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Chag Chanukah Sameach!



*A little bit of light
dispels a lot of darkness*

(see Wiener's Wisdom on p. 16)

Editorial

On Sept. 2, 2020 Rabbi Sandy Sasso moderated a discussion with famous sex therapist Dr. Ruth Westheimer for the annual Lion of Judah/Pomegranate event in support of the Jewish Federation of Greater Indianapolis 2020 Annual Campaign. I attended this Zoom meeting with approximately 70 other local women.



Rabbi Sandy Sasso: What is your suggestion of how to best cope with quarantine caused by COVID-19?

Dr. Ruth Westheimer: Do not lose your hope, eventually the bad times will be over, and then we are going to rejoice. I respect how difficult it is right now. The reason I don't talk about subjects like the virus is because we have to listen to the health professionals. Also when it comes to politics, I do not talk except to say how upset it makes me to see children separated from their parents because this is what happened to me.

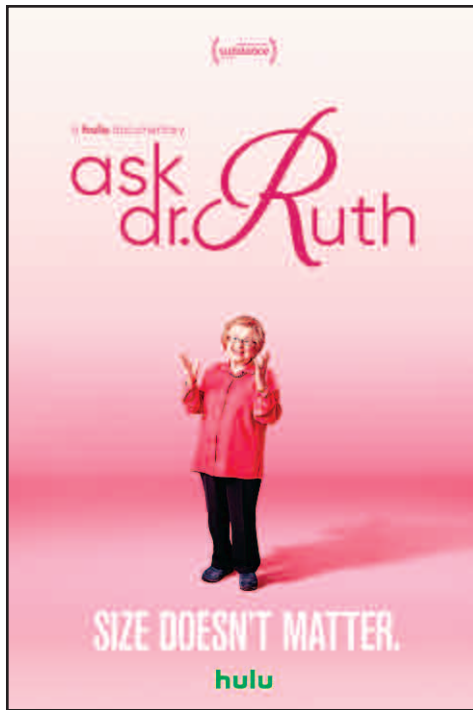
Rabbi Sandy: I know you don't like to talk about politics but recently you decided to speak out on three issues. Would you please explain?

Dr. Ruth: I felt like I had to make an exception to my rule and I went with my daughter Miriam to a protest. I held up a sign that said "Enough is Enough" and Miriam's sign said, "Black Lives Matter". In addition I speak up for Planned Parenthood because with my expertise in human sexuality I believe that abortion must remain legal. Otherwise only women with money can afford to get one. Finally, even though I don't talk about specific politicians, I know I will vote and I believe so should everyone else. I have been a member and on the board of the Jewish Y in Washington Heights for 50 years. I am also an active member of the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York.

Rabbi Sandy: We have just celebrated the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote. You are a woman pioneer who overcame enormous



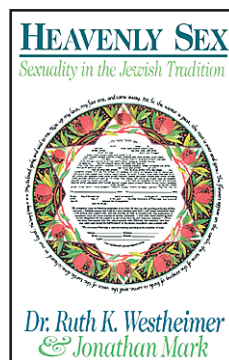
Dr. Ruth Westheimer on WYNY radio in New York City (c. 1980).



obstacles and have been an inspiration to women. What advice do you have for our daughters and granddaughters and what message do you have for the next generation?

Dr. Ruth: It pleases me to no end to tell you that I am going to get an honorary doctorate from Ben-Gurion University, because when I was in then-Palestine in 1948, I still remember his voice on the radio when he declared the State of Israel. I was in Jerusalem and he was in Tel Aviv. These days whenever I talk to anyone, I say give me a little money for the Endowed Chair of Psychology at Ben-Gurion.

Also coming out again this month is the book *Heavenly Sex: Sexuality in the Jewish Tradition* that I wrote 35 years ago with Jonathan Mark, a writer from *The Jewish Week*. NYU Press is republishing it as a classic so it will never be out of print. How fortunate we are that I can talk about sex from morning to night because for us Jews, sex was never a sin. It is a *mitzvah* on Friday night for a husband to have sex with his wife.



Rabbi Sandy: Do you have any advice for women that we can give to our children?

Dr. Ruth: All of you have to be sexually literate. You have to be able to answer the questions about sexuality and for us Jews this is so easy because there is no shame attached to it.

Rabbi Sandy: Can you say something about the #MeToo movement and sexual harassment?

Dr. Ruth: I don't talk about that because

I don't give a second appointment to anyone who has come to me after being sexually harassed. I tell them they need to go to a social worker who is an expert in those horrible happenings. I don't dabble in subjects for which I am not well equipped. I am an expert in telling you how to have good sex but I am also an expert in knowing what I don't know. Anybody who has had a bad experience needs to see a psychologist or social worker who specializes in that.

Rabbi Sandy: At 92 you are still writing and teaching, what can you teach us so that we will have the strength to overcome all of the obstacles like you did?

Dr. Ruth: All of you have to have a little *chutzpah*. Also my first 10 and a half years of life were very successful in terms of having a loving father, mother, grandmother and other relatives, while I was an only child. That helped me. Also what helped a great deal is to be Jewish and know that sex is not sin but something to be enjoyed by a married couple. Today I am extending that by saying that whoever is your loved one right now, make sure you make the best of it.

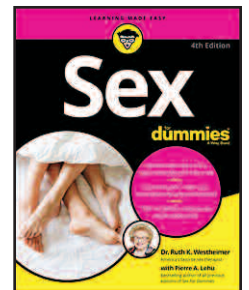
Rabbi Sandy: You have a 4th edition of *Sex for Dummies* coming out. What has changed that you need a new edition?

Dr. Ruth: I didn't say I need a new edition. The publisher called me and said the others were so successful they wanted a new edition. For the 4th edition I went to a colleague, a professor who knows more than I do about gay sex and gender identification, and I asked him to write a chapter. I also went to some experts on sexually transmitted diseases and about the #MeToo movement to contribute to the book. I wrote a chapter on loneliness.

Rabbi Sandy: Does anything surprise you about sexuality today?

Dr. Ruth: Not only am I surprised, I know what I don't know. That is very important for someone like me. Frequently on radio or television if I do not know the answer to a question, I tell them I don't know but I will research this and get back to them. Then I go to some experts and find out.

I am surprised by people who act



irresponsibly, such as people who have sex with more than one partner because I do not want to see another rise in AIDS. I may be old-fashioned and a square but I want people to be with one partner only. I do not believe in open marriage because somebody will get hurt.

Rabbi Sandy: *Why is your Jewish connection so important?*

Dr. Ruth: Since I come from an Orthodox background, I am rooted in the Jewish tradition and that tradition permitted me to talk openly about sex. I have always said that part of my success in talking about orgasms, erection, and premature ejaculation is because in Judaism sex was never a sin, it was something to be engaged in.

Orthodox rabbis sent me clients when there was a problem with a couple. I made sure that if people came from Brooklyn, I didn't schedule one couple after the other. I also had two staircases in the office so I was very careful to keep their privacy.

Rabbi Sandy: *You have said that you want to live large and make a dent. What do you mean by that?*

Dr. Ruth: Since I am so short, 4 ft. 7 in., I knew that I had to do something but I did not know that the dent would be talking about sex. I knew that I had to make something of my life to justify for myself that I deserve to be alive while so many did not survive. I was fortunate to work for Planned Parenthood in New York City, to do research and to be trained as a sex therapist by Dr. Helen Singer Kaplan who wrote the first book of sex therapy. I don't do private practice anymore, I leave that up to young people, but I still talk a lot about relationships and sexuality.

During the Zoom meeting, Westheimer spoke about a new documentary about



At age 19, Dr. Ruth was a trained sniper. She claimed it was not heroism because every able-bodied person had to play a role in defense. In Israel's War of Independence in 1948, everybody in then-Palestine belonged to some group. She chose the group that was the forerunner of the Israel Defense Forces. They taught her how to put the Sten gun together and shoot it. Fortunately, she never had to put her skills to use by shooting anyone but her aim was good because she could put five bullets in the red circle, and she knew how to throw hand grenades.

her life titled, *Ask Dr. Ruth* that premiered in 2019, and is currently streaming on Hulu. One nice aspect of this fascinating movie is that she travels with the filmmaker to places she has lived and they filmed at those locations. When it was not possible to get a current shot, the filmmakers use animation.

One example of that is the train station in Germany where Dr. Ruth's parents put her on Kindertransport, a train transporting Orthodox Jewish children to Switzerland. This took place 82 years ago after Kristallnacht, the night of broken glass. That name refers to the litter of broken glass left in the streets after the Nazis attacked Jewish people and their property.

This gut-wrenching act by her elders made her the sole survivor of her family. *The world would be a much poorer place had they not made that fateful decision.*

Directed by Ryan White, the film mixes interviews, archival footage of Dr. Ruth's various TV shows and talk show appearances along with the animation. Also the film is built on footage of Dr. Ruth just living her current active life in the same Washington Heights apartment where she has lived since the 1970s. Just inside the entrance, in a place of pride, is a photo of David Ben-Gurion and Golda Meir.

Two years ago I saw the play about Dr. Ruth's life titled, *Becoming Dr. Ruth* and now I have seen the movie, *Ask Dr. Ruth*. Both were extraordinary! Her age may be 92, but she seems to be timeless. With her wit, sharp memory and stamina, she is still a force to be reckoned with.

We wish all of our readers a *Hanukkah* filled with light!

Jennie Cohen, November 11, 2020 ✨

Inside this Issue

Jennie Cohen: (Editorial).....	2
Amy Lederman: (Jewish Educator)	
How Were Your Holidays this Year?.....	4
Rabbi Benzion Cohen: (Chassidic Rabbi)	
Special Times	4
Rabbi Dennis C. Sasso:	
What Will the Pandemic Do	
To Congregations?	5
Jim Shipley: (Shipley Speaks)	
Does it Matter Any More?	5
Esther Tauby: (Woman to Woman)	
Parasha Chayei Sara	6
Melinda Ribner: (Kabbalah of the Month)	
Kislev – the month of miracles.....	7
Miriam Zimmerman: (Holocaust Educator)	
The Past Meets the Pres(id)ent	8
Tributes to: Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg	
and Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks ...	10-11
Rabbi Israel Zoberman: (Book Review)	
Haminhara (The Tunnel).....	12
Sidney Mishkin: (Book Review)	
The Jews Should Keep Quiet.....	13
Jerry Delson: Remembering	
My Grandfather Morris and	
his Poems of the Holy Land.....	14
Rabbi Irwin Wiener: (Wiener's Wisdom)	
Hanukkah – Time to Celebrate	
Freedom and Redemption	16
Rabbi Elliot B. Gertel: (Media Watch)	
The Keeper	17
Sybil Kaplan: (My Kosher Kitchen)	
Breads Without Yeast.....	18
Sybil Kaplan: (Children's Book Review)	
The Hanukkah Magic of Nate Gadol.....	18
Sybil Kaplan: (As Seen on the Israel Scene)	
SherlockS Hats:	
The Little Store That Could	20



Ruth at age 10.

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Jewish Educator



BY AMY HIRSHBERG LEDERMAN

How Were Your Holidays this Year?

The Jewish High Holidays and *Sukkoth* have come and gone and this year, unlike any other, posed new and significant challenges for all of us in different ways because of COVID. Yet it also offered new opportunities.

So, on the spiritual report card of life, how did we do?

In years past, we took for granted that we could celebrate holidays together – with family, friends and members of our community – at services, meals and communal gatherings. We *schlepped kugels*, briskets and honey cakes across town and happily anticipated the joy of dining together under the night sky in our *sukkahs*.

Not so easy this year as we painfully accepted, some of us kicking and screaming, the reality of COVID and the varied, dramatic changes it has required of us in how we live, work, socialize and pray.

In spite of that, we still created ways to come together as a Jewish community and nourish our spiritual health, at a time when gathering together was necessarily limited or prohibited in order to protect our physical health.

Online services were abundant, with many of us experiencing the delight and inspiration of “attending” congregations in other cities, even countries. In my own home, I created a special feeling by designing my own *Mikdash Me’at*, a sanctuary at home. I placed a white lace tablecloth, flowers, candlesticks and my *siddur* on my dining room table and tuned in to an early morning service in New York, followed by one in Tucson. The afternoon brought me to Los Angeles and in the evening, I broke my fast on Zoom with my family.

In a spiritual context, COVID provides an opportunity to enhance our holiday experience rather than limit it. True, this requires us to have a major attitude shift but historically, Jews have been doing that for years – adapting to the challenges imposed by history, governments and hostile communities.

So perhaps we can see this new year of 5781 as a time when we accept that while we can’t go outward, *we can go inward*. Into our hearts, minds and souls – to truly reflect on what is important to us and find ways to better ourselves and others. Perhaps this is the year that we commit

Chassidic Rabbi

BY RABBI BENZION COHEN

B.H.

Special Times

We are living in a special time. Our world is not the same. A tiny, tiny, virus, invisible to the naked eye, has changed a lot of things in our huge planet. How has my life changed? I am feeling closer to G-d and His creations, especially to my family and my people.

A year ago, our world and my life were rather normal and stable. Today was like yesterday and tomorrow was like today. Now there are many new rules, and they are changing often. A year ago my health was not a big issue. Today, I have to be very careful, especially because I am not so young.

How does this situation bring me closer to G-d? Now I am less self-centered as a result. The less that I feel myself, the more that I can feel the outside: my G-d, my family and my people. This is one of the secrets of living a happy life. I grew up quite self-centered and was not very happy. I wanted to be popular, to have a lot of friends and girlfriends, to go to parties and have good times. I did not achieve these goals and was not very happy.

Why did I fail to make friends? One reason is that I was very self-centered. I didn’t really care about the other person. I cared mainly about myself. If you give love and caring to people they are likely to become your friends. But if you only care about



ourselves, from the privacy of our living rooms as we encounter the world on our computers, to make it a safer, healthier and more equitable place to live.

Maybe this will be the year that we use the time and energy that we will save by not doing all of the things we have done in the past to consciously and intentionally look for new ways to contribute our resources, counsel and support to those people and organizations that so desperately need our help. Because while we may not be physically together as we were in the past, we can still do something that will bring us closer to who we want to be, as human beings and as Jews, and guide us on how to engage as members of the Jewish community in the future.

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. ✨

yourself, you will probably be quite lonely.

Fifty-two years ago my life changed for the better. I visited a *Chassidic* community and met a lot of loving and happy people. A month later I decided to give this way a try. I dropped out of University and went to learn in the *Yeshiva* in Kfar Chabad.

Amazing! Now I am happy. I am popular, have lots of friends, and a beautiful girlfriend (my dear wife). I go to many parties (birthdays, *Bar Mitzvahs*, weddings, and *farbrengens*) and have a lot of really good times (every *Shabbos* and holiday).

What is the secret of success? I started to believe in G-d and live according to His will. Before, I was serving myself. Now, I am trying to serve G-d. Now I try hard to love my neighbors, and this brought me many friends. Now I am careful to celebrate *Shabbos* and our holidays and this brings me a lot of good times. However, this is not always easy. Our nature is to be selfish and self-centered and this is hard to change. When my belief in G-d becomes stronger, I realize that I am not the center of the universe. G-d is.

The *Torah* teaches us that everything that happens is from G-d, even the difficulties that we sometime experience. Why does G-d send us difficulties? One reason is to help us to be more humble and less self-centered. We realize that we are not in control of everything; that we are not all-powerful.

This is one of the benefits of the virus. It has certainly brought us many difficulties, and these difficulties have helped us to refine and humble ourselves and come closer to G-d.

Amazing! For many years I have been talking to people and encouraging them to believe in G-d and observe His commandments. Some were willing to talk and some were not. Some were devout atheists busy with their lives. They politely changed the subject.

Now I am seeing a big improvement. People are opening up and at least they are talking for 45 minutes! Definitely the longest phone conversation that I have ever had!

Indeed our world is getting better and better. I used to see my brothers and sisters only once every year or two or three. I live in Israel and they live in America. Now we meet every week, on Zoom!

What is happening? Every good deed that we do makes our lives better and the world that we live in better. Even a tiny virus brings out a whole lot of good deeds. When someone gets sick, their family and friends help out and prepare meals. If they get really sick, people all over pray for them. Many people have lost their income, and many people have opened up their hearts to help and give charity.

(see Benzion, page 5)

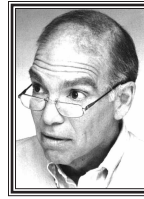
What Will the Pandemic Do To Congregations?

BY RABBI DENNIS C. SASSO



Shipley Speaks

BY JIM SHIPLEY



Does it Matter Any More?

“The Jewish Vote.” What ever happened to the “Jewish Vote”? While we never meant more than one or maybe one and a half percent of the total turnout, there was always press, commentary, speculation, even some wringing of hands about the turnout, the political leaning and the meaning of the “Jewish Vote” during every national election for a really long time.

I could never figure out what the fuss was all about. We truthfully could not have any real impact on the final outcome of any presidential campaign. Outside of maybe the five boroughs of New York, I doubt Jews could affect any local race. But, still, there it was on the air, in the papers and in numerous studies.

“The Jewish Vote”. Until now. Somehow in the past few election analyses, “The Jewish Vote” statistics do not appear. Well, to begin with, there is really no way to accurately measure the number of Jews who vote in any given election except maybe in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

Secondly, it does not make political or even common sense to have somebody hired to ask people exiting a polling place: “Pardon me, but are you Jewish? Great! How did you vote?”



to you, but we can't wait until you can bring yourself to the congregation.

The story is told of a youth who wanted to become a blacksmith. He apprenticed to a master blacksmith and perfected all the skills and techniques of the trade: how to hold the tongs, lift the sledge, smite the anvil, and blow the fire with the bellows. Upon completing training, he was chosen to work at the smithery of the royal palace. But the youth's delight soon came to an end when he realized that he knew all the skills, but had failed to learn how to kindle the spark.

After this interim period of Zoom and Livestream, may we remember not just how to turn on the computer, but how to kindle the spark and nurture the passion to keep faith and congregations bright and alive.

Rabbi Dennis C. Sasso has been senior rabbi at Congregation Beth-El Zedek in Indianapolis, Ind. for more than 40 years. (Reprinted with permission from the Indianapolis Business Journal Oct. 16, 2020.) ✨

So, let us do some speculation. It was assumed, it seems forever, Jews were believed to be overwhelmingly liberal leaning. Ergo: Democratic voters. This reflected our supposed liberal views on race, equality, and other factors that meant we would vote Democrat and liberal up and down the ballot.

Times change. So do political parties. When the “Jewish Vote” seemed important, the Democratic Party was “Liberal”, the Republican Party “Conservative”. Jews, by our nature, our heritage, and our experience in the world were overwhelmingly “Liberal”.

The United States is the *only* developed country with a democratic process of election to have only two major parties. Closest to us would be England with its “Conservative” and “Liberal” Parties.

But: Nobody would claim that England has the same diversity, the same racial, race and geographical differences as the United States. We are by far the largest nation in the world with a “democratic” electoral system.

So far as Jews are concerned, we are still the tiny percentage of the population we have always been. One wonders; looking back at history, why such an emphasis on the “Jewish” vote ever existed.

For eons, the United States ignored the Hispanic vote. Now that seems to be a really important part of the political strategy of both parties. While it is hard to compare the size of the Hispanic population of America with the Jewish population, America is still getting that one wrong. The difference in political attitudes between Mexican-Americans, Cuban-Americans, Venezuelan-Americans, etc. is huge.

So, if the pundits choose to ignore those differences, why should there be an urge to pars the Jewish Vote? Anti-Semitism has been dealt with on the legal front and until recently seemed to be less important politically. Has the overall electorate become less interested or maybe simply bored with how Jews voted?

(see Shipley, page 6)



BENZION

(continued from page 4)

We are indeed living in very special times. The Lubavitcher Rebbe told us that our final redemption will be very soon. Today, we are witness to many of the signs of the redemption, when our world will be completely good.

Let us all increase learning *Torah*, doing good deeds and *mitzvahs* which will purify our world and bring MOSHIACH NOW!

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Woman to Woman



BY ESTHER TAUBY

Parasha Chayei Sara

The name of this week's *parsha* is *Chayei Sara* – the lives of Sara. Why is the *parsha* named “the LIVES of Sara” instead of “the LIFE of Sara?” Nearly the whole *parsha* is about what happened after Sara's death!

Rashi says that all the years of Sara's life were equally good. Sara went through different stages during her life, but they were all consistently good. Her goals were always focused on G-d. She would ask herself what G-d wanted from her at every stage of her life. One of her first goals was to settle the land of Israel. The Lubavitcher Rebbe explains that even after her death this goal continued. That's why the *Torah* says “*Chayei*” but starts with the events after her death.

Many times in our busy, fast-paced lives, we get caught up with what we did in the past and what we'll be doing in the future. We don't always think about the present. From Sara we can learn to “seize the moment” and take the opportunity to see what we can do for G-d at that moment. Perhaps a good deed for someone, a chapter of *tehillim* (Psalms) or a prayer. There are so many mitzvot we can choose from!

The second verse of the *parsha* tells us that Sara died in Kiryat Arba which is in Hebron in the land of Canaan and Avraham came to eulogize her and weep over her. Avraham bought this land for a large amount of money and it became the burial place for many of our righteous ancestors including Avraham. It is called *Maarat Hamachpaila* (the doubled cave) and is still standing in the exact same spot today, thousands of years later. People from all over the world come to pray to our holy ancestors buried there.

Then (Ch.24:1-4) tells us about Avraham becoming older and how G-d had blessed him with “everything.” Commentaries comment on that word and say it refers to having a child; the child he and Sara had waited so long for, who was Yitzchak (Isaac). The commentaries also discuss the words “*Bah Bayamim*” which means, “He came into his days.” The *Zohar* tells us that as Avraham aged, he didn't merely pass through the days of his life; he accumulated them. Each day was fully used as an opportunity to serve G-d consistently.

Later, Avraham instructs his servant Eliezer to go to Avraham's birthplace to

choose a girl to be Isaac's wife. (Ch.24:10-12) He takes 10 camels and guides them to wait outside the city beside the well to wait for the time when the young girls would come out to draw water for their families. Eliezer asks G-d for a sign that he'll know the right girl to choose for Yitzchak and G-d tells him that the sign will be; the one who gives you and your camels water to drink will be the right one.

The journey from Hebron to Haran is a 17 day journey and Eliezer made it in three hours! It was a miracle that G-d performed in order for Eliezer to arrive right at the time that Rebecca (Rivka) would be at the well. Rivka was living in a terrible environment that was so corrupt that G-d didn't want her to suffer even one more moment than she had to. In fact, our sages teach us that we only have to be in a situation as long as we need to be there in order to grow or learn from it. Every moment of our lives is necessary for our development.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe OBM said that Avraham and Sara pioneered the Jewish settlement of the land of Canaan. Her burial in the *Maarat Hamachpaila* achieved the first actual Jewish ownership of a piece of land in the Holy Land. Sara devoted her life to the creation of the first Jewish family, and the story of Rivka's selection demonstrates how Sara's successor embodied the ideals upon which Sara founded the Jewish home. In fact all the miracles that existed in Sara's home continued to exist in Rivka's home. The miracle of having her *Shabbat* candles stay lit from Friday evening until just before the next *Shabbat* so they could be relit, the clouds of G-d's glory were always above her tent, and her dough (and food) was blessed so that no matter how many guests came to her and Avraham's home, there was always enough for everyone.

How can we learn to live like our first Jewish mother? We just need to keep focused on our goals. To enter each moment and truly be there. To realize that in every moment we have the opportunity to serve G-d. We can also learn from Sara that wherever we are at a particular moment is where we are meant to be, even when struck in traffic or waiting for our doctor for a very long time; when it's unpleasant for us. We just need to trust that G-d knows what He's doing, keep our focus, and if we fall, pick ourselves up again and keep trying and keep practicing. We can do it because our dear mother Sara taught us how.

Here is a story of a holy woman to inspire us this week

Rabbi Avraham HaLevi Horowitz, known as the “*Shelah Ha Kodesh*”, the

SHIPLEY

(continued from page 5)

Well, maybe. One thing for sure, as Jews diversified in their political leanings, it became more difficult to separate the “Jewish Vote” from the overall.

Even where Israel is concerned, politically, there is no longer one hundred percent loyalty from American Jews to the State of Israel. As a concept, Israel has close to one hundred percent loyalty from the Jews of America. On the other hand, as a functioning nation with its own political parties, philosophies, and destiny, there is again, a left/right split within the Jews of America.

Meanwhile, the demographic trends of young Jews are not that different from the overall. Young Jews are no longer a dependable generation for either party. And their attitudes on Israel vary from ardent Zionist to an almost total lack of interest.

In the 1980's and '90's along with the rest of that generation age group, they watched the American Dream almost disappear. They saw Dad lose his job or at least his desire for the “Corner Office” as the economic world crashed. In many cases, this younger generation even lost their homes.

Losing faith in the previous “American Dream” they entered the “Gig Economy” with gusto. They flooded into the world of entrepreneurship. Their reasons for this were different than the original Jewish entrepreneurs. Years ago, Jews became entrepreneurs because so many business doors were closed to them. Today? We are just as deft at creating opportunities as ever – but in a world where creating your own business is easier and there are so many avenues to pursue.

As Jews become diverse in their political philosophies as well as their business activities, the Jewish “Middle Class” is harder to pinpoint, their political leanings likewise scatter. I think it is probable that as this real political divide continues to grow, so will the diversity of the “Jewish Vote”.

Are we still for equality, human dignity and equal opportunity? God, I hope so.

Jim Shipley has had careers in broadcasting, distribution, advertising, and telecommunications. He began his working life in radio in Philadelphia. He has written his JP&O column for more than 20 years. He can reached at: shipleys954@gmail.com. ★



famous author of the holy Jewish book, *The Two Tablets of the Covenant* was a great scholar. His *Rebbetzin* was praised by their son after her death. “Everyone who knew her will testify that she did not depart from any of our Matriarch's holy ways. Her hand was always out to help my father, (see Tauby, page 7)

Kabbalah of the Month



BY MELINDA RIBNER

Kislev – the month of miracles

Chodesh Tov. We welcome the new month of Kislev Tuesday, November 17. Every Hebrew month offers new blessings and unique spiritual opportunities.

The month of Kislev takes place in one of the darkest times of the year; nevertheless, the month of Kislev is a time of expansiveness, and going forward in life with trust and faith. The energy of Kislev is about actualizing dreams and visions. Natural optimism, hope, confidence and faith are more easily accessible during this month to support the rekindling of dreams. This is a month of miracles and redemption. It is the time to go for what we really want. We can take risks this month because Kislev is actually a time of deepening faith and trust in God, a time of greater clarity and courage.

Kislev is an auspicious time to meditate on one's life purpose and receive important guidance. It is a time of clarity. Life is always full of synchronicity, but particularly in this month, we see the Divine hand in what happens to us and in the world. One of the signs that we are living in accordance with our life purpose and Divine Will is that we are happy and are experiencing the magic and abundance of life. Small miracles seem commonplace. This awareness fills us with gratitude. The entire month of Kislev is a time of thanksgiving. It is no coincidence that the secular American holiday of Thanksgiving is usually in the month of Kislev.

The energy of Kislev is shaped by the holiday of Chanukah, the holiday of miracles that occurs at the end of the month, the darkest time of the year. It was not logical that a small group of Jews would be able to defeat the vast and powerful Greek armies. It was miraculous. The holiday of Chanukah reminds the Jewish people that they live on the level of miracles. The existence of our beautiful Jewish state of Israel with all its accomplishments, and with so many foes is a modern day testament to the power of miracles today.

As we celebrate Chanukah with the lighting of candles, we learn experientially a most important and deep truth about life: There is light amidst the darkness. At the darkest time, this is light. Actually the light in the darkness shines even more brightly because of the darkness that surrounds it.



When the nights get longer and it gets colder outside during this month, you may find yourself wanting to sleep a little longer. That is good. According to the ancient mystical text, *Sefer Yetzirah*, the healing of this month takes place through sleep. Sleep is not a waste of time but provides an opportunity to live in another dimension. When we sleep, we are told, our soul may ascend to the higher worlds. Those who have purified their consciousness may receive true vision and understanding through dreams.

General Guidelines for the month of Kislev

1) Give Yourself time to dream

You have a right to dream. Your dreams speak the messages of the soul. They need not be logical. This is the month to pay attention to your dreams, listening to the part of yourself that is beyond the rational mind. During the month of Kislev we reclaim the pure faith of the child within who believes in miracles. Close your eyes and allow images and visions to emerge about yourself and your life. The theme of the importance of dreams appears several times in the *Torah* portions read during this month.

2) Meditate on Divine Light each day

We meditate on lights during Chanukah, but the practice of meditating on Divine light need not be confined to just those times. G-d's light is always present for those who yearn for it. This light will heal and transform you. Pray and stand before G-d in prayer. Take a few moments to know and also visualize yourself surrounded by the Light of the Divine Presence for that it is the truth.

3) Seek how to go forward in life rather than understand why you can't

The mind always wants to understand; it seeks answers reasons and justification. Understanding does not necessarily change things. Tap into the natural faith within, for faith enables us to leave the place of limitation within the mind without even knowing how or why. Faith by definition is beyond the reasoning powers of the mind. Faith enables us to be present,

TAUBY

(continued from page 6)

who spent all the money his wife had brought with her from her parent's home in support of *Torah* scholars. Not only did she not look askance on this practice, but she added to it on her own... Look around and see whether you can find a better woman than my mother was in all these things – who rejected the mundane and did everything for the sake of the next world."

Story excerpted from the book She Shall Be Praised by Avraham Erlanger.

This Shabbat is Shabbat Mevorchim Chodesh Kislev. Rosh Chodesh will be this coming Tuesday. Please G-d. Wishing you a restful and enjoyable Shabbat Shalom.

Esther Tauby is a teacher, lecturer, writer and counselor. She lives in Toronto, Canada with her husband and children. Read more by her at <http://www.jewishindependent.ca> or chabad.org. Contact her at esthertau@gmail.com. ✨



to not dwell in the past or worry about the future, but live moment to moment fully with trust and fearlessness. It is faith, not the mind that opens us to new possibilities and new dimensions, enabling us to go forward in ways that we could not do solely on our own. Transformation is the bottom line.

4) Strengthen a "Can Do" attitude

This is the month to go forward. Know that often when we live our vision and bring new things into our lives, fears of the unknown or of failing may surface. As much as we want change, as much as we want more light and joy, we are resistance and frightened by change. This is natural. Don't let your fear or resistances stop or limit you now.

Strengthen yourself with affirmations, prayer, meditation, and doing *mitzvot*. A *mitzvah* is a good deed prescribed by the *Torah*. Each time we do a *mitzvah*, we make a connection to the Divine. This gives us strength we would not have on our own.

May we be grateful for all instances of divine synchronicity we experience this month. May we increase in faith and in our awareness that God is alive and active in our lives. These teachings were taken from my book, *Kabbalah Month by Month*.

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. she offers a free newsletter on meditation, healing, kabbalistic energies of the months, holidays, and more. www.kabbalahoftheheart.com. Email: Beitmiriam@msn.com. (This column was submitted for Hanukkah 2019.) ✨

Holocaust Educator



By DR. MIRIAM L. ZIMMERMAN

The Past Meets the Pres(id)ent

“Ritchie Boys” knew the language and culture of their native Germany or Austria. Thus, they were ideal candidates to return to Europe as U.S. soldiers to wage psychological warfare against the Nazis during World War II. Named for U.S. Army Camp Ritchie in Maryland, which later became Fort Ritchie, Camp Ritchie personnel taught young German-speaking immigrant men counterintelligence strategies. Most of the Ritchie Boys were Jewish.

Camp Ritchie also trained them in de-Nazification strategies, interrogation methods, military intelligence, and translation techniques. Some of the Ritchie Boys helped prepare prisoners for the subsequent Nuremberg Trials after the war. The Ritchie Boys are a little-known footnote in Holocaust history, not included in the official curriculum of Yad Vashem’s International School for Holocaust Studies. I did not learn about the Ritchie Boys until I met Eric.

Holocaust survivor Eric Gattmann was a Ritchie Boy. I last saw Eric in 2016 at a Holocaust program shortly after Donald Trump’s election. I lamented to Eric, “It used to be that students claimed the Israelis treat the Palestinians just like the Nazis treated the Jews during the Holocaust. I would always say, “Wait until the end of the semester, then let’s have this conversation.” I did not want to argue with students, based on their lack of knowledge of the Holocaust.



E. Gattmann

“Good answer,” Eric affirmed.

I continued, “Recently, a student came to me and said, ‘Isn’t Trump just like Adolf Hitler?’ I did not know what to say to him (the student),” my voice trailed off. Already, in 2016, I was beginning to see many similarities between Trump and Hitler.

Eric looked at me with an intensity I had never seen in the many years of our friendship. “You tell your students exactly what you have always told them,” he declared. “This country is nothing like Germany in the 1930’s.” Eric should know; he lived through those years, until 1935. He emigrated to the United States at the age of ten. When 18, he joined the U.S. Army and was sent to U.S. Military Intelligence Center at Camp Ritchie for training.

“The difference is the people,” he concluded emphatically. “People in this country would never allow what happened in Nazi Germany to happen here.” I took Eric’s advice for four years, from 2016 to 2019, whenever students presented the Israelis-as-Nazis analogy. Few made the Hitler comparison. My stock answer: “Let’s have this conversation at the end of the class, after learning about *actual* Nazi behavior,” usually preempted the need for subsequent discussion.

Four years later, I hoped Eric is still correct. Would the people of the United States reelect a known racist? We have witnessed Trump abuse women, immigrants, and any perceived enemy. He is a hate monger and habitual liar, with no respect for democratic institutions or traditions.

Trump’s unnecessary rallies solidified my sense of parallels between the two leaders; one a dictator, and the other, a dictator-wannabe. It is sometimes a challenge to help students understand how a Hitler rally served propaganda purposes. Individuals at a Hitler rally felt safe and secure, surrounded by like-minded people with shared purpose and ideology, shared hatreds and mind-sets. In Germany, this greater community was called the “Volk.” It was those mind-sets with which the Ritchie Boys were intimately familiar.

It was Hitler’s instinct – I loathe to use the word “genius” – to understand the psychological needs and mind-sets of his people so that he was able to create propaganda messages that would appeal and successfully persuade them to do his bidding. In persuading half of the American people to vote for him, Trump demonstrated that same capacity.

Mass rallies characterized Hitler’s cult of the Führer, with thousands of his adoring followers slavishly saluting at appropriate times and chanting “Sieg Heil” on cue. Mass rallies characterized Trump’s modus operandi, throughout his campaign and throughout the four years of his presidency. He even wanted to throw himself a military parade down Pennsylvania Avenue, dictator style.

According to an article in *The New York Times* on Feb. 16, 2017, less than a month after his inauguration, Trump was “eager to get outside of Washington and relive the rapturous reception that greeted him during the presidential campaign. Mr. Trump exulted in large crowds assembled at cavernous venues throughout his 2016 bid, and spent the first days of his presidency quibbling over how many Americans attended his inauguration.” The paper pointed out how unusual it is for a president to hold a campaign rally once elected, with midterm elections almost two years away.

In July 2019, former democratic presidential

candidate Beto O’Rourke described a Trump rally as “an impromptu Nuremberg rally,” pointing out how the president incited hatred and violence against people of color and immigrants. His use of the term “Nuremberg rally” reinforced my conclusion that the two men functioned alike in this regard.

Chills infused my body as I watched Trump rallies that took me back to the Hitler era, both in style and in substance. Instead of “Sieg Heil’s”, Trump orchestrated misogynist choruses of “lock her up” against Hillary Clinton and “send her back” referring to Congresswoman Ilhan Omar and the three other members of the “Squad,” all congresswomen of color. Although these women should not be singled out because of their religion or ethnicity, I do not want to appear to support their deeply held antisemitic and anti-Israel beliefs.

A crucial distinction between a Hitler rally and a Trump rally: a Hitler rally would not kill you the way a Trump rally could, populated with maskless supporters crammed together in tight places, exposing all to the deadly Covid-19 virus. A headline in the Nov. 4, 2020 *Huffington Post* pointed out that “Donald Trump Did Shockingly Well in Counties with High Covid-19 Death Rates.”

The article cited an analysis from Reuters that showed “the president actually performed better this year than he did in 2016, in counties with high COVID-19 death rates.” The report included results from 139 counties in 19 different states and found that Trump garnered a 4% increase in votes from 2016 “in areas highly impacted by the coronavirus.”

It is clear to this writer that, literally, Trump’s supporters will die for him. “Trump also won the majority of votes in states with the highest COVID-19 death rates, including Florida and Texas.” The CDC (Center for Disease Control) map that was linked to the article shaded the states with greatest numbers of Covid dark blue, the reverse of the red-state blue-state maps showing which states were projected to go for Biden and which to Trump.

The election year of 2020 tested Eric’s assertion that people here will behave differently from the people in Nazi Germany in 1933. President Paul von Hindenburg designated Hitler the Reich Chancellor on Jan. 30, 1933. Less than two months later, the Reichstag passed the “Enabling Act”, granting Hitler full dictatorial powers. The German people did nothing to halt Hitler’s march to total power.

In 2020, the people of the United States stopped Trump’s attempt of a totalitarian takeover, in contrast to the passivity of the German people. But contesting his loss will further divide the American people and erode our democratic processes.

Fall Semester 2020

I felt an imperative to teach the class in response to events around me. As a Notre Dame de Namur University (NDNU) faculty administrator for over a decade, I encouraged my faculty to keep their curricula relevant and updated. I practice what I preach. Unfortunately, Holocaust themes are all too relevant and applicable today, primarily because of the machinations of the current president. It is all too easy to make these connections.

In previous years, at the conclusion of the course, I presented “lessons learned” from the Holocaust experience. One of these lessons, crucial today: “Holocaust scholars agree that the way to avoid a totalitarian takeover is to keep democratic institutions strong,” an endnote in *sotto voce* to a semester following Yad Vashem’s approved curriculum.

This semester, I want to frame questions loudly and clearly: “How are Hitler and Trump alike? Is Trump behaving like Hitler behaved in the late 1920’s and early 1930’s?” Let me count the ways, starting with Trump’s undermining of our democracy, well documented by the media. I can call out Trump’s blatant mimicry of so many Hitlerian tactics: demeaning and undermining the media and promoting “fake news”; using Hitler’s propaganda techniques in speeches, rallies, and censorship (see previous two-part article in the *P&O*, “Scapegoats of History”); invoking a mythical past in his signature promise to “make America great again”; anti-immigration and nativism policies; his defense of white supremacists and their violence; his misogyny, authoritarianism, and racism. I’m just getting started.

Both leaders politicized the medical profession and public health institutions in egregious ways. Hitler sanctioned the “T4” Euthanasia Program and medical experiments in concentration camps. Trump’s purposeful mishandling of the coronavirus pandemic has resulted in over 230,000 deaths, many of them unnecessary if only he had mandated and provided for proper precautions.

Further, both Trump and Hitler have been diagnosed by experts as “malignant narcissists,” and have behaved accordingly.

Hitler intimidated his party’s leaders. Trump intimidated Republican leaders throughout his presidency, from the party leadership, to governors, and to members of Congress. With his loss seeming certain (as of this writing) – without some extraordinary recount or court intervention – will anyone from the Republican front advise Trump to leave his office gracefully and not further divide the American people?

This fall, the Holocaust class at NDNU, which I have taught for 25 years, will be

my last. For a variety of reasons having to do with the fact that NDNU will cease functioning as a four-year, residential undergraduate university as of May 2021, I am partnering with Dr. Judy Buller, current chair of the Undergraduate Communication Program, to teach this course.

Dr. Buller brings a strong Media Studies presence to the course, specializing in “fake news,” media manipulation, and teaching media literacy. She also has Zoom skills I am learning. I am deeply grateful that her lecture on genocide and fake news on *Erev Rosh Hashanah* enabled me to attend *Rosh Hashanah* services without having to cancel class.

Although controversial among many Jews, I believe that what Trump has done on our southern border warrants the use of the term “concentration camp.” I explained to students that “concentration camp” is an abstract term that describes a variety of camps. One textbook I reviewed listed seven different types of camps. I feel that my students do not need that level of detail, and am satisfied with the five types of camps as defined by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum’s online Holocaust Encyclopedia.

The Encyclopedia defines a concentration camp as “a camp in which people are detained or confined, usually under harsh conditions and without regard to legal norms of arrest and imprisonment that are acceptable in a constitutional democracy.”

The Encyclopedia includes: detention camps, forced-labor camps (why don’t they use the term “slave labor?”), transit camps, prisoner-of-war camps, and killing centers (extermination camps, of which there were six).

No one would label what Trump has done as an extermination camp, although some people have died. But separating children from their parents, over 500 of whom will possibly never be able to be reunited; confining people in unsanitary conditions without adequate food or water; and withholding medical treatment, are all hallmarks of Hitler’s concentration camp system.

Further, there are reports that indicate medical personnel have sterilized women without consent, another erosion of our country’s medical ethics and a faint echo of Ravensbrück and Auschwitz. Although such sterilizations are under investigation and not yet documented, medical negligence is rampant, especially egregious during a pandemic. I acknowledge the smaller scale of Trump’s current endeavors, reminding me of the *Talmudic* dictum that whoever saves a life saves the world. Judaism equates the value of a single life to that of the entire world. This Jewish value of a single life nullifies the argument that Auschwitz and ICE detention centers

cannot be compared because of size.

Dr. Buller, too, made the connection between Trump and Hitler, positioning it within the context of the stages of genocide. Zoom technology enabled me to watch the entire class after *Rosh Hashanah* and at my leisure. She brilliantly connected Trump’s behavior with Hitler’s in the early years of the Third Reich, and made the parallel to the early stages of genocide.

Unfortunately, our comparisons triggered four ardent Trump supporters in a class of 17 students. Probably, there are more. The most outspoken student made it clear that he felt it was inappropriate for us to make this comparison.

We both tried to clarify that the comparison was not with Hitler, the genocidal dictator of 1944, but with Hitler in his early stages as he rose to power. Once triggered, a student’s amygdala kicks in, shutting down the neocortex and any possibility of rational discourse.

In these times, having difficult conversations with students requires a crash course in the neuroscience of brain function. Students need to learn how to self-monitor their emotional responses, accept the normal dissonance when encountering something new, and process that dissonance so that it results in learning.

My failure to help this student get outside his comfort zone of familiar beliefs and actually consider something new, made me realize how challenging it is to learn. I wish I had Eric Gattmann to advise me, someone who lived through those times.

Eric taught for many years at the College of San Mateo and is now Professor Emeritus at that institution. He and his lovely wife Hilde reared two daughters in San Mateo. Currently, he resides in an assisted living facility near one of his daughters in northern California; Hilde is close to them in another assisted living facility. Eric and Hilde also have nine grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Jews are experts in hope. Until G-d’s revelation to Abraham, human beings were at the mercy of impulsive gods, whose whimsical passions played havoc with the hapless human beings who believed in them. G-d usurped humanity’s blind faith in unaccountable deities who were as capricious and as amoral as many humans.

Who is this G-d? According to *My Jewish Learning*, G-d answers Moses from the Burning Bush, “I will be what I will be,” the literal translation of “*Ehyeh asher Ehyeh*.” G-d’s name belongs to the future.

The imperative of Holocaust education is to ask, “What should we do differently, to avoid the depths to which humanity can sink, and to ensure that humanity

(see Zimmerman, page 11)

Tributes to...

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg



BY RABBI DAVID WOLPE

Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg passed away just before Rosh Hashanah began the afternoon of September 18, 2020. This was Rabbi Wolpe's sermon on Shabbat Shuvah Sept. 26, 2020. You can hear more of his sermons at <https://www.sinaitemple.org/worship/sermons/>

As many of you know right now, at this very moment, something extraordinary is happening in the history of our nation and the history of our people, because for the very first time in the 244 years of the United States of America, a woman is lying in state at the Capitol, and for the first time, a Jew is lying in state at the Capitol. That this happens at the same time and that this is the same person gives us an obligation to pause on this *Shabbat Shuvah* and say a word about the lessons, or some of them, that we can learn from late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.



Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg in 2016.

Our sages tell us it is better to go to a funeral than a wedding because at a funeral you learn lessons that you can take with you into of your life. I want to draw a few lessons from the life of this extraordinary woman for us to keep close and I hope that they will make us better in our lives which after all is what this *Shabbat Shuvah* is intended to do.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, like Jews of her generation, came from parents who never finished school. Her father was a furrier and her mother died before she finished high school. Yet she managed through



Justice Ginsburg lay in repose at the U.S. Supreme Court. (UPI)

own ability, skill and passion to succeed to the highest position that a legal scholar can achieve in our nation and therefore in some ways in the entire world. She did this in part because of that passion for justice and truth that animated her life. The verse she had in her office was *Tzedek Tzedek Tirdof* "Justice, Justice you shall pursue".

It is important in this time to remember three lessons from Justice Ginsburg's life. First is that despite the fact that she held her views firmly and argued for them vigorously, she was famously good friends with Justice Antonin Scalia. Justice Scalia believed almost the diametric opposite of what Justice Ginsburg believed and they argued against each other in the court, sometime in very sharp terms but they also went to the Opera together. They also celebrated each other.

In this age when political opponents seem incapable of believing the best of each other's ideas, I think Justice Ginsburg reminds us that someone can disagree with you but you can still cherish them. I have no doubt that in whatever world they

dwell in right now, Justice Ginsburg and Justice Scalia are still arguing and still enjoying each other.



Previous Law Clerks for Justice Ginsburg line the steps to the U.S. Supreme Court to honor her as her flag-draped casket ascends on Wed., Sept. 23, 2020. (AP)

A second lesson that we learn from Justice Ginsburg's life is something she said when someone I believe asked her about marital advice. "It's important sometimes to be a little deaf. And then she said, "it's not only important in marriage, it is important in life." All of us know that sometimes people will say hurtful or difficult things to us. Sometimes it helps not to hear.

You must imagine that somebody as smart, aware, acute and as able as Ruth Bader Ginsburg heard what you said to her but sometimes she choose not to hear it. That giving space to other people to say objectionable things and to let it go, this too illustrates this is a person who was not only smart and brilliant but wise. She was willing to understand that other human beings have faults and frailties and their own difficulties and you have to be forgiving and you have to give them space.

One other lesson, I want to draw from the life of this remarkable woman. As I said, her mother died before she finished high



Ruth Bader Ginsburg is sworn in as a Justice of the U.S. Supreme court by Chief Justice William Rehnquist (right) on Aug. 5, 1993 as her husband, Martin D, Ginsburg (center), and President Bill Clinton (left) observe. © Stout Magazine.



Queen Elizabeth II receives a Chanukiah from Rabbi Sacks at St. James Palace in 2006 to mark the 350th anniversary of the re-establishment of the Jewish community in Great Britain. The queen had knighted him the year before. Credit: Associated Press

school and her father never finished school and became a furrier. Someone once asked her, "What is the difference between a furrier and a Supreme Court Justice?" She said, "The difference is one generation."

She's someone who was very much influenced by the Holocaust. It shaped her world view as it did most of the Jews of her generation. And she never forgot that the reason one generation could make the difference between someone who didn't have an education and struggled to make a living, and someone who achieved a position at the highest court of the land is because she lived in the United State of America.

Her presence in the Capitol right now is a solemn affirmation and a powerful statement about the goodness and greatness of this land. I know that we are involved in all sorts of arguments, but do not forget for a moment that such a career for a Jewish woman would have been impossible almost anywhere in the world and that this country in its greatness and in its goodness enabled her through her great talents, passion, pluck and wisdom to rise to the heights.

We mourn her passing as we celebrate her life. May she remain as a model for our children and grandchildren to remember what someone can accomplish given both the ability and the drive and also given a nation that opens its arms to opportunity, to possibility, to goodness and to greatness. May her memory for all of us forever be a blessing.

Rabbi David Wolpe is senior rabbi of Sinai Temple in Los Angeles. He was named the most influential Rabbi in America by Newsweek Magazine and one of the 50 most influential Jews in the world by the Jerusalem Post. ★

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

BY PAUL BERNSTEIN



It is hard to put into words the shock, devastation, and sense of loss we all feel today [Nov. 7, 2020] as we reflect on the passing of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, z"l – scholar, teacher, and lover of humankind. I had the incredible privilege of having my Jewish life and education shaped by Rabbi Sacks, both in England and through his vocal support for Jewish day schools in North America, meeting with him in my role as the CEO of Prizmah: Center for Jewish Day Schools.

That Rabbi Sacks believed in the power of Jewish schools was no secret – and his conviction that teachers are the "builders of the builders of the Jewish future" (Interview with Prizmah, 2018) will inspire the work of Jewish day school leaders and supporters for years to come.

Growing up in England, I was part of a small minority within our community who attended Jewish day school. Thanks to Rabbi Sacks's instrumental leadership in building support for Jewish day schools and *yeshivas*, by the time my children started school in London (before we moved to the US), studying in a vibrant Jewish school had become the norm in the community.

In speaking with me in 2018, Rabbi Sacks shared the following about his experience building day schools in the UK: "We had 20 years of intense school-building in our community, and it was

ZIMMERMAN

(continued from page 9)

achieves its greatest potential?" We remember so we can create a better future.

In electing Biden, the people have chosen democracy over totalitarianism, unity over division, and healing over violence. G-d's name is for the future, giving me hope.

Dr. Miriam Zimmerman is professor emerita at Notre Dame de Namur University (NDNU) in Belmont, Calif., where she taught the Holocaust course for 25 years. She can be reached at mimzim@gmail.com. ★



extraordinary. We went from 25 percent of kids at Jewish day schools to 70 percent of kids at Jewish day schools and really, really transformative experience. What did we discover from this? Number one, that the actual process of getting communities to build schools, built communities. Number two, the children of those schools are just more knowledgeable and committed than their parents, and they are the people who are bringing their parents closer to Judaism. I happen to find that very moving, because my late father, blessed memory, came from quite a poor immigrant family, and he had to leave school at the age of 14 and so he never had a Jewish education."

Rabbi Sacks placed Jewish education, and Jewish day schools in particular, at the heart of the legacy he would create as Chief Rabbi. And, great educators were central to his vision. He asked me, "What is the greatest honor that we can possibly confer on anyone in the Jewish community? The greatest Jew we ever had was Moses. We called him *Moshe Rabbenu*, Moses our teacher. For us, teachers are the most important people there are."

(see Tributes, page 12)



Rabbi Dr. Jonathan Sacks' delivers his address on his installation as Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth on September 1, 1991 at the St. John's Wood Synagogue, London.

Book Review

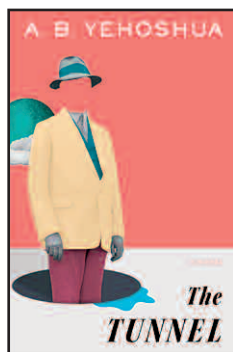


REVIEWED BY
RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN

Exploring Complex Issues of Identity, Change, and Loss

Haminhara (The Tunnel). By Abraham B. Yehoshua. Hakkibutz Hameuchad Publishing. 2018. Pages 323. In Hebrew.

This is Yehoshua's latest book, and the 12th by one of Israel's leading veteran writers. His center-left political orientation is evident in this brilliant novel, which is both serious and humorous, exploring complex issues of identity, change, and loss, both personal and collective in a fractured land with a long history.



The book's protagonist, Zvi Luria, a 72-year-old retired roads' engineer, is diagnosed with the onset of dementia (*Shitayon*). His struggle with this debilitating disease affects his family as well, even as he attempts to postpone the inevitable. His neurologist's advice along with the support of his wife who is a pediatrician is for Zvi to be productive while volunteering his 40 year professional expertise in road and tunnel construction.

He gets involved in a project with a complex scenario concerning the construction of a secret military road and a tunnel through a hill in the Negev's Ramon Crater. The consuming secret co-plot which turns into a major one is to protect three Palestinians, father, daughter and son, who found refuge from both Palestinian and Israeli authorities on that deserted hill. The hill itself is of historic significance and deserves protection, argues Shibolet, a former Israeli Army officer who commanded Luria in boot camp and is now involved with the clandestine sponsoring of the Palestinian family.

The hill has the remains of a Nabbatian structure from the third century B.C.E., representing the great Nabbatian civilization that managed to survive and thrive in the harsh Negev wilderness. Further, emphasizes Shibolet, it acted in the much later visionary spirit of Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion who believed in the Negev's great potential for renewed

TRIBUTES

(continued from page 11)

Rabbi Sacks believed not only in the need for great educators – he spoke passionately about the need to support schools with resources as well. He told me, “The people who build and support Jewish day schools – they are the heroes of the Jewish world, because they are the builders of the Jewish future. ... The very



Jewish sovereignty, calling for its settlement and offering personal example by moving there (Kibbutz SdeBoker) later in life with his wife Paula.

As for the argument that the Nabbatians were idol-worshippers, “Firstly, what's wrong with idol-worshippers responds Shibolet with light sarcasm, after all most of the Israelis are now also idol-worshippers, if not in their faith but in their conduct. It's enough to wander in the large malls, in the banks and restaurants, to witness their admiration for real idols” (p.289). Moreover, King Herod, the great builder, was a Nabbatian through his mother, which was no handicap as far as the Temple priests were concerned. What a sharp barb at the current rigid Israeli religious establishment! Moreover, “... This original and tricky ruler who was at home in the Roman empire like our Bibi in the White House...” (p.290).

Shibolet believes that the Nabbatians who in the fifth century became Christians and later on Muslims, would have likely turned Jewish had the Jews not left the land. Maimoni, who succeeded Luria upon retirement, reminds that both President Ben-Zvi and Prime Minister Ben-Gurion regarded the Palestinian peasants and Bedouins as the Jews' descendants and while forced to convert never left the land. Maimoni concludes on a promising though humorous note, “If all those around us are Jews whose identity was forgotten, then without special effort we are already a natural and solid majority in this confused land.” (p.70).

The identity of the hiding Palestinian family becomes fuzzy if not altogether erased in a country obsessed with – after all it is in the Middle East – placing people in distinct and separate identity boxes. Luria's dementia, for which an empty tunnel is an apt metaphor, threatens to eventually deprive him of the all-important human capacity for memory, which is essential to preserving a person's identity as well as a nation.

Luria's dementia along with the proposed security tunnel represent Israel's deteriorated solid old values that once defined a socialist, pioneering and altruistic young

(see Zoberman, page 13)

success of the Jewish people and surviving and thriving through all circumstances, some good, and some not so good, was due to the fact that we put education as the first of our [communal] priorities... The Mesopotamians built ziggurats. The Egyptians built pyramids. The Greeks built the Parthenon. The Romans built the Colosseum. Jews built schools. That's why we're still here, still strong, and still young while all those super powers in their day have been consigned to history.”

The wisdom and passion he shared for Jewish day schools expanded well beyond the realm of building Jewish communities. As is most often the case with Rabbi Sacks's inspiring wisdom, his words spoken at a Prizmah gathering in late March, with over 700 Jewish day school leaders from around the world, are especially relevant today – just days after U.S. elections saw a country divided for months, if not years. In response to questions about lessons to be learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, he spoke of the need and opportunity to use this moment to unify as a humankind: “Until now, every society has been changed by war. This is the first time all of humanity has faced a war that allows us to come together as human beings. There is no our side and theirs.”

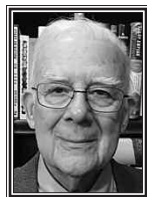
Prizmah is the network for North American Jewish day schools, and we take seriously our role in deepening talent, catalyzing resources, and accelerating educational innovation in support of our schools. We know that this work will continue to connect Jews to their communities, their histories, and the world. It is our sincere hope that the legacy Rabbi Sacks built, which Prizmah will continue, towards the success of Jewish day schools will also serve to unify us through times of crisis and uncertainty. We must come together to support and care for one another, in order that we may merit beautiful times ahead.

In writing about this week's *parsha*, *Hayei Sara*, in “Lessons of Leadership,” Rabbi Sacks described what made Abraham the first Jewish leader: “Leaders take responsibility for creating the conditions through which G-d's purpose can be fulfilled... Leaders see the destination, begin the journey, and leave behind them those who will continue it. That is enough to endow a life with immortality.”

It is certain that Rabbi Sacks's legacy and wisdom will guide the work of Prizmah and Jewish day schools for generations to come, and we are grateful to be surrounded by the many who work alongside us to build a community and a world worthy of his legacy.

Paul Bernstein is CEO, Prizmah: Center for Jewish Day Schools. Email: paulb@prizmah.org ✨

Book Review



REVIEWED BY SIDNEY MISHKIN

Roosevelt's Indifference to Plight of European Jewry

The Jews Should Keep Quiet. By Rafael Medoff. Jewish Publication Society, 2019. 387 pages. \$20.99 Hardcover.

In March of 1933, Adolf Hitler and Franklin D. Roosevelt came to power in Germany and America, respectively. Coincidentally, both died in April of 1945. The years they held political power were devastating for the Jewish people.

Hitler's hatred of the Jews was well known and never abated. During his term in office, Roosevelt was considered by most Jewish people to be a friend of the Jews. Even before his death, however, a debate began about whether this was true. This book examines that question and the role played by Rabbi Stephen S. Wise before and during the Holocaust. Prof. Medoff is critical of both Roosevelt and Wise.

Rabbi Wise was the undisputed leader of the Zionist movement in the United States during President Roosevelt's term in office. The president cultivated and used Wise for the president's purposes. Wise had access to the president but not influence. Roosevelt could do no wrong as far as Rabbi Wise was concerned and he misled most American Jews into thinking Roosevelt wanted to help the Jews of Europe.

Rafael Medoff is an American professor of Jewish history and the founding director of the David Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies. His extremely well researched book demonstrates in exquisite detail how Roosevelt's indifference to the plight of European Jewry and Wise's ego-driven failure to work for the best interests of the Jewish people cost many Jewish lives.

There was a time when these words would have been fighting words among some Jewish people and they are painful for an earlier admirer of Roosevelt to write, but the contemporary documents are available and we know from books such as professor Medoff's that these words are true.

President Roosevelt knew as early as October 1941 that the Germans were mass murdering the Jews of Europe and he

knew by June of 1942 that the Germans were using gas chambers to speed up the process.

It should not be said that that Roosevelt was Anti-Semitic, but he grew up in a family some of whose members were Anti-Semitic. He said before the war that the Germans were understandably upset that the Jews of Germany controlled the learned professions and business. He refused to allow the refugee ship, the St. Louis, to land on our shores. He rejected proposals to allow Jewish refugees to stay in America or settle elsewhere in U.S. controlled territory until the end of the war. His idea was that Jewish refugees should be scattered throughout the world after the war so that there would not be "too many" in any one place.

The visa situation for German Jews was a *shanda* [Yiddish for "disgrace"]. The quota for Germany was filled only once during Roosevelt's 12 years in office. Roosevelt's administration placed every stumbling block imaginable in the path of Jewish refugees who sought visas. For example, a *Ketubah* [Jewish marriage document] was not considered sufficient evidence that a couple was married. In the midst of the war, they were told to go back to from wherever they had fled to get civil evidence of their marriage.

Roosevelt required secretary of the interior Harold Ickies to delete critical references to Hitler in his speeches, even after *Kristallnacht*. He permitted the US ambassador to Germany to attend the weeklong Nazi party rally in Nuremberg in the fall of 1937. In fairness, despite his official action and inaction in the 1930s, Roosevelt apparently had no sympathy for Hitler or Germany. He was concerned about American isolationism and his political future.

Roosevelt never spoke out against Hitler until the end of 1940. He believed that cordial diplomatic and trade relations with Germany were more important than human rights. He went out of his way to avoid any association with foreign Jewry for fear of antagonizing American isolationists and the Arabs. He rejected the idea of a Palestinian Jewish Defense Force and even refused to permit an auditorium in Palestine to be named for him.

After the Allies gained control of the skies over Europe, many people of goodwill began pressing Roosevelt to bomb the railroad tracks, bridges and crematoria at Auschwitz. The stock response of the Roosevelt administration was that we cannot take any airplanes and munitions away from the war effort, even though Allied aircraft were flying just a few miles from Auschwitz and the Allies had dropped over five billion bombs on Europe. He couldn't spare a few bombs for Auschwitz.

ZOBERMAN

(continued from page 12)

country as the author rails against its radically altered identity. Yehoshua may be overlooking perhaps in order to prove this thesis or/and with sugar-coated nostalgia, persisting remnants of *Eretz Yisrael Hayafa* of heroic beginnings even as the Jewish State has moved closer to the political Right and transitioning to capitalism.

At a retirement party for Yitzchak Dibon, who once worked under Luria, and then succeeded him opted to relocate for a lucrative job in Kenya, a young representative of Israel's foreign ministry claims to speak on his own, offering a scathing rebuke of a disturbing trend the 1950's and 1960's when Israel was, "...poor but ethical..." (p.48). It reached out to build the infra-structure of emerging African states, "...that got rid of the yoke of exploiting colonial rule" (p.48). Whereas now Israel exports weapon systems and retired young senior military officers whose ambition is merely to quickly amass a fortune.

The book's last chapter divided into brief sub-chapters, is titled, "Eretz Hazvi" (The Land of the Deer). However, it is also an endearing idiomatic expression, "The lovely Land," for the Land of Israel. In a shocking conclusion conveying the author's pessimism concerning Israel's reality, the Palestinian father, a teacher, shoots a deer in front of Luria whose first name is Zvi (deer).

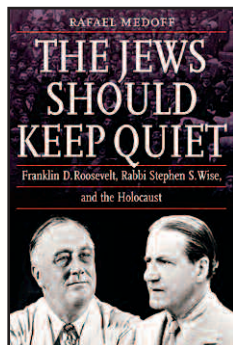
"And the village teacher goes to the ruin and takes from there an old rifle whose identity and mixed parts are unclear (Like the Palestinians and/or the Israelis? Zoberman), aiming it toward the deer that stands contemplatively while quietly spreading around light. Luria, unable yet to shout, with the teacher shooting one direct bullet to the deer's brain while the deer refuses to die and seeks to flee; but the bullet which melts into the glow between the horns collapses the deer carrying itself into a crevice and disappears" (p.323).

Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman is the founder and spiritual leader of Temple Lev Tikvah in Virginia Beach and is Honorary Senior Rabbi Scholar at Eastern Shore Chapel Episcopal Church. (He translated all the quotes from the original Hebrew.) ✨



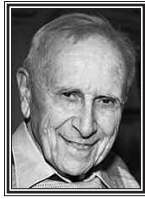
Roosevelt was no more helpful when it came to helping Jewish refugees to settle in Palestine. He said there was only room in Palestine for 100,000–150,000 European Jews. On his way home after the Yalta conference, Roosevelt visited with the King of Saudi Arabia and assured him that America would never do anything to assist

(see Mishkin, page 14)



Remembering My Grandfather Morris and his Poems of the Holy Land

BY JERRY DELSON



When I asked my cousin, David Diamond, what he knew about our grandfather's life in Poland, David responded with a frightening story: "When the Cossacks were approaching Grandpa's family, the family ran into a field and hid among tall plants. They heard the hoofbeats of the Cossacks, but they were not discovered, and they escaped!"

Grandpa Morris Yudelson was born in Przerosl, in Northern Poland, in 1868. His father, Yehuda Leib Yudelson, was a Cantor. His six sons, including Morris, became his choir.



Yehuda Leib Yudelson, Hannah Gittel Strashun surrounded by their sons: David, Abe, Morris, Solomon, Albert and Alex. (photo c. 1910)

In 1970, Rose Delson Goldberg, the oldest child of Morris and his wife, Shiphra, wrote:

"Yehuda Leib (ca. 1843-1927) lost his father at age 12. At age 14, he met a friendly *Shochet* (ritual slaughterer) who trained him to become a *Hazan* (cantor), *Mohel* (circumciser) and *Shochet*. He was a good scholar and had a good singing voice. He was called a "*schwarze yingel*" because he had dark hair and dark eyes. He became a popular singer and sang *Mafter* (chanted the *Haftorah*) in the synagogue."

"At age 19, Yehuda Leib became a *Shochet*, *Mohel* and *Hazan*, first in Prusha Suwalk (Przerosl, Poland) then in Kopchuva (Kapciamiestis, Lithuania) and then back in Poland in Viskava (Wyszków), Lomza, Mishenitz (Myszyniec), and Chorzshall (Chorzele)."

"He married Chana Gittel Strashun in Mishenitz. Her uncle Matthais (Mattityahu) Strashun, was a very well known scholar, community leader and book collector who amassed a collection of books that became the foundation for the Strashun library in Vilnius."

"A daughter was born, who died young, followed by six sons."

"Yehuda Leib and Chana Gittel sailed

from Liverpool to Philadelphia with their youngest son, Solomon, arriving March 21, 1893. They were on their way to Chicago to meet their older sons, who had already emigrated."

"Yehuda Leib represented the Rabbinate, he married and buried Jewish folks, acted as *Mohel*, *Shochet*, Cantor, taught the boys Hebrew and prepared them for *Bar Mitzvah*. In America, with the exception of Chicago, they lived in smaller communities, Evanston, (Illinois), Kalamazoo, (Michigan), Ottumwa, (Iowa), and finally Chicago."

"In Chicago, he was *Shochet* in the stockyards (Armour and Company). He was a short person and used a *cholorv*, the ritual knife that was almost as long as he was tall. He would spend hours preparing the blade to make sure it had a smooth edge."

"Their oldest son, Albert, was rabbi at Chicago's South Side Hebrew Congregation from 1902 to 1916. In World War I, Albert served as a physician and captain in the battles of Chateau Thierry and Argonne Forest. He was a psychiatrist at Northwestern University medical school from 1914 to the time of his death in 1939 at age 70."

"Of the other brothers, Morris was a *Shochet*, Alex, Abe and David were businessmen, and Solomon was head of Romance Languages at Hamline University. Later, he was a professor at City College of New York and was awarded des Palmes Académiques by the French Government. His wife Rose Raymond (Rabinowitz), was a concert pianist."

In 1889, Grandpa Morris married Shiphra Gerber, and they emigrated from Mishtenitz (Myszyniec), Poland, to Toronto, Canada. Two of Grandpa's brothers, Albert and Alex, accompanied them. Albert came with his wife, Katie (Kahlke Wyzanska). In Toronto, Alex, the unmarried brother, traveled north to sell goods to the Natives, who taught him how to shoot.

Alex, Morris and his wife Shiphra then moved to Chicago where Alex was hired as the watchman for Frank's Department Store, knowing that he knew how to use a rifle. The store had been founded by Louis Frank, and by coincidence, Jack Frank, his grandson, married my sister Pat!

Our Memories of Grandpa Morris

My cousin, David, said, "I have a memory of sitting on Grandpa's knee and his reading stories to me when I was little. I also remember he sat next to me when I went to my first funeral (for my Grandma Diamond), and I was scared. He held my hand and I felt better."

At one time, Grandpa Morris lived with David's parents, Sam and Helen Diamond. David reported, "Our Reform Jewish families did not appreciate Grandpa's scholarship

MISHKIN

(continued from page 13)

the Jews against the Arabs. He refused to pressure the British to modify their White Paper and allow expanded Jewish refugee immigration to Palestine.

A close associate of Wise stated that all Jews who held leadership positions during Roosevelt's administration should feel inadequate and contrite. Wise's support of Roosevelt, however, remained unshaken which Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver said was due to his "hysterical prestige complex".

That may be true. The even more important question is would we have had a State of Israel in 1948 if Roosevelt rather than Harry S. Truman had been president at the time the crucial UN partition vote was taken?

Sidney Mishkin is a retired Indianapolis lawyer. He is the author of *The Unvarnished Torah: Observations, Questions and Answers of a Jewish Lawyer and Memories of Donora: Growing Up Jewish in a Western Pennsylvania Steel Town.* ✨



or his poetry. When he died, no one in the family was interested in his fine collection of Hebrew books. I believe they were all donated to Chicago's South Side Hebrew Congregation, where I believe Grandpa did have some official capacity." David was with Grandpa when Grandpa died in a Lutheran hospice in Chicago in 1952 at age 84. David felt that the large cross in the room was not appropriate for Grandpa, and David recited the *Shema* to say goodbye to the grandfather he loved.



Morris and Shiphra Yudelson (c. 1921).

To prepare for his death, Grandpa had sewn his own shroud, and at the end of his poem, *Mount Carmel*, he wrote, "We are hoping and waiting for Elijah the Prophet to come to us."

David said that Grandpa was a gentle and very sweet man, and he felt badly that his grandfather's job was killing animals.

David's sister, Shiphra, remembers sit-

ting on Grandpa's knee while he tried to teach her the Hebrew alphabet that was printed on a wooden ruler. She also said that Grandpa prayed with a *Minyan* that met in the basement of a nearby house. She remembers the Passover *Seders* that Grandpa led at the home of Rose and Henry Goldberg. To accommodate everyone, their dining table extended all the way to their porch. A cousin, Barbara Wollin, later drew a painting that shows all the family at the table.

I was quite proud when Grandpa attended my Confirmation Ceremony at South Shore Temple, a Reform synagogue that was a huge departure from the Orthodox group in which he prayed. In my role, I had a short line in Hebrew, which I recited, beaming at him.

Although my parents and friends supported Israel, I had no thoughts of going there. In 1951, however, while I was helping build houses in France, a Jesuit Priest, Pere Fluery, suggested that I should instead be helping out in Israel. I made a brief trip in 1956, and then my wife Esther and I went there in 1958.

Grandpa's Poems

Grandpa wrote page-long poems in Yiddish and Hebrew to express his religious feelings and to describe places in the Holy Land. Here are some excerpts:

The Jordan River

Coursing through land it goes veering
to the left and to the right,
Back and forth it flows
like one engaged in battle.

The Sea of Kinneret

I will sing about the abundant beauty
of the Kinneret.
Slowly, slowly the water will gurgle
The Sea of Kinneret dwells
in eternal silence
Soon, the white-feathered birds will pass by
Soon the echo of the song in my heart
will inflame me
Like the silver-framed mountains
that surround it.
Towards the sky the Sea of Kinneret
will look and see fragments
of the world's secrets.
Anyone with a heart cannot but be happy here.
I will not cause to anger the silent beauty
of the Kinneret from its slumber.
I will sit down between the water and the sky,
And I will think that the end is approaching
And my soul will journey to the land
of my forefathers.

The Torah

The Torah is the spiritual life force.
It is a beam of light from the Creator.
We exist through its luminescence and
for this we thank you God.



Descendants Morris and Shiphra Yudelson: Shiphra and her husband, Mel Davis, are in the center of the first row behind the three children. The photo was taken September 13, 2009 in Israel.

Mount Carmel

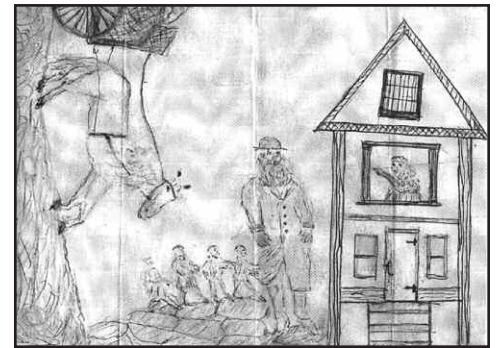
It is phenomenal in its height, splendid
and beautiful for all the world.
Near the ocean, there is a place for ships
to enter and berth.
This is Haifa's natural port, which has been
in existence since the world was created.
There, Elijah the Prophet, on Mount Carmel,
truly convinced the world
of the True Belief in One God,
and he established the faith.



I inherited this replica of a *Torah* scroll (above) from Grandpa. It is a legible photocopy of a regular *Torah* scroll, but reduced in size. At the bottom of the cover, using gold thread, Grandpa embroidered in Hebrew letters his name and Shiphra's name.

Grandpa's Drawing

On the back of Grandpa's drawing, (below) he wrote, "M. J. Yudelson and brothers, pulling their Grandfather's coat. They want a lift on the wagon, but Grandmother stopped them."



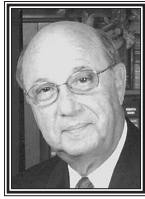
Grandpa's interest in art, evident in the drawing, was passed down to his youngest son, Robert Delson, who became a professional artist and graphic designer and to Robert's son, Sidney, who became an architect. Grandpa's oldest son, my father, Louis Delson, used an artistic flair to design thousands of ads for his advertising business. Other descendants are also artistically inclined and talented.

Eli, Alex's son, said Yehuda Leib had a beautiful set of leather bound religious books, hand-written on parchment that had originated in Spain. He also said that Yehuda Leib would oil the leather covers to keep them pliable.

I traced these religious books to David Delson's son, Lucien Delson, who said he had left them in the basement of an apartment building in Chicago when he (Lucien) went off to join the Marine Corps in World War II. I went to the site where the building had stood, but the building

(see Delson, page 16)

Wiener's Wisdom



BY RABBI IRWIN WIENER, D.D.

Hanukkah – Time to Celebrate Freedom and Redemption

In the beginning there was light. Over 2,200 years ago the light was almost extinguished. But then humanity was introduced to an awareness that not only illumines the path of life's journey but also enables us to understand the difference between good and evil.

We know only too well that evil is all around us. We see it every day, and we feel helpless by its ugliness. Evil is like the snake crawling on its belly, lurking around every corner. It crawls because it cannot walk upright. Evil hides behind a cloak of invisibility because vision is its enemy.

Good, on the other hand, requires light so that everyone can marvel at its splendor and how indispensable it is for complete fulfillment. It is so difficult to be good because our inclination is to be bad. And so the effort is greater. *Hanukkah* helps us understand this eternal struggle.

The lesson of *Hanukkah* should be that military might or the ability to wage war is contrary to the relationship required of us to achieve a Divine bond. Perhaps that is why the Book of the Maccabees was not included in the canon of Jewish holy writings. To glorify armed conflict contradicts the very essence of Heaven's connection to Earth. And yet, without *Hanukkah* and its military aspect, we would not be able to celebrate freedom and redemption. Perhaps the intent was to allow us the ability to decide when struggle justifies the need for spiritual awareness.

Hanukkah began the process of globalization of the understanding of God. The true meaning of sacrifice can be found in the light that emanates from the *menorah* and affords us the opportunity to engross ourselves in the true meaning of the relationship between God and the created.

Hanukkah comes at a time when darkness surrounds us. Whether it is the darkness of mind and body or the darkness of destructive experiences, there is despair and hopelessness because the days are short, the night is long, and the cold harshness of winter is upon us. We are reminded of our mortality. Some sleep, and some die. For this is the darkest time of the year – the darkest time of our lives.

Then there is light. The warm glow of

DELSON

(continued from page 15)

had been demolished. I tried, but was unable to find them.

Descendants in Israel

My cousin, David, commented, "I imagine that Grandpa is quite pleased to look down from his heavenly perch and see that my daughter, Debbie, and her family and Shiphra and her very large family, all Orthodox Jews and living in Israel."

David's sister, Shiphra Diamond, and



the candles kindles an awareness in our hearts that radiates strongly and gives us solace. We watch the flame, almost hypnotized by it, and we are assured of a brighter tomorrow. Each night we light another candle to be added to the candle of the preceding night until all eight are lit. And each encounter with the new flame gives us a new sense of enlightenment, a new level of holiness.

We light eight candles to differentiate between the Creator and the created. For in six days did God bring order from chaos with the Word, and we utter the words that bring order into our daily lives with an eighth day of wonder – a miracle of lights – thanking God for the wisdom and understanding that make life meaningful.

We celebrate in our homes because there, too, do we find the comfort and serenity that separates the holy from the profane. Our homes are sanctified through the blessings of family and friends. And it is in our homes that the lessons of life are first learned.

We cannot recapture the past, but we can use it to ensure the future. The religious freedom we established some 2,200 years ago has been the clarion call for all people throughout history. Every effort at freedom has had as its example the spark from the candles lit when evil was overcome. The Temple where it all began is no more, but the Temple is with us in all that we do, in all that we are, and on *Hanukkah*.

We pray, not only for ourselves, but for all peoples everywhere that the light of freedom will glow forever; that the light will give hope and meaning to our journey through life; that the light of redemption will enable us to fulfill our destiny; that the light of *Hanukkah* will remain a symbol for the future.

We pray that the light will illuminate the paths of darkness, awakening our souls to our societal duties; reminding us that there is goodness and we have an obligation, a moral responsibility, to comfort the oppressed, to respond to those in trouble, and relieve as much pain and suffering as we are able; that tomorrow can be better and that life is cherished above military

her husband, Mel Davis, moved to Israel following the move made by their two children, Barry and Susan, who had settled there. Barry became an Orthodox rabbi and Hebrew teacher in a *moshav* near Lake Kinneret.

Susan and her husband, Alex Heller, settled in Tsfat in the Galilee. Although Susan lives in Israel, she works as the editor in chief of a company in New York that publishes books aimed at Orthodox adults and children.

Shiphra reports that she just returned from Tzfat where she went to celebrate the birth of a new great-grandson. "This is Susie's 21st grandchild and my 37th great-grandchild. We are truly blessed."

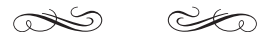
Morris and his wife Shiphra raised a loving, large, close-knit family, where everyone cared for each other and passed down their love to their many descendants.

Acknowledgements

Jerry thanks cousin Sidney Delson for sending him Morris' poems and the drawing, which were forwarded to Jerry by Pat Canan, the husband of Jerry's cousin Irma Delson. Jerry also thanks his nieces, Barbara and Linda Feinberg, for the photos they located of Grandpa Morris

David Diamond and his sister, Shiphra Davis, graciously supplied their thoughts about our Grandfather Morris. Daniel Deitch, great-grandson of Alex, used a computer program to do the initial translation of the poems, and then our daughter Lea forwarded them to a professional translator. Lea helped write much of this article.

Jerry Delson and his wife, Esther, lived ten years in Israel. They went to the Weizmann Institute in Rehovot in 1958 where Jerry conducted research. They lived in Haifa in 1959 where Jerry worked for the Israel Electric Company. They returned to Israel in 1972 with their three children, and Jerry taught seven years at Ben Gurion University in Beer Sheva. Jerry and Esther have lived in Palo Alto, California, since 1979, where they are active members of Congregation Beth Am. In Palo Alto, Jerry worked as a project manager for the Electric Power Research Institute and afterwards served twenty years as a consultant to Municipal Light and Power of Anchorage, Alaska. He can be reached at j.delson@ieec.org. ☆



might or the ability to make war.

*Rabbi Irwin Wiener is spiritual leader of the Sun Lakes Jewish Congregation near Phoenix, Ariz. He welcomes comments at ravyitz@cox.net. He is the author of two books: *Living with Faith*, and a modern and contemporary interpretation of the *Passover Haggadah* titled, *Why is This Night Different?* (Reprinted from an earlier *Hanukkah* edition.) ☆*

Media Watch



BY RABBI ELLIOT B. GERTEL

The Keeper

The film *The Keeper* is based on the life of Bert Trautmann (David Kross), a celebrated goalie, who was a German prisoner of war in England. Trautmann's soccer skills were spotted by Jack Friar (John Henshaw) an amateur coach who sold groceries to the prison camp. Friar's losing local team excels due to Trautmann's talents. He is soon recruited by the major Manchester team.

After initial revulsion at having a Nazi soldier visiting their home, Friar's daughter Margaret (Freya Mavor) is attracted to Trautmann when she witnesses his kindness to her kid sister and his efforts to overcome the social and political forces that sent German youth to the front line. Soon after Bert meets Margaret who has an interest in dance, he tells her: "I'd rather have danced with you than stood in the battle field, but I didn't have a choice." He suggests that soccer is his form of dance as well as his salvation: "When I'm playing football, there is only the moment."

The film repeatedly suggests that although Trautmann was a decorated Nazi soldier, he regretted the German atrocities that he witnessed. He was not naïve about the crimes of the Nazi regime, particularly against Jews. Clearly, Trautmann had been aware of the Holocaust long before he and his fellow prisoners were forced to watch a documentary about Bergen-Belsen as part of their "re-education" program.

Needless to say, the Manchester soccer fans are not thrilled about having a former Nazi soccer star, even one who is winning games for them.

When Jack sees that Trautmann, who stays at the Friar home, and Margaret are drawn to one another, he reminds Bert that there are wounds on both sides as people are in mourning. "It's gonna be a while before anybody can think straight. People have got deep wounds, you know. You can't argue with the bereaved. I know Margaret. She'll carry that with you. Is that what you want for her? Let her go, son."

But Margaret and Bert determine to marry. All the while, the press is dogging Bert and an important question emerges: "Manchester has a big Jewish community. How do you think they'll react to you being here?" There is talk of a Jewish boycott, though it would not seem (given that Jews were a minority) that the team owners were really concerned about the ensuing publicity stirring up the resentment already



widespread in the general population.

We first meet a local rabbi, named Altmann (Butz Ulrich Buse), when he visits the owners of the professional team which has recruited Trautmann and complains about the status given to a Nazi prisoner of war. "But rabbi," the owner protests, "if your people boycott others will follow. Some are already giving back their season tickets. The gates are down." Sensing some singling out that is inconsistent with Jewish numbers, the rabbi responds: "The gates are down just because of a boycott of these Jews?" When the owner replies, "Oh, don't get me wrong," the rabbi retorts: "You should have thought of that before you put a Nazi on the team."

As for Trautmann, he always asserts calmly: "I had no choice. I volunteered. I didn't know what I was doing and what it would be like." He does have an iron cross, however, and is asked by reporters if he had any knowledge of the deportation of Jews – a question he never answers directly. We do learn that he witnessed Nazi atrocities against the Jews, and is haunted by them – or, rather, by not acting against those atrocities in ways he imagines he might have acted. But the film makes a point of implying that there was nothing he could have done.

In one scene Margaret defends her husband in a sports club in which a local rabbi is present. When she says her last name is Trautmann the rabbi stands up in surprise. Margaret declares to all the patrons: "You can't hold one man responsible for all that happened. I understand really. But I didn't know him as a soldier, I only know him as a man. If you took the time to look past the fact he's German, you'd see he's just someone doing his best to put the past behind him. You lot band

together trying to break a man who's already broken instead of helping him find a future, and all because it's easier than forgiveness. You know you're no better than the people you accuse." The team owner had already observed (and not without self-interest): "We're a football club, not a revenge club. It's time to forgive and forget."

The film suggests that it is Margaret's words that move the rabbi, who seems to hang out at the sports club. Rabbi Altmann writes a letter to the newspaper saying that each man must be judged on his own merits. "Each member of the Jewish community is entitled to his own opinion, but there is no concerted action to end our support for Manchester City Football Club. Despite the terrible cruelties that we suffered at the hands of the Nazis, we would be no better if we were to persecute people who are related to, but obviously not connected with, any such crimes of hatred."

The point of the film is that the rabbi's letter opens the door to Trautmann's acceptance, both locally and then on the national and international professional scenes, and helps the famous soccer player in his process of self-forgiveness, if not redemption. Yet Margaret is definitely the moral presence in the film and the moral compass in Bert's life. When he blames a family tragedy on his past sins, particularly his silence at the targeting of Jewish children, Margaret tells him, "I'm not paying for your sins. It's not about you.... So we move on. Or we bury ourselves."

"This is an amazing movie! It is painful to watch at times, but only because of the subject matter. The movie is very well made and the soccer is pretty accurate. I 'enjoyed' watching it very much," says Mike Getman.

Mike Getman was a professional soccer player for the Detroit Express and was Head Coach of two College Men's Soccer teams from 1987–2018. He is currently the Director of the Mike Getman Soccer Camp in Birmingham, Ala., and a Commentator for Legion FC there. You can read more about him at: <https://mikegetmansoccercamp.com/>

Written by German director Marcus H. Rosenmuller with Robert Marciniak and Nicholas J. Schofield, *The Keeper* is well-acted and thought-provoking, and deserves credit for not trying to tidy up the moral questions that it raises. Indeed, an interesting fight scene in a cemetery demonstrates how certain issues can never be resolved even though there can be a working relationship, or at least an unworkable understanding, among those who must live on.

(see Gertel, page 18)

My Kosher Kitchen



BY SYBIL KAPLAN

Breads Without Yeast

Growing up, I remember stories what a wonderful baker my great-grandmother was. I remember also my grandmother and my mother being great bakers. One area I did not inherit from them, however, was working with yeast. Here are some of my favorite no-yeast breads.

My Mom's (z"l) Corn Bread

(4 servings)

As soon as it is fall, this recipe comes out of the file because it is my very favorite when I am making a dairy meal.

- 1-1/4 cup flour
- 3/4 cup corn meal
- 5 tsp. baking powder
- 4 Tbsp. sugar
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 egg
- 1 cup milk
- 2 Tbsp. melted butter or margarine, or 4-1/2 tsp. vegetable oil

Preheat oven to 375°F. Grease a baking dish. In a mixing bowl, combine flour, corn meal, baking powder, salt and sugar. Add egg and milk and blend. Pour batter in a greased baking dish and bake in oven 20 minutes. Serve immediately.

Quick Parmesan Bread

(6 servings)

This came out of a very old newspaper. I think of it as great for a company pasta evening.

- 1-1/2 cups flour
- 1-1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1-1/2 tsp. Italian seasoning
- 1/4 tsp. garlic minced
- 3/4 cup milk
- 3 Tbsp. melted margarine
- 1-2 Tbsp. melted margarine
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 400°F. Grease a 9-inch baking pan. In a mixing bowl, stir together flour, baking powder, Italian seasoning and garlic. Add milk and 3 Tbsp. melted margarine. Stir until moistened. Spread batter in well-greased 9-inch baking pan. Brush top with 1-2 Tbsp. melted margarine. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Bake in oven 25-30 minutes until top is golden brown. Cut into squares and serve immediately.

GERTEL

(continued from page 17)

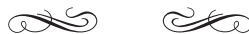
Occasionally, the film provides glimpses into Trautmann's character and determination which may be telling indicators of his zeal both in sport and at war. After all, at the height of his professional career he plays with a broken neck to the end of a cup final. That does raise issues about his character – and about zealotry – that may not have been resolvable.

But while a strength of this film is its understanding that there are issues that cannot be resolved, it still could have been more forthcoming in its presentation. It does not do justice to Rabbi Altmann; it does not even give his first name. It omits that Rabbi Alexander Altmann was a refugee from Germany and that he was one of the great scholars of Jewish philosophy of the 20th century. This could have been hinted in the dialogue. Instead the rabbi is depicted as a bearded hanger-on in the local sports club.

Rabbi Altmann went on to teach at Brandeis University for many years and to publish several important studies. This should have been mentioned in the credits.

Indeed, it is especially in those final credits that the film could have been forthcoming. The credits do not even reveal that Margaret and Bert were divorced, and that he remarried a couple of more times. That is a pretty important fact considering the importance of the Margaret character in the movie. Given its perspective and focus, the film would have been more honest had it found a way to address that divorce.

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. ☆



Onion Bread

(4 servings)

- 3 Tbsp. margarine
- 2 cups thinly sliced onions
- 2 cups flour
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/4 cup melted margarine
- 2 Tbsp. finely chopped parsley
- 1 cup milk
- 1/3 cup sour cream or
- 1/2 cup grated cheese

Preheat oven to 425°F. Grease a square baking pan or loaf pan. Heat margarine in a frying pan and sauté onions until tender. In a mixing bowl, combine flour baking

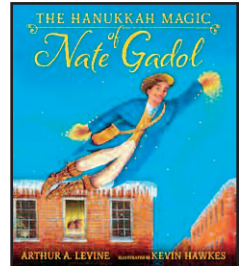
Children's Book Review

REVIEWED BY SYBIL KAPLAN

An American Hanukkah Story

The Hanukkah Magic of Nate Gadol. By Arthur A. Levine. PenguinRandom House. \$19.99 hardcover. September 2020.

"Nate Gadol was a great big spirit who had eyes as shiny as golden coins and a smile that was lantern-bright. In answer to people's prayers, he made things last as long as they needed to." So begins this story. This book is an original idea for parents who follow the idea of giving *Hanukkah* presents, presented in an upbeat, attractive style.



Nate Gadol (a play on the words, *nes gadol*, a great miracle) wears a Revolutionary-war-era costume as he wields his magical powers behind the scenes to liven the lives of two families. Set in the 1881 winter, Levine creates a tale of how the Jewish Glaser family began giving *Hanukkah* gifts, inspired by the Christian O'Malleys.

Levine explains that present giving on *Hanukkah* is a peculiarly American innovation. Buying gifts for the children "sparked what has been called the 'Hanukkah industry.'" In an attempt to create a mythology to promote the idea of gift giving for *Hanukkah*, Levine presents this story.

Arthur Levine has been a children's book editor more than 30 years and is the author of more than 15 children's books. Illustrations by Kevin Hawkes, an illustrator who lives in southern Maine, greatly enhance the book with the textured acrylic pictures, splashed with gold.

(See Sybil Kaplan's bio below.) ☆



powder, salt, melted margarine and parsley until blended. Add milk. Pour into greased baking pan or loaf pan. Spread onions on top. Cover with sour cream or grated cheese. Bake in oven 20 minutes. Serve immediately.

Sybil Kaplan is a journalist, author, compiler/contributor/editor of 9 kosher cookbooks (working on a 10th) and food writer for North American Jewish publications. She lives in Jerusalem where she has led weekly walks of the Jewish food market, Machaneh Yehudah, in English since 2009. She wrote the kosher Jerusalem restaurant features for Janglo.net, the oldest, largest website for English speakers from 2014 to 2020. ☆

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BY SYBIL KAPLAN

The Little Store That Could

Once upon a time there was a small magical hat store right in the heart of Jerusalem, called SherlockS. It's not hard to find. Just walk along King George Street in Jerusalem until you see a two-foot-high teddy bear dressed in a SherlockS deerstalker hat and Inverness cloak, holding a pipe in one hand and a magnifying glass in the other, perched on a table in the display window. You'll know you've reached your destination because there's a giant SherlockS Hat sign near the front door.

SherlockS is packed with hundreds of hats for both men and women. The store specializes in hard-to-fit heads and carries famous-make hats by Stetson, Bailey's, Kangol, Chirstys, and many other quality hat companies. There are even Borsalinos, the kind the snazzy Italians wear. SherlockS is also the home of hand-made hats by local milliners like Danielle and Justine. And SherlockS makes their own Panama hats as well.

The owner, Yaacov Peterseil, decided to create this unique hat store after his dermatologist warned him the damage the sun's ultra violet rays were doing to his head. "You must wear a hat outside in

summer and winter," said the doctor.

"I was just looking for something to do, having left publishing," Yaacov explains. Could a hat store afford me the opportunity to help people by keeping the sun's rays at bay and be financially rewarding as well? I wondered. I had to try. So, in 2016, I opened SherlockS Hats in my garage. Before long, people came in droves to the store which was way too small to hold both the hats, and the people. So I moved to Diskin Street, in an underground mall. But soon that store was too small, too. Finally I moved to King George Street where people could stop by, relax, get a cappuccino and a muffin, and even buy a hat."

When Yaacov decided to choose a name for his, he discovered Sherlock and Sherlock Holmes were already taken. "So I thought of SherlockS. SherlockS Hats has a nice ring to it. And there's no need for an apostrophe."

Yaacov was born in 1946, after World War II, in Salzburg, Austria, in a Displaced Persons' Camp. His family moved to the States in 1949. Eventually, his father opened a wholesale clothing shop, selling ladies sweaters and t-tops to all the big chains in New York.

"I worked with my dad for a while," says Yaacov. "It was there I developed a love of quality clothing."

Yaacov believes that his varied business endeavors all led him to SherlockS Hats. He worked as a copywriter for Prentice-Hall, had his own byline in *The Nassau Herald*, taught Journalism at The University of Michigan, was a speech writer for Bnai Brith, founded Enjoy-A-Book Club, and owned K'tonton Book Store, the largest book and party store on Long Island. He also found time to get his Rabbinic Degree, and rabbinated in the United States and Newfoundland, Canada, where he taught Jewish Studies at Memorial University.

In 1986, he and his wife, Tamar (a family and sex therapist), and their (then) six children made Aliyah to Israel. Once they settled in, Yaacov kept busy as Public Relations Director for his mentor, Rabbi



The multitude of hats inside SherlockS.

Shlomo Riskin, and developed Pitspopany Press for Children.

It was while he was busy publishing Jewish children's books at Pitspopany that Yaacov asked me to review some of their titles. Since then our paths have crossed a number of times.

"One of my first hat purchases was the deerstalker hat," says Yaacov. "It was made famous in 1891 when Sidney Paget illustrated one of Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories, putting a deerstalker hat on the detective. Today, I sell about 50 deerstalker hats a year in Israel."

When Covid19 forced him to keep his shop closed for weeks and months at a time, Yaacov took his store online. He created a Website, SherlockSHats.com that features a 3-D tour of his hat-filled store, as well as hundreds of hats to choose from.

"I write two kinds of blogs for the Website," says Yaacov, "one is a story type blog called *The Adventures of the Mad Hatter*. The blog tells the story of some of the strange and unusual things that happen in my hat store. The other blog gives a bit more practical information about hats and how to wear them. I'm writing one now on *How To Fit The Hard-To-Fit Head*."

Next time you get to Israel, you're invited to visit SherlockS at 31 King George. It's not as famous as 221b Baker Street, yet, but it's getting there. And if you want to talk hats with Yaacov, call him at (972) 503612342. SherlockS: It's the little store that could be the answer to all your hat needs.

(See Sybil Kaplan bio on page 18.) ✨



Yaacov Peterseil at his hat store, SherlockS, in Jerusalem. (Photos by Micha Paul.)