapon was a small word, inclusion. It understood that Judaism could not and would not continue to grow and develop if it remained in a vacuum. Telling fellow Jews that if they did not fit into a narrow definition of religious completion that they would forever be isolated was an enigma.

Reform Judaism teaches that there is no value to Judaism if it does not seem relevant or necessary in everyday life. Where is the future of the Jewish People if we live only in the past without trying to reach for the present and the future? That is the underlying characteristic that makes Reform Judaism important for the continuity of the generations and the perpetuation of a dream that began with a man called Abraham.

Even the rabbis of the Talmud were forever engaged in making Judaism relevant for their generation. There are constant references to the learning centers of Bait Hillel and Bait Shammai, the House of Hillel and the House of Shammai. Shammai was considered more rigid and inflexible while Hillel was more liberal in the transmission of religious thought and its interpretation. Reform Judaism follows the standard set by Talmudic expression and relates to this definition of relevancy.

On the other hand I have noticed a resurgence of traditional expressions in Reform Judaism. I have always marveled at the somewhat intimidated attitude that can be found among Reform rabbis. It is as though they consider themselves inferior to their more traditional counterparts. They are more deferential to Jews who profess to be true *Torah* adherents. Perhaps some think that they are not legitimate and therefore must resort to introducing a different kind of Jewish acceptance.

Inclusion, which was the hallmark of Reform Judaism, has been replaced by exclusion. Tampering with traditional attitudes now seems to be a repudiation of religious living. We see Reform congregations building *Mikvehs* (ritual baths) for conversion or other purposes. We find Reform rabbis refusing to participate in interfaith marriages.

When people reach out and our hand is not there to take theirs, what have we done? Alienation is not the road to acceptance. If Judaism is to remain vibrant and relevant then we need to be as inclusive as we possibly can, not to dilute but to be an example. To teach that even today Shammai is still relegated to the next world as described in the Talmud. To make clear that Hillel is the path to involvement and continuation.

Perhaps when Reform rabbis feel secure in who they are, we too will feel comfortable in Reform Jewish fervor. If our people

## ROBERTS

(continued from page 7)

from the other forest dwellers.

"There are infinite pathways through the forest to the King's abode. But there is no path for you except the one you make. And you must make it yourself." "Here," he said, and gently laid an ax at the seeker's feet. "You will need it. There are briars and thorn bushes and tangles of vine that trip you up. Go that way," he pointed, "and you shortly will be rewarded by the radiance of the King's palace, the reward for hacking your own path through the woods. But let me tell you a secret. If you have led a good life, you can even take the wrong road and still end up at the palace."

The seeker wildly set off slashing through the underbrush. Soon, through the tops of the tallest Pines, a faint gold glimmer brightened the sky. He had found the path. Soon he would be with the King. Soon his daughter would run in sunlit meadows.

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



are not afraid to identify, in whatever form, why should we Reform rabbis tell them to change or be sidelined?

Are we reformists or conformists? That is the question. It should be a continuing debate that should be in the forefront of attempting to bring relevance to an ancient faith that deserves better than excluding many of its adherents. I wonder if the Conservative Movement realizes that the Reform Movement is the new you!

There is a classic story about a man who came to the saintly sage, the Ba'al Shem Tov and remarked that his son had abandoned God. In desperation the man asked, "What shall I do, Rabbi?" And the Ba'al Shem Tov answered, "Love him even more than ever." Is that not what the founders of Reform Judaism going back to Spinoza had in mind when they sat and determined that the future of Judaism was not only in yesterday but in today which will guarantee tomorrow? Which will it be reform or conform?

*Rabbi Irwin Wiener is spiritual leader of the Sun Lakes Jewish Congregation near Phoenix, Ariz. He welcomes comments at [ravyitz@cox.net](mailto: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?* ☆*



# Media Watch



BY RABBI ELLIOT B. GERTEL

## Jojo Rabbit and Law and Order S.V.U.

### Jojo Rabbit

Writer-director Taika David (Cohen) Waititi's film, *Jojo Rabbit*, tells the story of Johannes "Jojo" Betzler (Roman Griffin Davis, in an affecting and memorable performance), a ten-year-old boy growing up in Nazi Germany. Infatuated with Nazi power and propaganda, Jojo is, when we first meet him, scampering to attend a Nazi Youth program. But he is humiliated when he is unable to kill a bunny, and thus branded a coward and given the nickname "rabbit."

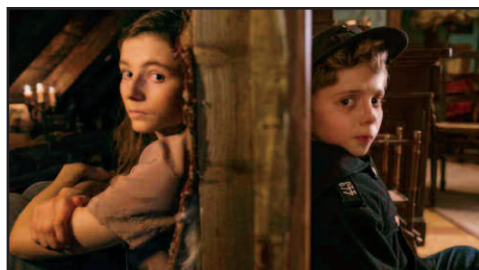
Overcompensating for his embarrassment, Jojo carelessly exposes himself to a life-threatening danger and the resulting injury changes his life. Indeed, the point of the movie is that Jojo's "rabbit-like" innocence, decency, and "fear" to do harm save him from ideology, culpability and from what could have been irredeemable betrayal on his part and devastating personal guilt.

Throughout the film we learn that Jojo's mother, Rosie (Scarlett Johansson) is putting herself in harm's way to post placards against Hitler's war and to help dissidents. She is concerned about his allegiance to Hitler Youth programs, but knows how to provide him with quality time with lasting messages. When they see people who have been hanged in the town square for helping Jews or rebelling against the German war effort, Jojo asks: "What did they do?" His mother responds: "What they could."

In one of the film's most memorable scenes, when Jojo is angry and near rebellion against his mother, Rosie dresses as her husband, putting on her face soot from fire place to suggest that he is in battle, and says in his name: "Take care of your mother." Jojo will emulate such ruses in his relationships with others.

*Jojo Rabbit* would be effective enough as a movie about a mother trying to impart values to her son in a Nazi environment even as she risks everything to fight the Nazi effort. But Waititi adds another element; Jojo finds out that his mother is hiding a young Jewish woman, Elsa (Thomasin McKenzie) in the attic.

Elsa fears that Jojo will turn her in. But she quickly senses that "rabbit" quality of



Thomasin McKenzie (Elsa) and Roman Griffin Davis (Johannes "Jojo" Betzler) in *Jojo Rabbit*.

decency and modesty in him and realizes that she can turn the tables of fear on him by pointing out to him what his mother is risking, by threatening to kill him, and also by invoking imaginary Jewish powers to keep him in line. At first she comes across as vicious, but it becomes clear that she wants to protect Jojo's family as well as herself.

Encountering Elsa, Jojo decides to use the opportunity to write an expose on Jews. He enters anti-Semitic canards, both learned and of his own fantasies, into a large notebook with childish script and illustrations.

Nazi officials are amused by Jojo's anti-Semitic obsessions, not suspecting that he knows a real-live subject. For her part, Elsa uses these encounters to instruct Jojo via sarcasm. When he asks her to tell him everything about the Jewish race she responds: "We're just like you [Germans], only human." When Jojo asks her why she doesn't have horns, Elsa replies to his satisfaction that Jews don't grow horns until they turn 21, and then adds that Jews can read minds, but not German minds, because German skulls are too thick.

Elsa's sarcasm toys even with reverse psychology when she communicates her hunger to Jojo by quipping that Jews are allergic to food, especially biscuits. Yet she can also come right out and say very striking and moving things about being Jewish: "I am descended from those who wrestle angels and kill giants. We are chosen by God."

Jojo makes a power play at end that he knows is wrong, and he does it to keep Elsa's friendship. She is sensitive enough to slap him and to forgive him immediately.

Indeed, the plot about hiding a Jew and all the attendant risks is powerful and suspenseful enough, let alone the anti-Nazi resistance activism outside the home. But Waititi was still not satisfied that these would attract or grip an audience. So in addition to whatever parody of the Nazis is provided in his other plots, he adds the tease of Jojo's imaginary friend – none other than Adolph Hitler. This allows for lines like Hitler's description of Elsa as a "female Jesse Owens" and for provocative graphics like the Fuhrer's prancing around sporting his suicide wounds.

Does this represent ingenious avant-garde humor? Waititi's approach asserts that pushing the envelope, whether of taste or humor, is the best way to get attention for a Holocaust-themed film and maybe the best way to teach the subject to future generations. So, whether justified or not as artistic pedagogy, *Jojo Rabbit* can serve, even if by default, as a teaching moment, both on the Nazi era and on the question of what pushing the envelope does to the quality and taste of Holocaust-related films and their audiences.

The first question that any good educator would ask is why American soldiers had to be depicted at the end of the film as responsible for the summary execution of an unlikely hero in the resistance with an occasional link to Jojo. Why turn the Allies into villains?

### Law and Order S.U.V.

One of *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit's* most moving episodes (11-7-2019) deals with girls and young women abducted from small villages in China and sold into New York sex trade "spas" to pay off family debts. The writers take pains to point out the regrets of a Chinese American socialite who enables such crimes. Passion and conviction characterize the plot and dialogue.

I was crestfallen when I saw the aplomb with which the writers depicted two of the villains in this drama – a father and son named Olin, who are clearly intended to be Jewish. Both are without scruples, regrets or conscience. They rent commercial real estate. The vain son, Rick Olin, has been taking cash from the sex trafficking ring and arranging for his squash friend to commit rape on a weekly basis. The conniving father, Avi Olin (complete with beard and Hebrew first name), has been renting property to the "spas" in eleven locations, and taking cash in order to bypass building inspectors. Avi prides himself on being a "great deal maker." He agrees to identify the syndicate behind the trafficking operation if his son receives no jail time.

The writers suggest that the son is dim-witted. Is this intended as an excuse? What about the father?

For more than 40 TV seasons I have pointed to such ugly depictions of Jews in TV and film. Beginning with one of my first reviews, of *The Adventures of Duddy Kravitz* (JPO Jan. 30, 1981), I suggested that it is the obligation of writers who depict Jews badly to point out that such behavior is not consistent with Judaism. Seeing that time and space and money considerations militated against this, I pointed out that writers and producers should realize that negative images of Jews

(see Gertel, page 10)

# Holocaust Educator



By DR. MIRIAM L. ZIMMERMAN

## California is Burning

As I write these words, Oct. 29, 2019, a total of 15 fires rage in northern California's wine country and in the Los Angeles area. Twenty-five million people are under red flag warnings, with a confluence of winds, temperatures, and humidity creating conditions conducive to additional fires. The increased temperature of the land, caused by climate change, makes forest fires an imminent threat throughout the state.

Fifty years ago, I never anticipated such an outcome when my husband Richard whisked me out of Indiana to the promised land of Palo Alto, Calif., during his third year of Stanford Law School.

We met as teenagers under the auspices of NFTY (National Federation of Temple Youth) during a conclave in his hometown of Lafayette, Ind. Back in the 1960's, there were not many Jewish teens in small town Indiana, so the intercity weekends, or "conclaves," served multiple purposes – educational, social, and religious.

For 50 years, when asked why he left Indiana, Richard replied, "Two reasons: summer and winter." My silent thought during his recitation follows: "Who would ever leave the Gan Eden (Garden of Eden) that is the Peninsula of the San Francisco Bay Area?" I knew from day one that I never wanted to leave California.

Last year, Richard and I celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary and 40 years in the same house. Last weekend, we celebrated his 50th law school reunion. We returned to Evanston, Ill., for my 50th Northwestern University reunion two years ago. Richard and I are two Hoosier hicks who went to good schools.



Richard and me toasting at our 50th anniversary dinner.

CNN meteorologist Brandon Mille reported that the Kincade Fire, begun on Oct. 23, "grew at a rate of one football field

every three seconds when it first ignited," and, at this writing, "has scorched more than 75,000 acres in and around Northern California's Sonoma County since last week," an area twice the size of San Francisco.

I awakened to this news report, which also predicted hurricane force winds in southern California this evening. Daily, I check which way the winds are blowing in Los Angeles, because our son Josh and his family live in a western suburb of Los Angeles. The winds determine which way the fires spread. Josh and his wife Erin have bags packed in their cars, with snacks and extra bottled water. They keep their gas tanks full. In 1968, who would have thought that "historically powerful" winds could become such an enemy?

About 90,000 people have been evacuated in Northern California, with tens of thousands more under evacuation orders. Richard thoughtfully reached out to a friend of our younger daughter with a husband and two young children, and to our son-in-law's parents, all of whom live in possible fire danger. He extended to them an invitation to stay with us, should they need to relocate.

I have been fortunate to experience Richard's thoughtfulness countless times during our 50-year marriage. Last year, he encouraged me to submit a proposal to the International Association of Jewish Genealogy Associations (IAJGA). All those years earning tenure as a college professor, writing proposals and making presentations, paid off. Proposal ironically accepted; presentation made. Ironic, because I was not even a member of IAJGA; it is Richard who is the dedicated genealogist.



Me with my cousin, Michael Loewenstein, Ph.D. – our fathers, z"l, were brothers.

The California fire season had not yet begun on July 28, 2019, when the conference began, at the Hilton Hotel in downtown Cleveland. The topic was Richard's idea, "After the Shoah, Honor Your Family by Restoring German Citizenship, Stolpersteine, and the Ancestral Tour." My cousin, Michael Loewenstein (above), co-presented with me. He helped me with the proposal and added his family pictures to our slide

## GERTEL

(continued from page 9)

will be out in the stratosphere forever and that they ought to stop and consider whether their craft or message is worth one more such nasty image. But of course Jewish generations were changing and film production teams would willingly cast aside such scruples for monetary or entertainment goals.

In more recent years I have urged that if film and TV writers and producers are not concerned about what Gentiles think, they should be concerned about what new generations of Jews will think about themselves, having been reared on such fare. But obviously Jews who don't care about how Jews appear to Gentiles will not care about how Jews appear to themselves. So much for Prophetic concerns about Jews being a "light to the nations."

And now, in this age of the "Me Too" scandals and the sexual predators in the TV and film industries, many of whom, sadly, are Jews, I wonder whether the vulgarities and the excesses of depiction of Jews over the last 50 years have taken their toll. Or could it simply be that the Jewish villains and their writers (and actors?) in TV and film have been intended as a quiet resistance against powerful and spiteful Jewish executives who were known to have either exploited women and other employees, or who allowed such exploitation?

It does not seem, however, that "resistance" against network officials led the very next week (11-14-2019) to *Law and Order's* depiction of a distinguished-psychologist-turned-sex-cultist who abducts and drugs young women and exploits pharmaceutical research privileges to drug them, sometimes fatally. Why name him Dr. Julius Adler (thus slamming by name association even the iconic psychotherapist Alfred Adler), and bring in a well-known Jewish actor, sporting a rabbinic beard, to play this character? And why persist in making him dishonest and destructive with his wife and daughter, and politically paranoid to boot?

*Rabbi Elliot Gertel has been spiritual leader of congregations in New Haven and Chicago. He is the author of two books, What Jews Know About Salvation and Over the Top Judaism: Precedents and Trends in the Depiction of Jewish Beliefs and Observances in Film and Television. He has been media critic for The National Jewish Post & Opinion for 40 years since July 27, 1979. ★*



show. Michael conducted a great deal of genealogical research to find the German towns in which our forebears lived.

At the genealogy conference, Michael



Eye contact was in short supply at IAJGS conference meals and receptions. Nametags measured four inches by seven inches, providing enough room for five family names and locations (photo left). Participants were encouraged to read one another's nametags with the purpose of finding lost relatives. IAJGS even printed your name and contact information multiple times, on perforated cardstock. Inserted into the back of your nametag, the tear-off cards enabled you to provide quickly your contact information to any potential relative.

The unintended consequence, focusing on one another's chests rather than eyes, made me feel alienated from my fellow attendees. Perhaps I was not so hungry to connect with potential cousins, since I am completely happy with the ones I know about. Yet on the *Stolpersteine* walking tour of my ancestors' hometowns, I discovered I had many more relatives "ermordet in Auschwitz," murdered in Auschwitz, than I previously realized. We also discovered relatives of my grandfather, whom we knew nothing about, when we visited the historical museum in Brilon, his hometown.

For years, I answered the question, "Where are you from?" with "I live in California, but Indiana will always be my home." But something transformed in me between the Cleveland conference and the start of fire season in California.

Fifty years ago, I took a risk and emigrated from the Midwest to the West Coast. I followed the love of my life, for whom I will be forever grateful. He introduced me to a whole new world and *Weltanschauung* (philosophy of life) not available in my provincial hometown. I discovered that the "Left Coast" ethos fit my own coming-of-age-in-the soaring-1960s mentality.

Despite the ever-present threat of earthquakes, I felt safe in California. But now, with the very real danger of wildfires, spontaneously and unpredictably flaring up all over the parched state, for an ever-increasing number of months per year, I wonder if it is time to emigrate once again. Clearly, my ancestors did so. Why can't I?

Richard and I have options. As Jews, there is always Israel. On the other hand, we could follow our daughter Leah and return to Germany. Munich, where she lives – that does not speak to me. Perhaps I could call one of the idyllic little villages in Westphalia, where my ancestors walked home. Or, I could return to my hometown of Terre Haute.

The real answer is "none of the above." Despite the new challenges to living in this state, with climate change an everyday reality and not something 20 years in the future, I pulled back from my fantasy travel

## Play Review



REVIEWED BY  
PROFESSOR ARNOLD AGES

### *Fiddler on the Roof in Yiddish*

After *Fiddler on the Roof* first arrived on Broadway half a century ago and then a spectacular Hollywood version a decade later, the world was treated to multilingual adaptations (including a Japanese rendering which produced the vexing comment by one enthusiast in Japan who expressed astonishment that Jews could actually understand the play because it was so Japanese in spirit) – and thereafter an American documentary film peopled by those involved initially in the creation of the first *Fiddler* who spoke eloquently about the musical, literary and historical challenges faced by the artists who contended with the travail of transforming a Sholem Aleichem *Yiddish* tale about the life of Jews in a Russian *Shtetl* called Anatefka whose lives were sundered by ever present anti-Semitism and a pogrom.

The English transformation which first appeared on Broadway was a miraculous event as was the music (melodies, refrains, and songs, liturgical snatches) and succeeded masterfully in communicating the joy commingled with angst experienced by their religious and historical customs (match-making among the latter) in the face of

(see Ages, page 13)



Steven Skybell stars as Tevye in "Fiddler on the Roof in Yiddish" at Stage 42. Photo credit: Matthew Murphy.

and realized that my home is where I am. And, I am here to stay.

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

and I talked about our trip to our fathers' hometown and what it meant to us and to our family. I discussed the qualifications needed and process for obtaining German citizenship, and how to honor one's family by the installation of *Stolpersteine* ("stumbling stones"). Created by artist Gunter Demnig, the *Stolpersteine* are placed in front of the last known residence of someone persecuted by the Nazis, before they fled or were deported. See my P&O column, <https://jewishpostopinion.com/?p=3508> or page 10 of [https://jewishpostopinion.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/NAT\\_8-8-18.pdf](https://jewishpostopinion.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/NAT_8-8-18.pdf).

Michael discussed his cemetery research and how he constructed the itinerary of our subsequent ancestral tour of the relevant villages. Unlike half of the German Jews in 1933 who lived in the ten largest German cities, our family came strictly from small towns. After my father, of blessed memory, took me to his hometown of Buer, in Westphalia (state in northwest Germany) in the early 1980's, I wondered if he had chosen to settle in Terre Haute, Ind., in part, because it was so similar to Buer, both in terms of demographics and in the terrain.

Michael found not only the towns associated with our familial names, but also, in some cases, the exact plot numbers of their graves, enabling him to find easily the final resting places of many of our ancestors.

Unfortunately, the locked gates of two different cemeteries, one in Abterode, home of our grandmother, Bertha Katzenstein Loewenstein; and the other in Frankenhausen, served as deterrents. The waist-high fence around the Frankenhausen Jewish *Friedhof* (cemetery) was easily scaled, as we helped one another over the almost "cosmetic" barricade. But the fence of the Abterode cemetery was too high; we could only gaze into the marble orchard of aging grave markers, with their Hebrew-German inscriptions.

# Seen on the Israel Scene



BY SYBIL KAPLAN

## Mediscope 2019, Mossad Movie, and Aboriginals

Each year in October, members of Hadassah-Israel, from throughout the country, gather at Hadassah Hospital, Ein Karem, for Mediscope, a day of hearing doctors speak about their departments. English speakers gather in one hall, while Hebrew speakers meet in another room.

This time, the event was opened by Professor Yoram Weiss, director of Hadassah Hospital in Ein Karem for the past six years. He told participants that they treat patients from Syria, Jordan and Iraq, and that is part of the story of Hadassah as they try to “provide a bridge to peace in our region.”



Prof. Weiss

Hadassah Ein Karem treats a million patients a year and they are “proud and thankful for the people who work here.”

**Rehabilitation:** First on the program, was a nice-looking young man who said “you are the people who changed my life.” In a matter-of-fact and poignant way, he described how 17 years ago in June 2002, he was with a group of youngsters on a field trip. They did not know mines had been planted by a field gate, and he stepped on a mine.

Today, he is married with two children and has had 30 surgeries at Hadassah and is working as a guide at the hospital. His most recent surgery, six months ago, was to repair nerve damage in his feet by a German trained doctor.

Information about the Rehabilitation Department of Hadassah Mount Scopus was presented by Dr. Isabella Schwartz, head of that Rehabilitation department. In addition to outpatient needs, the inpatient ward has 38 new electric beds which were recently funded by Hadassah Israel.



Dr. Schwartz

A new center for rehabilitation is now in the early stages which will have 132 beds and an outpatient rehabilitation unit. Among the units is a gym for the disabled.

**Hadassah School:** Members of the staff described the activities of the Hadassah

School for Hospitalized Patients. The school is located on two campuses with 12 departments, 90 multicultural staff members and 220 students a day, K through high school, short term or long term.

The staff meets from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. then they work from 9 a.m. to 12, break for lunch, and return to work 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The curriculum is built out of the children’s needs, and they use ipads for children to see their classmates in the classroom. They have 20 different programs such as a therapy doll, preparing for blood tests, swallowing pills and syrup and radiation.

**Ophthalmology:** Representing the Ophthalmology Department was Dr. Shahar Frenkel, an ophthalmologist and ophthalmic surgeon. The Department of Ophthalmology was founded in 1922. They have an ocular oncology service with the highest level of research in Israel and 3 operating rooms where they perform 6,000 surgeries a year with a staff of 50 clinicians and 150 employees. This department also has an international outreach service to Africa, the Palestinian Authority, Ethiopia and Guinea plus research and education.



Dr. Frenkel

**Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases:** Professor Alon Moses directs the Department of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases. He told the audience the astounding news that, world-wide, one in 10 people admitted to a hospital will acquire an infection while in the hospital. There is a 70% chance, once a patient acquires an infection in the hospital, it will be a resistant bacteria.



Prof. Moses

Each year, 4,500 patients acquire a hospital infection and die in an Israeli hospital. Compare this to 450 people who die in Israel from a motor accident! Thus the infection control unit has changed things in the past 15 years with standard and isolation precautions and cleaning guidelines. Their goal is to lower the number of hospital acquired infections.

**Pediatrics:** Professor Eitan Karem heads the division of Pediatrics. He explained in a detailed the challenges of treating 44% of children with chronic diseases on Mount Scopus in Israel where children represent 30% of the population. He cited the fact that 80% of the children with cancer, for example, are cured.



Prof. Karem

Among the chronic disorders which impact children’s daily lives are asthma, obesity, ADHD, learning disabilities,

cancer survivors and survivors of premature birth. When they reach adulthood, many are dependent on public programs and have a lower quality of life.

Children with chronic disorders need to live with the chronic disease, undergo regular physical checkups, have frequent contact with medical personnel and follow medical advice. They often have cognitive, emotional, and social development issues. Their parents need to go through stages of denial, anger, bargaining, and depression in order to have acceptance.

“The birth of a sick child gives birth to a sick family and sickness within society.”

Hadassah is the “medical home to help children and their parents to cope with disease. Here they find one-stop care, all support services, patient oriented care and disease oriented care conducted by managing people and a case manager.”



### Mossad Movie Review

Do you keep track of Israeli movies when they come to your community – for yourself or for your organizations to use as a fundraiser? Do you like funny, action comedies, sometimes silly? In June, a movie opened in Israel, and by the next weekend, 30,000 tickets had been sold.

In mid-September, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Government Press Office offered a special showing to foreign correspondents and diplomats with free parking for four hours in the garage, and free popcorn and a drink at Cinema City.

Knowing that according to the film critic of the *Jerusalem Post*, Hannah Brow, this is “a phenomenally high figure for an Israeli film” and “many screenings...were sold out – a rarity among Israeli movies,” we were excited to view the film.

Most people who have been to Israel or have a serious interest in Israel know that

Mossad is the institute for intelligence in special operations. Inspired by David Zucker's film classics *Airplane*, *Top Secret*, and *The Naked Gun*, director/screen writer Alon Gur Arye created this spy comedy which is really a parody. U.S. director David Zucker actually served as the onset adviser to the film.

Without spoiling the experience of seeing the film, the plot involves Mossad Agent, Guy Moran, who is recruited to rescue an American tech billionaire, kidnapped while in Jerusalem, from the "really bad guys" (RBG) terrorist organization. The Mossad agent teams up with a female CIA operative, whom the CIA sends, so as not to depend on Israel. If the mission fails, the Mossad director will be unable to light one of the Independence Day torches, which is his goal.

The acting is great, and everything about this comedy is good except the English-language captions move almost too fast to be read. Will non-Israelis enjoy this film? They may have some difficulty understanding the nuances of Israeli culture.

#### **A little know fact – Aborigines in Palestine**

In September, the Government press office sent us an invitation to a ceremony, at the Semakh Railway Station on September 25, commemorating the Australian Aboriginal Troopers in World War I. It surprised me because I knew very little about the Aboriginal men and even less what they had to do with Palestine.

Aborigines are Australia's indigenous people, about 2% of Australia's total population who arrived in Australia about 30,000 years ago. A statue has been designed by an Australian artist, Jennifer Marshall, depicting an Australian Aboriginal Trooper, Jack Pollard, of the 11th Light Horse regiment, with an army issue bible in one hand tending to the grave of a fallen white Australian mate.

Unveiling the statue will be Australian Ambassador Chris Cannan; Mark Pollard (grandson of Trooper Jack Pollard); descendants of Aboriginal Troopers; and a director of the Australian Light Horse Association.

What is the connection of Aborigines to Palestine? Some of these Australian soldiers, mounted on horseback, fought against German soldiers in northern Israel (Palestine). The battle took place at *Tzemach*.

In an article on the Infoplease web site by Ricco Villaneuva Siasoco, I learned that the Ottomans built a railway line from the *Tzemach* area, which was linked to Mazrib in Syria and Dera'a in Transjordan. The *Tzemach* station building is one of the eight original buildings constructed along the railway line within the territory of the Land of Israel. It is a known fact, however, that the *Tzemach* station building and

most of the surrounding facilities were already in place by spring 1907.

The station was intended to serve the entire region around Tiberias. The First World War spurred a huge development of railway lines in the Land of Israel. The war required troops to be transported, and at a time when roads and cars were less developed, the train was the most effective form of transportation for moving troops and supplies quickly and efficiently.

In Autumn 1918, when the British started their large-scale offensive to capture the north of the country and Syria from the Turks, the combatants considered the *Tzemach* station particularly important, because it was an intersection between the land route around the Kinneret, and because of the railway line over the Yarmuk River. The site's strategic importance is discernible in the decision taken by the German commander of the Ottoman forces, Generalleutnant Otto Liman von Sanders (1855–1929), to try and delay the British advance.

Von Sanders appointed a German officer to command the railway station's defense, and to augment the defense with German units equipped with machine guns. Many soldiers in the British Army fought in the Middle East in WWI and, in fact, came from the east of the British Empire – India, Australia and New Zealand. As part of the British war plan, the Fourth Light horse regiment, part of the Australian Fourth cavalry division, was tasked with capturing the township of Samakh and the area around the railway station. The battle to capture *Tzemach* would be one of the last offensive cavalry battles.

The Australian forces advanced from the south on horseback, riding only during moonlight. On September 25, 1918, at dawn, they came under heavy fire from German machine guns. The Australian commander immediately gave the order to charge, and the cavalymen drew their rifles and galloped in the dark – two companies of the 11th cavalry battalion galloped to the eastern edge of the township and two companies from the 12th battalion to the west. Fighting was particularly difficult around the station, where the Germans concealed themselves in the stone buildings (the buildings in Samakh were made of clay). The Australians managed to ride into the station, dismounted, and then continued hand-to-hand combat with rifles, bayonets and swords, as battle doctrine dictated. The fighting ended one hour later, at 5:30 in the morning, just after dawn.

On the Turkish - German side there were around 100 dead, almost all German soldiers, and many wounded. Altogether the Australians took 365 men prisoners, half of them German. Fourteen Australian

## **AGES**

(continued from page 11)

subtle and not so subtle persecution and discrimination. The unusual success of this play was also attributed to those wonderful actors who interpreted the role of Tevya, the *milchidiker* – the milk merchant who is constantly calling on his maker to improve his place in life.

Although there are almost a score of fine thespians who have lifted *Fiddler* in its Broadway venues, foreign theatres, there are basically only three or four whose talent has been universally recognized in the English version of the play – Israeli Chaim Topol, Zero Mostel, and Herschel Bernardi.

Now a fourth name has to be added to that distinguished pedigree of *Fiddler's* Tevya – Steven Skybell, whose *Yiddish* speech, perfect diction, posture and facial contortions were integral parts of his delivery. This reviewer was fortunate enough to have been present in the newest *Fiddler* production in the company of two fluent *Yiddish* speakers who confirmed for me that except for some very minor problems with the Russian tinged *Yiddish* variants, the level of *mamaloshen* was very high. This reviewer was somewhat troubled by the word "*traditiye*" to translate tradition, the title of a major song in the play.

It is no surprise that the *Yiddish Fiddler* has won the "Best Revival Award" for 2019. Tickets can be purchased at the box office at 422 W. 42 St. New York City, Telephone 212-239-6200. The show is closing January 5, 2020.

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



cavalymen were killed, 64 wounded, and almost half of their horses were killed. The Australians estimated that if the attack had been delayed and had taken place in daylight, far greater losses would have been incurred.

In Australian military history, the cavalry attack and capture of *Tzemach* became a story of heroism that ended with success and relatively few losses (similar to losses in the entire Palestine campaign). It was the very opposite of the appalling casualties in other regions where Australians (and all the other armies) fought in WWI. Another contribution that the Australian army made to the history of *Tzemach* Station are the photographs that Australian military photographers took in the aftermath of the battle once it ended. They created the best collection of pictures of the station in its early period.

(see Kaplan/Israel, page 15)

# Gather the People

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



## Don't Put Out the Light

Have you ever driven to work and, once you got there, realized that you didn't remember driving there at all?

It happens to all of us – and not just in the car. And the result is that literally we don't see; we don't experience what's right in front of us. Even Moses had this experience. Moses was shepherding the flock of his father-in-law and he took the sheep out into the wilderness when, the scripture tells us, "he looked" at a bush that was burning and yet not consumed. And he said to himself, "Let me turn *aside* and see this incredible sight..." (Exodus 3:2-3)

From this, our sages say, we learn that there is no place that is devoid of God's presence, not even a thorn bush. God's presence is discernible in all things and all places. Even in something like a bush. The problem is that we just don't see it. Things only look ordinary to us, however, because we have not yet seen what is truly there. That is, we haven't made a conscious decision to perceive the extraordinary that is right there in front of us. As the Baal Shem Tov (Rabbi Yisrael ben Eliezer, 1698-1760) said, "The world is full of miracles, but man takes his little hand and covers his eyes, and sees nothing."

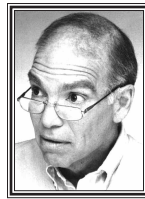
So what about the miracle of *Chanukah*? For all these eight nights of *Chanukah*, our rabbis say, these lights are holy. We are not permitted to use them, rather only to look at them. And they also say that they call out to us to turn aside from everything else and to see what is really there.

But what is it that we actually see? And what is that small flame to us? Although a better question might be: What are we to it?

For in a way, fire is who we are. As Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808-1888) teaches us, *aish* (fire) is the power that gives movement, alteration and life to all physical beings. We could think of it as life-energy. It is the dark invisible fire by which the eternal, God-given laws of nature work in all of God's creations. These are the laws that work unconsciously in everything created. And in most creatures, they operate independent of the will of those creatures. But there is one creature for which those laws come

# Shibley Speaks

BY JIM SHIBLEY



## What's a Jew to Do?

Since the first large wave of Jews arrived in the U.S. we have fought for human rights. It is in our own self-interest to do so. We believe in taking care of our fellow man, in equal rights, equal opportunity, etc. You know, the stuff that allowed us when we came to America to take advantage of the system. And, based on our heritage and our history, we have endeavored to pass it on to succeeding generations.

This has resulted in Jews having the reputation of being "Liberals", "Left Wing", etc. All this because we tend to take up the cause of the underdog – again, because we were – and in many cases, still are.

For generations, Jews were comfortable in the Democratic Party. Sure – some Jews as a part of their assimilation became Republicans. They felt the philosophy of small government with a light hand was the way this new nation to which they now belonged should be governed. Many Jews who all but worshipped Roosevelt turned to Eisenhower to guide us in the 1950s.

Things change. A terrible Democratic Leadership and a foolish Republican Party that allowed 17 candidates to run for President which allowed a Trump to happen. In the confusion that followed an old Will Rogers quote rang true: "I don't belong to any organized political party – I'm a Democrat."

So today, we have a group of Democratic Congresspersons who are really different. I don't know what he would make of this present gaggle of Freshmen and their odd ideas. Let's take a district in the Bronx. Joe Crowley had been the Congressman from that District as long as anyone could remember.

So long that he didn't even bother to campaign during the Primary. Result? Only 12% of the electorate turned out to vote in the Primary and today we have "AOC." She knows so much about the job that she didn't bother to open a District



for free-willed acceptance. And that creature is us.

By keeping the *Torah* we consciously and freely take up the position that all other beings occupy unconsciously and without free will. For us the "fire" becomes "law," referred to in the *Torah* as *aishdat*, (see Ben Asher/bat Sarah, page 15)

Office in the Bronx. She said she thought the people would rather have her in Washington – fighting for basic rights rather than wasting time on the problems of the folks who elected her.

Then of course we have Ilhan Omar. She is an African from Somalia. She was raised in a middle class neighborhood of Minneapolis. She has decided to make the centerpiece of her role in the Congress constant attacks on Israel. She has never been there, has no historical knowledge of the country – but considers herself an expert on the Jews and their relationship with their Native Land.

Does she know that even this correspondent has DNA that reaches back to that land? Does she know the story of the First and Second Commonwealths and the birth of the Third? No.

Her Anti-Israel platform barely masks a strong Anti-Semitic bias that leaks into her rhetoric and tweets on an almost daily basis. She has dredged up the oldest and silliest tropes about Israel and then condemns Jews who support their native land.

The Jews. The easy target AND do not believe for a moment that Omar is alone in her rhetoric and her approach. She said it's "All About The Benjamins"? Believe me – if you could follow the money (which you can't) – you'd see substantial "Benjamins" in her bank account from folks who are well grounded in the International conspiracy to delegitimize the Jewish State.

And how easily she slides into the age-old game of Anti-Semitism. Old Tropes or new angles on Anti-Semitism. She serves on the Foreign Relations Committee. Thank God they in truth have little to do with Foreign Policy.

After her first swipes, the Democrats had an opportunity to pass a strong condemnation of Anti-Semitism in all its forms. They didn't. Instead there was a wishy-washy condemnation of all prejudicial speech, missing the target by a mile.

On the other hand, as Tevye would say, there are the Republicans. But, where are the Republicans? What we face daily is an increase in the number of White Nationalists, no desire by the head of the Party to disown them. Hate crimes are at the highest level in years, but the head of the Party has no desire to discuss it.

On the left there is Omar and AOC. On the right? Why are the good guys so silent? What is a Jew to do?

*Jim Shibley has had careers in broadcasting, distribution, advertising, and telecommunications. He began his working life in radio in Philadelphia. He has written his JP&O column for more than 20 years and is director of Trading Wise, an international trade and marketing company in Orlando, Fla. This column was submitted Aug. 26, 2019. ★*

# The Eight Nights of Hanukkah

On the first night of *Hanukkah* my true love gave to me:  
Lox, bagels and some cream cheese.

On the second night of *Hanukkah*, my true love gave to me:  
2 *kosher* pickles,  
and lox, bagels and some cream cheese.

On the third night of *Hanukkah*, my true love gave to me:  
3 pounds of corned beef,  
2 *kosher* pickles,  
and lox, bagels and some cream cheese.

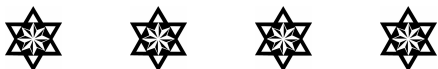
On the fourth night of *Hanukkah*, my true love gave to me:  
4 potato *latkes*,  
3 pounds of corned beef,  
2 *kosher* pickles,  
and lox, bagels and some cream cheese.

On the fifth night of *Hanukkah*, my true love gave to me:  
5 bowls of chicken soup!  
4 potato *latkes*,  
3 pounds of corned beef,  
2 *kosher* pickles,  
and lox, bagels and some cream cheese.

On the sixth night of *Hanukkah*, my true love gave to me:  
6 pickled herrings,  
5 bowls of chicken soup!  
4 potato *latkes*,  
3 pounds of corned beef,  
2 *kosher* pickles,  
and lox, bagels and some cream cheese.

On the seventh night of *Hanukkah*, my true love gave to me:  
7 noodle *kugels*,  
6 pickled herrings,  
5 bowls of chicken soup!  
4 potato *latkes*,  
3 pounds of corned beef,  
2 *kosher* pickles,  
and lox, bagels and some cream cheese.

On the eighth night of *Hanukkah*, my true love gave to me:  
8 Alka-Seltzer,  
7 noodle *kugels*,  
6 pickled herrings,  
5 bowls of chicken soup!  
4 potato *latkes*,  
3 pounds of corned beef,  
2 *kosher* pickles,  
and lox, bagels and some cream cheese. ✨



# Light One Candle

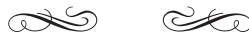
A SONG BY PETER YARROW OF PETER, PAUL & MARY  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=StB\\_ehpZyN4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=StB_ehpZyN4)

Light one candle  
for the Maccabee children.  
Give thanks that their light didn't die.  
Light one candle  
for the courage they needed,  
when their right to exist was denied.  
Light one candle  
for the hope in their hearts,  
that justice and freedom demand.  
Light one candle  
for the wisdom to know  
when the peace-maker's time is at hand.

Don't let the light go out:  
it's lasted for so many years.  
Don't let the light go out:  
let it shine through our love and our tears.

Light one candle  
for the strength that we need  
to never become our own foe.  
Light one candle  
for those who are suffering  
the pain we learned so long ago.  
Light one candle  
for all we believe in,  
let anger not tear us apart.  
Light one candle  
to bind us together,  
with peace as the song in our heart.  
What is the memory  
that's valued so highly  
that we keep it alive in that flame?  
What's the commitment  
to those who have died,  
we cry out they've not died in vain?  
We have come this far,  
always believing,  
that justice will somehow prevail.  
This is the burden  
and this is the promise  
and this is why we will not fail.

Don't let the light go out.... (3x) ✨



## KAPLAN/ISRAEL

(continued from page 13)

Historians estimate that as many as 1,000 of the approximately 4,500 Australian soldiers who fought in Palestine in World War I were aboriginal. Australian Aboriginal soldiers were part of this battle. Thus, a little known aspect of Israeli (Palestinian) history and Aborigines comes to light.

*Sybil Kaplan* is a journalist, lecturer, and book reviewer. She is a former region president and national board member of Hadassah U.S. and former chapter president

and current board member of Hadassah-Israel. She is author of *Witness to History: Ten Years as a Woman Journalist in Israel*; and nine cookbooks (including *What's Cooking at Hadassah College*.) She lived in Israel from 1970–1980.

She and her husband, Barry, came to live in Jerusalem in 2008, where she works as a foreign correspondent for North American Jewish publications, lectures to senior citizen residences, leads walks in English in Machaneh Yehudah (the Jewish produce market) and writes stories about kosher restaurants in *Janglo.net* for which Barry is a photographer. ✨



## BEN ASHER/BAT SARAH

(continued from page 14)

the fiery law. As Rabbi Hirsch teaches, we are the fuel for keeping the fires of godliness burning on earth.

So, on each night of *Chanukah*, when you look at the flame, think of yourself. And ask yourself: For what purpose will I use this God-given fire, this life-energy that is mine to direct.

Bar Kappara (*tanna* who lived in transitional period between *tannaim* and *amoraim*) taught: "God said to man: 'My light is in your hand and your light is in My hand.' 'My light is in your hand': this refers to the *Torah*; and 'your light is in My hand': this refers to the soul. If you guard My light, I will guard your light, but if you extinguish My light, I will extinguish your light." (Leviticus Rabbah 31:4)

We leave you with a poem called, "Don't Put Out the Light":

For You  
Who made the light  
And blew it into me  
Who gave me my soul  
To be a lantern  
In Your hand,  
Saying,  
Don't put out the light!  
Let me keep pure  
This filament,  
My body.  
Let it be  
According  
To Your will,  
A sheath for light,  
That I may lift  
My lamp  
Into Your hands.

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

# Book Review



REVIEWED BY  
RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN

## Israel Needs Separation of Church and State

*Zionism Vs. Judaism: Can the Jewish State Survive the Jewish Religion?* By Arye Carmon. Miskal-Yedioth Ahronoth Books and Chemed Books. Israel. 2018. Pp.272. in Hebrew.

Israeli historian Dr. Arye (Arik) Carmon studied at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, earning his doctorate at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. He is senior fellow at the Hoover Institute, Stanford University. The author-scholar-activist is founder of the 2009 Israel prize winner, the Israeli Institute of Democracy, which he headed for two decades. In his book that is a must-read for all who care about Israel as it has entered its seventh decade, the author both challenges and alarms us to the threat posed to Israel's democracy and future by the Orthodox camp whose over-riding loyalty and commitment is to *Halachic* Judaism.

He is concerned that Israel's twin pillars, as a Jewish and democratic state, are on a collision course with each other. He points out the risk of no less than a civil war, with American history in mind, and the high cost of neglecting the explosive slavery issue. "Today, in the midst of Israel's political culture that primarily nourishes democracy in its structural as well as normative dimensions, different narratives are found, two of which are dominant, reflecting opposing views of the Zionist revival. These two narratives have been there since the beginning; they exist in modified degrees almost since the beginning of the Jewish people's national liberation movement: On the one hand, stand the Political and Practical Zionism's leaders for whom the revival is a product of a generally secular rebellion against religion's centrality and particularly against the nation's awaiting messianic redemption. On the other hand, stand

Religious Zionism's leaders who turned the secular revolution's products into 'the flowering's beginning of our redemption.'" (p. 30)

In the absence of an Israeli constitution and no defining guidelines and boundaries for religious involvement in public life, growing religious forces have utilized this to their advantage while undermining the delicate balance and separation between the Jewish and democratic components of Israel's identity. Moreover, Orthodox Judaism's monopoly on Israel's religious life along with the "official state ban" (p. 61) on the Conservative and Reform streams, have only worsened matters. While the United States had the Federalist Papers to guide its civil development, Israel lacks a similar document, contends Carmon.

Perhaps to avoid a divisive debate on the religious and state divide, David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister, and its leader in the formative period including pre-state, was opposed to a constitution. This was at a fateful juncture where official unanimity was required. However, there was then a unique opportunity, argues the author, to fashion a constitution given that influential religious political leaders such as Zerach Verhaptiag, who was a jurist, supported it. He even headed the committee in July 1948 to accomplish it, with the endorsement of Rabbi Uziel, the first Sephardic Chief Rabbi. Carmon calls this failure, "the loss of a historic moment of grace" (p. 212), along with, "missed was the historic moment to place the foundation for legitimizing definitions of multi-cultural, multi-Jewish identities" (p. 130).

Carmon nostalgically recalls walking to soccer games in Jerusalem of the 1950s joined by Sephardic youth who just finished attending *Shabbat* services and some smoked cigarettes as long as a *Shabbos goy* lit them. This scenario is not likely to be replicated in today's political-social climate. The above Sephardic flexibility is contrasted with the disturbing memories of Ashkenazi Meah Shearim Jews stoning a military vehicle passing by on *Shabbat*. Israel's Declaration of Independence uses *Zur Yisrael* (The Rock of Israel) as the compromise offered by Ben-Gurion in the face of Orthodox representatives who insisted on including God's name in a critical moment just before sharing the historic Declaration with the world as *Shabbat* was about to be ushered in. The author admirably defends Ben-Gurion as a "pragmatic Kohen" but bemoans his not being a "pedagogic Navi" as well (p.131). I believe though Ben-Gurion regarded himself as a secular Zionist prophet.

The author is highly critical of the Israeli government's policy in the 1950s of forcibly assimilating the flood of new *olim*

into a "New Jew" Israeli identity, disregarding the rich cultural and religious traditions of the Jews from Arab lands while assuming they were primitive and inferior to the Eastern European Jews. He claims that this harsh melting pot approach was a failed experiment. Though a negative residue persists, it overlooks significant accomplishments as well under stressful circumstances. Carmon insists that the Zionist concept of "*Shelilat Hagolah*," the total negation of the lengthy Diaspora legacy promoted by a leader of Ben-Gurion's influential stature, is responsible for creating a dangerous void and imbalance by-passing most of Israel's history with its rich cultural-religious treasures.

The conscious return to the early Biblical period was modeled on the romantic European national revival of the 19th century. The author harps on his parents and their friends' warm cultural *Yiddishkite* they brought from Poland and the inability of the Zionist secular revolution to offer a satisfying spiritual alternative. The varied components of the Jewish experience should have been integrated. However, Amos Oz, renowned author and thinker who is also from the Left, diverges from this analysis. He finds the renewed Hebrew literature and culture and the general Israeli enterprise to overshadow the Diaspora and its rabbinic offerings, such as the *Shulchan Aruch* (see Oz's latest book, *Shalom Lakanaim*, Keter-Books, 2017).

The victorious 1967 War which was euphorically perceived in messianic terms and the resultant settlers' movement, gave rise to religious-nationalists forces that took advantage of the ideological vacuum and now threaten Israeli democracy's vital institutions such as the Supreme Court. Particularly the traumatic 1973 *Yom Kippur* War and the continued military engagements along with terrorist attacks, and with them the shattered sense of security of the Israeli "New Jew," allowed for the "Old Jew" to reemerge. The watershed 1995 murder of Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin is bound to those extreme religious circles that deem their *Halachic* interpretation to supersede decisions of Israel's democratic government which functions without a divine authority given its secular nature.

Israel's evolved demographic reality now reflects the secular Zionist in retreat by comparison to the ascendancy of traditional and Orthodox Jews. Even the IDF sacred cow is not immune to Orthodox pressure with the attempt to separate men and women and curtail women's role in ceremonies. Critical issues such as returning territories are open to Orthodox rabbis' opposition, remembering the 2005 Gush Katif evacuation. Also the attitude

(see Zoberman/BR, page 18)



Dr. Carmon



# My Kosher Kitchen



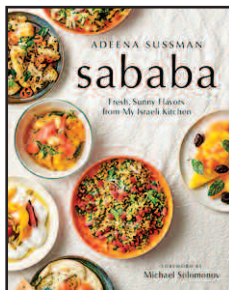
REVIEWED BY SYBIL KAPLAN

## Israeli Cookbook Review and Recipes

*Sababa – The Fresh, Sunny Flavors of Israeli Cuisine.* By Adeena Sussman. Penguin Random House (Avery). \$35 hardcover. 368 pp. Sept. 3, 2019

Adeena Sussman has co-authored eleven cookbooks, including the New York Times #1 bestseller *Crawlings* – and its *New York Times* bestselling follow-up, *Hungry for More* – with Chrissy Teigen.

She is also the author of Short Stack Editions' *Tahini*. A lifelong visitor to Israel, she moved there in 2015 after meeting an expat American who has since become her husband. She lives footsteps from Tel Aviv's Carmel Market, where she shops and explores daily, taking inspiration from her adopted country's seasonal and cultural culinary rhythms. She has written about Israeli food for *Food & Wine*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Epicurious*, *Gourmet*, and many others.



*Sababa* was named a Best New Cookbook of Fall 2019 by *The New York Times*, *Bon Appetit*, *Food & Wine*, *Epicurious*, *Eater*, and *Forbes*, and one glance into the book will quickly show you why.

As a food writer, food columnist and cookbook author, any new Israeli cookbook catches my eye and even though Adeena and I have never met, we have had some correspondence.

First I read through her cookbook online to get a feel for its style. I didn't go far when I read the Foreword by Michael Solomonov and Steven Cook, whose Philadelphia restaurant, *Zahav*, was named the best restaurant in America by the James Beard Foundation in May 2019.

This was *Zahav's* first nomination for the award, given to restaurants open 10 years or more – the culinary equivalent of the Academy Award for best picture.... Chef and co-owner Michael Solomonov was named the outstanding chef in America in 2017, the same year that he and business partner Steve Cook won the book of the year award for *Zahav: A World of Israeli Cooking*. The restaurant was nominated for outstanding service in 2017

and 2018."

From there, I was drawn into Adeena's introduction of her sojourn into the Tel Aviv Carmel Market where she loves to acknowledge purchases with *Sababa*, derived from the Arabic word for "great" or "wonderful" but actually means – everything is awesome.

Adeena and her husband, Jay, live by *Shuk haCarmel* and she writes: "this book is a reflection of the things I like to make from the bounty I've found right outside my door." This book is "a window of how I like to cook right now."

There are 12 chapters beginning with Kitchen Pantry: spices, spice blends, condiments and other staples with 11 recipes. This is followed by "Breakfast" with 14 recipes such as Zucchini, dill and feta *shakshuka*; "Bread and Crackers, and Snacks" with 9 recipes such as Cast iron skillet pita; "*Salatim*" with 14 recipes such as Quick and easy hummus; "Vegetables" with 9 recipes such as Oven roasted artichokes with roasted garlic; "Soups" with 6 recipes such as *Freekeh* vegetable soup; "Salads" with 8 recipes such as Toasted *challah* caprese salad with za'atar vinaigrette; "Pasta and Grains" with 10 recipes such as Roasted tomato and *labaneh pappardelle*; "Poultry and Meat Mains" with 18 recipes such as *Shwarma pargiyot*; "Fish and Vegetable Mains" with 16 recipes such as Moroccan fish cakes; "Drinks and Frozen Treats" with 9 recipes such as Date sweetened almond milk; and "Desserts" with 18 recipes such as *Labaneh malabi* panna cotta – a whopping 141 in all.

If those don't tempt you, there are 216 beautiful, color photos which show you how these dishes look and entice you to make a shopping list and then start cooking in your kitchen.

What is obvious about these recipes is they are authentic Israeli not custom made to cooks who want Israeli-style cooking in North America.

This cookbook will make a wonderful gift for anyone who has visited and eaten in Israel or who enjoys creative cooking from Israeli culture by a woman who really knows what she is doing!

### Za'atar Spice Blend (1 cup)

- 1 cup picked fresh za'atar, oregano leaves (or 6 Tbsp. dried oregano)
- 3 Tbsp. dried marjoram
- 3 Tbsp. toasted sesame seeds
- 4 tsp. dried thyme
- 1 Tbsp. ground sumac
- 1 tsp. fine sea salt

Arrange the za'atar or oregano on a towel-lined plate and microwave in 15-second intervals, stirring between intervals, until dry and crumbly, 2 to 2-1/2 minutes. Crumble the leaves by hand or in a spice

grinder until almost fine (the way dried herbs look) then combine in a medium bowl with the marjoram, sesame seeds, thyme, sumac and salt.

Store in an airtight container for up to 3 months.

### Dukkah (2 cups)

*This is more of a topping than a spice blend. It is traditionally served alongside labaneh with olive oil for dipping with bread.*

- 1 cup hazelnuts, preferably blanched
- 1/2 cup raw white sesame seeds
- 3 Tbsp. whole coriander seeds
- 3 Tbsp. whole cumin seeds
- 2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 tsp. sugar

Preheat the oven to 325°F. Place the hazelnuts on a rimmed baking sheet and toast until the nuts are lightly browned and the spices are fragrant, 9-10 minutes. Remove from the oven and cool completely. If the nuts have skins on them, rub them between two clean kitchen towels to remove and discard as much of the loose, papery skins as possible.

While the hazelnuts are roasting, toast the sesame seeds in a medium dry skillet over medium heat, stirring often, until golden and fragrant, 3-4 minutes. Transfer to a plate to cool.

Add the coriander and cumin seeds to the same skillet and toast until fragrant and the seeds begin to pop, 1-2 minutes. Transfer to a separate plate to cool. Grind the cumin and coriander in a spice grinder until powdery and transfer to the bowl of a food processor. Add the hazelnuts, pepper, salt and sugar and process until the mixture looks like fine sand, being careful not to over process the nuts into paste, 15-20 seconds. Transfer to a bowl and add the sesame seeds. Store in an airtight container for up to one month.

### Rough-Chopped Salad with Yogurt & Dukkah (Serving size varies)

- tomatoes
- kohlrabi
- cucumbers
- carrots
- radishes
- scallion greens
- yogurt
- extra-virgin olive oil
- freshly squeezed lemon juice
- salt and freshly ground black pepper

### Dukkah

*Prepare the dukkah before making this recipe. Chop the vegetables to your desired size.*

Spread some yogurt on a plate or in a bowl, put the vegetables on top, drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice, season with

(see Kaplan recipe, page 18)

# After Virginia Beach shooting May 31, 2019

BY RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN

At this trying and beclouded time of grief and sorrow, we gradually and painfully come to grips with the enormity of our losses diminishing us all as well as our newly discovered vulnerabilities. Our beloved Virginia Beach and the entire Hampton Roads community lost its beautiful but dangerously blinding innocence on that fateful Friday afternoon. How could we imagine that the mass shootings in other regions would not reach us too? Truth to be told no one is insulated and immune in the wide American landscape. What happens around us near and far is bound to affect us at home. However, we are obligated to protect ourselves as best as we can given whatever limitations we face.

We are called upon now to pick up together the shattered pieces of a complex and confounding reality to reemerge rededicated and reenergized to make our threatened world, inwardly and outwardly, a safer home and better place for one and all. Our fallen 12 heroes who so callously and cowardly were taken from their loving families, co-workers, neighbors, friends and all of us, deserve no less. For their cherished memories' sake and our very survival and future let us engage more than ever with those around us, particularly the ones we deem to be beyond our intimate circle of close associates.

We acknowledge that the social phenomenon of alienation is a hallmark of our challenging times. Pleasant surprises do await us when willing to reach out beyond the familiar and engage others in simple but far-reaching acts of human interaction that hitherto we regarded as too threatening and non-consequential. There is much to be learned, gained and prevented by exercising our extraordinary ability of ordinary communication in our wonderfully diverse human environment in Hampton Roads in which too many may feel lonely, unnoticed and undervalued.

So called "strangers" cease to be strangers once we encounter and appreciate our common humanity and shared American dream in which we all have a critical stake. The Bible wisely instructs us that a celebration is not complete without including the strangers in our midst so they may transform their status, claiming their rightful place in society and in our hearts. Spreading more and more conscious but random acts of kindness and goodness in our shared garden of life and civic exchange is bound to grow beneficial returns in kind. At times a reassuring

## ZOBERMAN/BR

(continued from page 16)

toward the Temple Mount status and the non-Jewish Israeli minority are at risk of being determined by undue pressure from Orthodox authorities.

Carmon's ringing conclusion should alert us all, "The salient characteristic, binding the implications of the religious counter-revolution with its social, cultural, and political manifestations, that is the threat to Israeli democracy's foundations, is the attempt to penetrate holiness into the public domain. It's an attempt to 'return' God into the public domain. In developed democracies God was taken out of the public domain through secularization." (p. 256)

*Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman translated all the quotes. His bio is below* ✨



smile and a generous act on the road and in the office can go a long way and even stymie road and office rage.

Our democratic and educational institutions on all levels demand our involvement and support that necessary change should occur. Surely prudent and common-sense gun control legislation along with an accountable and responsible mental health system are on the agenda. Are we waiting for more mass shootings' tragedies, oceans of tears and cries of family survivors of different languages and geographies, and heart-wrenching memorial services to propel us into action? Ought we not teach, beginning at one's home, that each finite human life is of infinite worth, and each of us is an entire, irreplaceable universe of purpose and meaning reflecting the Most High? We are witnesses to what irreparable damage can be done by a few minutes of unchecked madness and unrelenting evil using weapons of mass destruction equipped with silencers. Let us not allow a corrosive culture of death to replace a promising culture of life.

It would be advantageous for our entire nation to take a day out for national soul-searching and resolve to delve into issues that should be paramount on our American agenda. A day in which we engage in discussions and activities toward healing our nation, creating a "National Day of Caring" would create a ripple effect. The slogan "VB Strong" has joined us to the sorrowful and hurting family of previously affected communities, even as we pray and plan (!) that our Virginia Beach is the last in such an unenviable category of suffering. I suggest that we be better served by the slogan, "VB Cares," which is ultimately the source of authentic strength. What befell us will

## KAPLAN RECIPE

(continued from page 17)

salt and pepper, and top with as much *dukkah* as you like.

### Za'atar Roasted Chicken over Sumac Potatoes (Serves 4)

- 4-5 medium scrubbed red potatoes
- 4 quartered medium shallots
- 4 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1-1/2 Tbsp. sumac
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 small (about 3-1/2 pound) roasting chicken
- 1 lemon
- 1/4 tsp. red pepper flakes
- 2 garlic cloves
- 6 thyme sprigs
- 4 Tbsp. Za'atar

Preheat oven to 425°F. Cut each potato into 6 wedges. In a 9x13-inch metal or glass baking dish, toss the potatoes and shallots with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil and the sumac, salt and black pepper. Season the cavity and exterior of the chicken well with salt and pepper.

Zest the lemon into a small bowl, then halve the lemon and set aside.

Add the remaining 3 tablespoons olive oil to the bowl along with the red pepper flakes, and gently stir.

Stuff the lemon halves, garlic and thyme sprigs inside the chicken, then rub the chicken all over with the za'atar mixture.

Place the chicken, breast side up, on top of the potatoes. Roast the chicken for 15 minutes, then reduce the heat to 350°F. and continue to roast the chicken until the juices run clear and the potatoes are crisp and golden, about another hour and 10 minutes. (The rule is 23-25 minutes per pound of chicken not counting the high roasting temperature at the beginning of the recipe.)

*Sybil Kaplan (see bio p. 15)* ✨



surely not define us, but we cannot deny it. It may yet refine us to become more compassionate, considerate and connected with each other.

My 99-year-old mom, a Polish Holocaust survivor, called me from Israel that dark day, asking, "What's happening to America?"

*Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman is the founder and spiritual leader of Temple Lev Tikvah and Honorary Senior Rabbi Scholar at Eastern Shore Chapel Episcopal Church in Virginia Beach. The Temple meets in The Church Of The Holy Apostles. This article was inserted into the Congressional Record by Congressman Donald McEachin of Virginia's 4th district.* ✨



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**Make an end-of-year donation to Magen David Adom at [afmda.org/chanukah](http://afmda.org/chanukah) today.**

And our best wishes for a joyous Chanukah and New Year.



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# Soccer Player Turned Rabbi: The Story of Snir Gueta

## The Jewish Post & Opinion

1389 W 86th St. #160  
Indianapolis, IN 46260

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Rabbi Snir Gueta, once a promising player in Israel's national Under-21 team, is now a rabbi who teaches prominent soccer players the Torah. The 31-year-old former midfielder discusses his personal journey and explains why playing on weekdays, instead of Shabbat will increase the number of soccer stars in Israel.

Rabbi Gueta (below, on the right) grew up in the Maccabi Haifa's youth department, played in the Israeli Premier League for Maccabi Netanya, and starred in Israel's national Under-21 team. Today, he is considered one of the most recognized rabbis among Israel's younger generation.



Seven years ago, the promising midfielder decided to retire from soccer. Driven by his religious beliefs, he chose to forgo the sport he loved in order to uphold further the halachot (Jewish laws) surrounding the Jewish Sabbath. Today, he is a married father of three. He receives such a large volume of inquiries that he has been helped by an assistant to help respond to the people seeking his advice. Committed to helping others learn the Bible as he has, he dedicates his time to give lessons every evening, throughout the country.

The Rabbi's lessons are mostly about virtues, courtesy, faith, and what it means to be god-fearing. The audience in his lectures is very diverse – *Yeshiva* students and Orthodox Jews, sitting amongst well-known and secular soccer players of Israel's Premier League is a common sight. "Struggling with the modern balance of today's personal and professional lives, these motivational speeches help us to gain clarity," said Rabbi Gueta.

When explaining his decision to quit soccer, the Rabbi said, "It was a very long process. Through lessons of various righteous rabbis, I realized that I was not on the right track as a Jew. I found myself at a crossroads. One choice was to wait

**Happy Hanukkah**  
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Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu  
me-lech ha-o-lam a-sher kid-sha-nu  
b<sup>2</sup>-mitz-vo-tav v<sup>2</sup>-tzee-va-nu  
l<sup>1</sup>-had-lik ner shel Ha-nu-kkah.

Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu  
me-lech ha-o-lam she-a-sa nec-sim  
la-a-vo-tei-nu ba-ya-mim ha-heim  
ba-z<sup>2</sup>-man ha-ze.

(first night only)  
Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu  
me-lech ha-o-lam she-he-che-ya-nu  
v<sup>2</sup>-kee-y<sup>2</sup>-ma-nu v<sup>2</sup>-hee-gi-ya-nu  
la-z<sup>2</sup>-man ha-ze.

until I'm 35, finish my career, then begin my path to becoming the rabbi I knew I could be. The other option was to follow my heart and do what I felt G-d wants for me, beginning immediately." Rabbi Gueta continues, "In the last year of my career, I had plenty of offers from soccer clubs, but I made the decision to retire. I salute my wife – without her, it would have been more difficult to make the decision; she would have been willing to go anywhere with me."

"Giving up a soccer player's salary and retiring was not an easy thing to do, especially for those who were in the position I was in, at the time." When discussing what he feels when thinking of the life he left behind, Rabbi Gueta (right) quickly answered "I'm not missing anything. It must have been the right decision for me. When Football games are scheduled



on a Saturday, it automatically keeps a large religious fan base away from the sport. Who knows, maybe a few more soccer stars are hiding in the religious sector, and it's not worth losing them", added Rabbi Gueta. ✨