

THE REPORTER

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Federation Campaign 2024 wrap-up thoughts

By Reporter staff

Federation Executive Director Shelley Hubal knows that everyone does not run on the same schedule. That includes how they make donations to organizations they support. Although the Federation is winding down its active solicitation for Campaign 2024, Hubal realizes that some people haven't yet decided how much they will give to the Federation this year.

"If you haven't pledged or donated yet, it would be a big help to us if you did," Hubal

said. "Payments can be made through December 31. However, we also know that some people prefer to give at the end of the year and that is fine. We appreciate every donation we receive, no matter when it arrives."

Hubal continued, "Since we are gearing up for the Campaign for 2025, though, we want to make sure community members are not confused when they are solicited for the next Campaign."

Because of the decreasing number of volunteers who are able to make Campaign

calls to donors, the Federation will send out solicitation letters at the end of August. "We hope everyone will send in the letter with their pledge," Hubal said. "This helps us reduce the burden on our volunteers. If you prefer to make a pledge and gift at a certain time of year, please reach out to the Federation office and let us know. We recognize that some people give at certain times for various reasons. We have a lot of donors, so your communication is important to help us keep track of each donor's needs and wants."

Hubal thanked those who have made the 2024 Campaign a success and is grateful for the last few pledges for 2024 that will come in. "Community members can log onto the Federation website or use the form that will appear in *The Reporter* to get their pledges in," she said.

"We have a wonderful community," she added. "I am grateful for the support shown to the Federation and the greater Jewish community. Now more than ever we are 'Taking care of our own.'"

TI to hold Installation Celebration weekend honoring Rabbi Micah Friedman

Temple Israel will honor Rabbi Micah Friedman with an installation weekend of celebration and community from Friday-Sunday, June 28-30. The events will blend worship, scholarship and festivities. The featured guest will be one of Friedman's teachers, Rabbi Shoshana (Shani) Rosenbaum, co-director of the Beit Midrash of Hebrew College, the Boston-based graduate school that "seeks to inspire Jewish leaders through deep and pluralistic Jewish learning." June marks the end of Friedman's first year in the Temple Israel pulpit.

The weekend will begin with evening services on June 28 at 7:30 pm, which will be followed by an *oneg*. On June 29, services will begin at 9:30 am, followed by a *kiddush*, and conclude with song and Torah learning with Friedman and Rosenbaum. The celebration will continue with an installation program and luncheon on June 30 at noon. Tickets to the installation program and luncheon are available at \$36 per person. There is no charge for the Friday and Saturday programs. To make a reservation and receive a tickets, contact the Temple Israel office at 607-723-7461 by June 18. Seating is limited.

"Rabbi Friedman has demonstrated a wonderful blend of serious, yet accessible,

scholarship, spiritual service leadership and empathetic support and counseling to TI members and to the community at-large, and we are delighted to honor him with this installation ceremony," said Arthur Siegel, Temple Israel president.

"The entire community is welcome to attend these festive events at Temple Israel," said event organizer Rhonda Levine.

"The three-day celebration offers something for everyone," added Co-chairwoman Bonnie Brown.

Concurrent with the installation, Temple Israel will be replacing 1970s-vintage High Holiday prayer books with the recently published "Machzor Lev Shalem." Dedication bookplates are available for donations at various levels of sponsorship, some of which also include free installation luncheon tickets.

"'Machzor Lev Shalem' is a beautifully designed tool for Jewish prayer that will certainly deepen the experience of everyone who participates in our *Yamim Noraim* (High Holy Day) services," said Friedman. "Like the 'Siddur Lev Shalem,' which Temple Israel uses for our weekly services, each page of the new *machzor* features modern translations, explanations and thought-provoking commentaries, as

well as accessible transliterations."

Those interested in participating in the *machzor* fund-raiser should the temple office for details. One can participate in the fund-raiser even if not able to attend the luncheon; all fund-raiser proceeds will

benefit Temple Israel.

Temple Israel acknowledges a grant from The Community Foundation for South Central New York – The David and Virginia Eisenberg Fund, which helped to underwrite the installation program.

Hillel Academy CHOW drive



Hillel Academy of Broome County students and teachers held an end of school year food drive for CHOW and collected all of the items shown in three days.

Spotlight

Columbia protesters chant, "No More Money for Israel Crime"

By Bill Simons

Yom Hashoah, Monday, May 6, 2024, was a day of Holocaust remembrance. My destination was Columbia University. As the train headed uptown, I reviewed recent events at Columbia.

The *Columbia Daily Spectator*, the university's student newspaper, collaborated with New York Magazine to publish a detailed account of the student protests. Over the years, other student protests have roiled the Columbia campus, notably in 1968 when claims that university policies lent support to the Vietnam War and institutional racism spurred students to seize control of several buildings, leading to their removal by a forceful police response.

On October 4, 2023, Columbia University inaugurated a new president, Minouche Shafik, an economist and a Muslim. The advent of her presidency coincided with events in the Middle East that would throw the Columbia campus into turmoil. On October 7, Gaza-based Hamas terrorists slaughtered approximately 1,200 people in southern Israel and seized around 250 hostages. Israel then launched a retaliatory offensive against Hamas. Large anti-Israel protests and smaller pro-Israel counter-protests soon followed at Columbia, accompanied by rising campus antisemitism and Islamophobia.

As Shafik prepared to testify before the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee

on Education and the Workforce on April 17 concerning unrest on campus, anti-Israel students erected an encampment, marked by tents and provisions, on Columbia's South Lawn. A few months before, the presidents of Harvard, Claudine Gay, and the University of Pennsylvania, Liz Magill, resigned, under duress, from their positions for failing to make clear that calls for genocide against Jews were not protected by free speech. Shafik, however, took a hard line against protesters encamped on Columbia's South Lawn. New York City Police were called into the campus to physically remove the squatters, who were then suspended.

Unrest at Columbia, however, did not end with the removal of the first encamp-

ment and student suspensions. Campus antisemitism and Islamophobia intensified, and the boundaries between free speech and intolerance blurred. Columbia emerged as progenitor and epicenter of unrest on campuses across the United States.

By April 18, hundreds of protesters formed a second encampment on another portion of Columbia's South Lawn. Grandstanding politicians from the left and the right came to Columbia, issuing bromides that further escalated tensions. Protesters refused to dismantle the encampment unless Columbia pledged to disinvest from Israeli enterprises and to sever ties with Israeli universities. Protest leaders and the See "Columbia" on page 3

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Opinion

From the Desk of the Federation Executive Director

With gratitude

SHELLEY HUBAL

The Federation is blessed to have so many dedicated people who do everything from attending board meetings to chairing committees to making Campaign calls. Each volunteer brings something special to the community and I am so very grateful to work with compassionate people.

As the board year comes to an end, I want to express my gratitude to the Executive Committee members and board members who have stepped up.

First and foremost, I want to thank Suzanne Holwitt, Federation president, for her hard work and dedication. She makes sure the Federation remains compassionate and strong. Despite her many obligations throughout the community, she never fails to show up. Whether it is a Beth David Shabbat luncheon, a *Reporter* committee meeting, chairing the Temple Concord Ritual Committee, a *shiva* call – you name it, she is there. On a personal note, I am so grateful to have her as my beloved work partner and for always supporting me.

A special thank you to Lee Schechter, who is always available to help. Whether it is signing a check or keeping an eye on our finances, Lee pitches in and brightens our

day in the office with his sense of humor.

The Federation would not have an annual fund-raising Campaign without Marilyn Bell. She works hard, never hesitates to make a solicitation and is a wonderful partner, friend and Executive Committee member. I am grateful for Marilyn and all she does.

Thank you, Mark Walker, for your well-informed input in our meetings. I am grateful for all your time and support, and recognize that you have been dedicated to this community for decades.

Thank you to Howard Warner for your wise counsel, patience and support. Howard is a dear friend and an asset to this community who is always willing to step up.

Eileen Miller has been the Federation secretary for years. I want to thank her for her diligence and friendship.

Thank you to Dennis Foreman for your important tech support and warm friendship. I am so grateful that we can always count on you.

Thank you, Jeff Shapiro, for your many years of service, advice and friendship.

For years, Rita Bleier has lovingly chaired the Jewish

Family Service Committee. She is a compassionate and talented woman, and I am grateful for her help and friendship.

Nancy Dorfman is a wiz with finances and is very generous with her time. I want to thank her for making Federation better and for her hard work with the needs assessment last summer.

Thank you, Steve Malkin, for working so hard to build a culture of safety for our community. Your many hours of work are truly making a difference.

A quick shout out to Tara Kaminsky, Rose Shapiro and Benny Kellman for bringing energy and enthusiasm to the board. You are the future of the community, and I hope you will continue to do the hard and rewarding work of being leaders. Federation will do whatever it can to support you.

I truly appreciate every phone call that is made, every donation given, and every meeting and event that is attended. Please forgive me for not being able to thank everyone. We are a small and caring community, and the best part of my job is that I get to witness people's generosity. *Yasher koach* to all the leaders in this community.

One Perspective from Israel

Who wears the rifle in the family?

JEREMY M. STAIMAN

This article originally appeared in the Times of Israel and is being reprinted with permission.

You really never know what to expect here in Israel.

We were walking up the hill from *shul* on Shabbat near my son's home. It's a formidable hill for those not in top shape, and breaks can be welcome from time to time.

So when my son stopped to warmly greet an adorable, 30-ish couple, I was happy to have an excuse to catch a breath. I recognized the husband from around the neighborhood. The couple smiled broadly as everyone schmoozed, him with his rifle slung behind his back like so many others who are off-duty, yet always on-call.

Frankly, given the husband's political leanings, I might have been surprised that he and my son were friends. Let's just say that the husband is outspoken... in an over-the-top,

in-your-face, my-way-or-the-highway kind of Israeli way.

But if misery makes for strange bedfellows, war takes it further, nimbly traversing yawning social divides. The unity which was the immediate byproduct of October 7 made previous political and social stands irrelevant. Rightist was in the figurative foxhole with Leftist, religious with secular. The words "together we will win" were a heartwarming, heartfelt rally cry, not just a hollow war slogan.

The scene and the conversation on the street could easily have played out anywhere in Israel:

"It must be good to have everyone at home for a while."

"We're trying to get back to a normal routine."

"How long until you go back in?"

A few minutes passed, the conversation concluded and we began lumbering back up the hill.

I was curious to hear the backstory. "How long was he in?" I asked my son.

"It's not him," he replied.

"It's her."

"She's in intelligence, and her specialty is Iran. When things heated up recently, she was gone from home for some very intense weeks. Rumor has it that she slept at her desk."

No matter how many times I've learned the lesson of not judging books – or people – by their covers, it seems that lesson always needs to be re-learned. The hims and the hers in the IDF are all doing their part. Our heroes come in all skin shades, in all ages, and speaking with every type of accent.

Together. Truly together.

In My Own Words

Three lives

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

I saw the obituary just before leaving to attend a gravestone dedication at a local cemetery. Most of the obituary talked about the hard work done by the woman's late mother: she used patterning to help her daughter learn to walk, although nothing could be done about her other developmental disabilities. I knew some of this: the mother had been a good friend of my mom: both had been members of Broome Developmental Center's Parents Group, where they advocated for everyone's children and raised money to give individuals extras for which the state could not pay. They were also members of the mending group: twice a week, they and others met at the Center to replace zippers (they were masters at fixing winter coats), patch clothing and make wheelchair clothing protectors. I knew the daughter through my chaplaincy work, although she wasn't at the day program I visit for long. As she aged, she had pain issues and was more comfortable remaining at her group home. I had not seen her in years and had recently wondered if she was still alive.

When I later stood at the cemetery listening to the rabbi offer the prayers and readings traditionally done at

graveside, I could not help but ponder the differences in the two people's lives. The woman whose grave we stood before had lived a full life: a husband, career, children and grandchildren. She was a respected member of her synagogue and the local Jewish community. I had not known her well, but well enough to show my respect to her and her family by attending the funeral last year and the unveiling this year. There was a large crowd at both, showing just how many people cared about her.

Two so very different lives: how are we to ponder their worth? If the measure is accomplishments, then there is no comparison. But is our worth only what we accomplish? I spend a great deal of time with people who have no accomplishments in the way we normally measure them. Yet, we are all *betzelem Elohim*, created in the image of God. There is a spark of the Divine in all of us. As for love, I've watched the staff at group homes and day programs, and those places are filled with love and caring.

I recently did a funeral for a developmentally disabled Jewish individual whom I had visited over the years. She also had no accomplishments as we normally think of them. No family attended the funeral: I don't know if she

had no remaining family or if they had lost touch with her. What surprised the funeral home staff was the number of people who attended. We took turns talking about the deceased – sharing funny stories and tearing up while we mourned her loss. Far more people than I expected attended the burial – a burial that took place at the same cemetery I was the morning I compared two other lives. What I realized is that love could be found when each of those losses were acknowledged.

Perhaps that is the true measure of a life: not what we do, but how many people love us. But, sometimes, it's still difficult to note how different are the lives of the people with whom I work. Sometimes, life feels not only unfair to those who have done nothing to deserve the hardships they face, but cruel. Sometimes, I have to work very hard not to feel bitter or cynical. Sometimes, though, when I am at my chaplaincy work, I look at the faces of those I work with and recognize they, too, feel joy and sorrow, even if it takes a different form. Sometimes, I look at them and recognize the Divine presence that radiates from those around me.

May all three women's memory be for a blessing.



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The Reporter welcomes letters on subjects of interest to the Jewish community. All letters must be signed and include a phone number; names may be withheld upon request.

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BD Sisterhood to hold planning meeting on July 10

The Beth David Sisterhood will hold a meeting to plan programs for the 2024-25 season on Wednesday, July 10, at 7 pm, at Beth David Synagogue. Members and friends are invited to attend. The discussions will include potential programs and projects for the coming year, and filling committee vacancies.

Currently, Sisterhood is looking for a service vice president, a membership chairperson, a publicity chairperson, a meeting photographer, a photo liaison to *The Reporter*

and a Donor chairperson. Anyone interested in any of these positions, or who has program or project ideas for the coming year, is asked to attend the meeting or contact the Sisterhood in advance by e-mailing the Beth David office at bethdavid@stny.rr.com, or by leaving a voice mail at 607-722-1793.

“Beth David Sisterhood is always looking for ways to better serve our synagogue and the local Jewish community,” said organizers of the event. “You need not be

a member of Beth David Sisterhood, Beth David Synagogue, or female, to attend our meetings or participate in our programs.”

Organizers added, “Sisterhood welcomes ideas about fund-raisers, speakers, topics that might make an interesting program for a meeting, or any other project that you think would be appropriate for Sisterhood to take on. Many opportunities are available if you wish to become more active in the Beth David Sisterhood.”

Israel: Dozens of hostages held in Gaza are alive

By JNS staff

(JNS)—Many of the 120 hostages who remain in Hamas captivity in the Gaza Strip are believed to be alive, a senior Israeli official involved in ongoing negotiations with the terrorist organization said on June 18.

“Dozens are alive with certainty,” the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity due to not being authorized to speak to the press, told AFP. He claimed the vast majority of the captives are being held by Hamas, and not by other terror groups in the coastal enclave.

The official told the wire agency that Israel cannot end the conflict with Hamas before a hostage deal is reached because the terror group could “breach their commitment

... and drag out the negotiations for 10 years” or more.

“We cannot leave them there for a long time; they will die,” he said, adding that Hamas’ persistent demand that the Israel Defense Forces leave Gaza as a precondition for a deal remains unacceptable to Jerusalem. The reason for this is that “during the first phase, there’s a clause that we hold negotiations about the second phase. The second phase is the release of the men and male soldier hostages,” the official explained.

The official said the Israeli government had green-lit U.S. President Joe Biden’s proposed deal, which Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has claimed does not call for a permanent end to the war.

“We expect, and are waiting for, Hamas to say ‘yes,’” he said, warning that the IDF would continue to fight the terror group in Gaza in a “different” but “no less intense fashion” if it again rejects a truce deal.

On June 17, an official in Jerusalem told Ynet that Israel will not commit to ending the war until Hamas releases all of the captives. The official said that the hostages must be freed in the first and second phases of Washington’s See “Dozens” on page 8

Columbia Continued from page 1

Columbia administration entered into negotiations, but those talks faltered. Some Jewish students supported the encampments. Many more Jewish students reported feeling threatened by antisemitic barbs aimed at them.

A third encampment rose on April 30, followed by protesters invading and taking over Hamilton Hall. NYPD officers returned to campus, retaking Hamilton Hall and clearing the encampments. The *Columbia Daily Spectator* reported the assertion of a student identified as Jillian that echoed venerable tropes about a powerful international Jewish cabal: “The violence student protesters experienced at the hands of the police is connected to the violence Israel is carrying out. We know that police are sent from the United States to be trained in Israel by IDF soldiers...” Unlike the tragic Ohio National Guard fatal shootings of four Kent State protesters on May 4, 1970, no serious injuries were reported as a result of police action at Columbia.

Formal disciplinary measures against those who had not heeded the warning to leave Hamilton Hall and the encampments ensued. Columbia cancelled commencement, although individual schools and department would hold ceremonies.

On May 6, I deboarded the train at 116th Street and Broadway in the comfortable Morningside Heights section of Manhattan and walked over to Columbia University’s main entrance, where a NYPD officer informed me that the gated passage was limited to those with official identification. Nonetheless, I would spend a few hours just outside the substantial walls of Columbia. I took a slow

walk around the rectangular parameters of the formidable campus – Broadway, West 120th, Amsterdam and West 114th. During the course of my observations, I was able to engage protesters, non-protesting students, visitors, NYPD officers, private security guards and journalists in conversations of varying length and significance. A young, uniformed Apex Security guard was particularly friendly after I informed him that at his age I had worked as campus security at Boston College and Simmons College. He informed me that, at the height of the protests, NYPD and private security were first brought to the university to supplement Columbia’s own Department of Public Safety, but that the campus was now quiet.

I spent most of my time at Columbia perched outside the back entrance on Amsterdam Avenue a few feet from 20-25 protesters who marched in a continuous loop as they chanted. Some carried signs and wore masks. As required by law, an appropriate distance between protesters allowed pedestrians to walk through the demonstration without obstacle or harassment. An Australian tourist took photos, telling me that it was good that students were not apathetic. A *kippah*-wearing protester flashed a benign smile and a peace sign in my direction, which I reflexively returned. Collectively, the police and media outnumbered the protesters. Most pedestrians, primarily students, gave no evident reaction to the protest. Accompanied by drumbeat, protester chants – synchronized, repetitive and clear – included: “We Will Not Stop,” “Free, Free Palestine,” “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free!” “No More Money for Israel Crime,” “Don’t Suspend Our Students,” “Get the Cops Off Campus” and “Intifada! Intifada! Long live the intifada!”

Friendly, forthcoming and polite, a marcher – “Free Puerto Rico” emblazoned on his shirt – acknowledged that he was not a Columbia student. To my query as to whether he supported the freedom of all people, including Ukrainians, he responded, after a quizzical pause, “Yes,” and then stated that he and other protesters were headed to Hunter College for a similar demonstration.

Observing the protest, Associated Press reporter Cedar Attanasio shared context, sources and encouragement, telling me that local journalism was an essential counter to the ubiquitous echo chamber of national media. In that spirit, I report what I saw, no more, no less.



Columbia protesters (Photo courtesy of Bill Simons)

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of **Adele Freedman**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of **Gail Schneider**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of **Margaret Kuper Sherman**

REPORTER DEADLINES

The following are deadlines for all articles and photos for upcoming issues of the biweekly *REPORTER*.

ISSUE	DEADLINE
July 12-25.....	July 2 (early)
July 26-August 8.....	July 17
August 9-22.....	July 31
August 23-September 5.....	August 14

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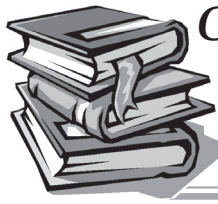
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Off the Shelf

Love, religion and Judaism

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Judaism is about law, while Christianity is about love. Rabbi Shai Held sees this statement as not only anti-Jewish propaganda, but completely mistaken. His purpose in writing "Judaism Is About Love: Recovering the Heart of Jewish Life" (Farrar, Straus and Giroux) is to prove that Judaism is a religion whose fundamental ideas are based on love. He notes that "the Jewish tradition tells the story of a God of love who creates us in love and enjoins us, in turn, to live lives of love. We are commanded to love God, the neighbor, the stranger – and all of humanity – and we are told the highest achievement of which we are capable is to live with compassion. That is considered nothing less than walking in God's ways."

"Judaism Is About Love" is an impressive work: it contains 380-plus pages of text, followed by more than 120 pages of footnotes. Held cites numerous biblical verses, which he discusses from a variety of angles. These include verses that support his basic idea and others that could be interpreted as opposed to his thesis. The author looks at a widening circle of those Jews are commanded to love, noting that even when dealing with sinners, we are commanded to hate the sin, but not the sinner. His understanding of love comes from his translation of the Hebrew term *chesed*, whose exact meaning is open to debate. Held notes that the word "has been rendered over time as 'love,' 'kindness,' 'lovingkindness,' 'mercy,' 'faithfulness,' and more. The fact that one Hebrew word has been taken to refer to all these suggests that they are so interwoven with each other that we can't fully explore one (love) without investigating the others as well."

The book's most interesting sections focus on the idea that in order to love God, we must love all of God's creatures, including our fellow humans. However, Held notes there

is a debate about exactly what that obligation means. Is there a special obligation to love fellow Jews? What about one's love for family and friends? What actions does that love require from us? Are we obligated to perform those actions for all of humanity? The author believes these questions teach an important lesson about Jewish ethics: "Faced with the complexity of human experience, Judaism doesn't try to simplify it so much as *embrace and express* it. If we are asked whether Jewish ethics is particularistic or universalistic, the answer is that it is emphatically both." Held sees Judaism asking hard questions, rather than offering easy or explicit answers about how to feel and behave. Since feelings and behavior are often two separate things, Jewish tradition speaks to both.

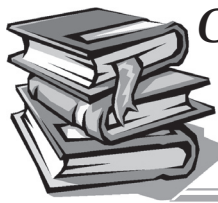
One discussion centers on the verses in Exodus (23:4-5) that command us to return an enemy's ox or donkey if we find them wandering from their owner's home. It also tells us to help our enemy's donkey regain its feet if it has fallen. Held discusses whether this means we are required to love our enemy, or only treat him justly. He notes that these actions might heal wounds and turn enemies to friends. However, although the author notes we are told not to seek vengeance when someone does us wrong, we do not have to passively accept being harmed. Balancing these two ideas can be difficult, especially in terms of verses from the psalms, where the psalmist asks God to punish those who have done evil to him. Held offers both sides of the issue, again showing how Judaism embraces complexity.

The concepts of love and justice are often thought of as opposing impulses. Head, however, see a connection between them, believing that the concepts "walk hand in hand." He writes, "The God of Judaism is a God of love and justice. To speak of justice without compassion is to

miss out on love, and potentially to forget the crucial urgency of being present with people in their suffering. But to speak of compassion without justice is to focus on people without asking *why* they are suffering. To be sure, some suffering – a great deal of suffering, actually – results from our finitude and mortality. But some suffering – more than many of us are willing to admit – stems from injustice." There is a need to balance the two concepts in our lives so that we can comfort those who need it, while fighting to rid the world of the inequality that causes suffering.

Judaism does see a connection between behavior and emotion. For example, Held believes that the ability to love God can be cultivated by performing the *mitzvot* (commandments). That means Judaism commands us to use our actions to express our love of God. Some suggest that we are God's hands in this world: our actions bring God's love into our lives by the way we care for others. Others see our actions as what bring us closer to God; rather than bringing God into the world, we are reaching out to connect with God. Held notes how Jewish tradition offers both of these possibilities without giving one specific answer as to which is correct.

"Judaism Is About Love" includes an amazing amount of material. However, it does have its imperfections: it's easy to lose track of Held's basic thesis due to the lengthy discussions offering contradictory material from biblical and rabbinic sources. While each discussion is interesting in itself, readers may have difficulty connecting the many different ideas and concepts. A shorter, more focused work might have served the topic better. However, "Judaism Is About Love" does a service by reminding readers of the theme underlying our religion: God's love for humanity and humanity's love for God. The tradition speaks to both possibilities.



Off the Shelf

Runaway queen

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

It was the title that caught my eye: "The Punk Rock Queen of the Jews: A Memoir" (She Writes Press). The author's name, Rossi (just Rossi), didn't seem familiar. However, when looking at her short biography, the title of her previous memoir, "The Raging Skillet," did. It took me several steps to discover that, yes, I'd reviewed her first book, which discusses her family and career as a caterer. The focus of her current book is not food, though. Instead, she tells of how, after being a rebellious teenager and running away from home, her parents took her to Crown Heights and left her in the hands of a Chasidic rabbi who was said to rehabilitate problem children. It doesn't spoil the memoir to say he was not successful.

Rossi, whose original name was Slavah Davida Shana bas Hannah Rachel Ross, was born to a loosely Orthodox family. Her behavior as a teenager in the late 1980s was not atypical for youth of that time: she drank, took drugs and dressed provocatively. However, after running away from home and living in a hotel for three months (and continuing what her parents considered inappropriate behavior), Rossi was arrested. Her parents were at a loss for what to do with her and, hoping to change her behavior, dropped her off at the house of a Chasidic rabbi in Crown Heights, Brooklyn.

Rossi's parents sent the rabbi a monthly check to take care of her. That didn't happen. In fact, the rabbi rarely interacted with her; he seemed content to collect the money and leave her to her own devices. He didn't require her to attend high school so she could get her degree, although

she was directed to a teacher who taught young women Torah and how to be Jewish. Her attendance at those classes didn't last long. While living at the rabbi's house, Rossi had no privacy: she slept on the couch in the living room and was basically left to her own devices. The rabbi also did not object to her moving into an apartment with friends, even though she was not yet 18. Nor did he seem to care that she had no money and needed to work in order to afford rent and food. (The funds her parents sent him were not shared with Rossi.)

Most members of the Jewish community in Crown Heights ignored her. The only exceptions were young men who were willing and/or eager to drink or do drugs with her and her friends. Being ignored was better, though, than the men who wanted to sleep with her – whether or not she wanted that to happen. Even though she wasn't happy living in Crown Heights, she felt anything was better than returning to her parents' home or being sent to reform school. What she waited for was her 18th birthday, when she could legally be considered an adult and move to Manhattan. It was during this time that Rossi began to realize that she was attracted to women, not men, something completely unacceptable in the Orthodox world and which was not often spoken about even by many in the secular community at the time.

Rossi did have some good experiences: a few members of the community befriended her and helped her survive. She had one opportunity to meet Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson personally and felt a connection.

But that didn't make her want to be more religiously observant. She only began to practice Judaism years later after she learned of an LGBTQ synagogue and found her Jewish home.

Although the Crown Heights community generally ignored her, readers might understand that reaction: Rossi was a threat to their Orthodox way of life, especially the influence she might have had on their children. Not everyone will enjoy reading the chapters telling of her drinking and drug taking. However, she was a teenager and should not have been left on her own. The rabbi who took money from her parents was committing fraud and, even worse, doing nothing to protect her. Her parents were also at fault: they visited and could see that she was living on her own. Why they didn't question this should bother readers. Her mother also seemed more concerned that Rossi might have non-Jewish friends than about her general well being. The advice Rossi's mother gives her – you can always trust a man who is wearing a yarmulke – proves not only to be wrong, but dangerous.

Rossi does manage to make a life for herself – professionally, personally and religiously – and, in the course of her memoir, comes to terms with her demons. She also makes peace with her parents, something for which she should be commended. The memoir contains doses of humor, even when she discusses serious subjects. Her work also offers crucial insights parents should consider when relating to children whose behavior and desires differ from their own.

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THE REPORTER
Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

* Issue date: July 12 • Ad deadline: July 3

Swiss museum takes down paintings allegedly stolen by Nazis

By Miri Weissman

(Israel Hayom via JNS)—Zurich’s prestigious Kunsthaus Zurich art museum has announced the temporary removal of five paintings from its ongoing exhibition showcasing the Emil Bührle Collection. The decision comes as the institution investigates potential links between these artworks and Nazi-era looting.

The collection, named after German-born Swiss industrialist Emil Bührle, has long faced scrutiny regarding the provenance of its holdings. Bührle amassed a vast collection of approximately 600 artworks, many of which were acquired during the war years when the Nazis systematically plundered cultural treasures across Europe.

The artworks under investigation include renowned masterpieces such as Claude Monet’s “Meules à Giverny,” Gustave Courbet’s “Portrait of the Sculptor Louis-Joseph,” Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec’s “Georges-Henri Manuel,” Vincent van Gogh’s “The Old Tower” and Paul Gauguin’s “La route montante.”

In a statement, the foundation board overseeing the Emil



“Meules à Giverny” by Claude Monet. (Photo courtesy of Screenshot)

Bührle Collection expressed its commitment to “seeking a fair and equitable solution for these works with the legal

successors of the former owners, following best practices.”

According to Stuart Eizenstat, the U.S. Secretary of State’s special adviser on Holocaust issues, it is estimated that over 100,000 paintings and countless other cultural objects stolen during the Nazi era have yet to be returned to their rightful owners or their heirs.

The decision to temporarily remove the paintings follows the publication of new guidelines aimed at addressing the persistent issue of unreturned cultural property stolen during the Nazi regime. These guidelines were developed by the U.S. State Department to mark the 25th anniversary of the 1998 Washington Conference Principles, which outlined a framework for the restitution of Nazi-confiscated art.

The foundation expressed willingness to offer financial compensation to the estate of Max Silberberg, a German Jewish industrialist whose extensive art collection was forcibly auctioned by the Nazis before his murder at the Auschwitz death camp.

Originally published by Israel Hayom.

FAMILY LIVING

Babies bounce into community families



Alexander James Daniels



Naomi Lillian Lyons



Freddie Jack Rosenberg
(Photo by Maxine Rosenberg)



Eliana Michal Wolff

Information was supplied by area synagogues.

Alexander James Daniels

November 23, 2023

Parents: Geoffrey and Melissa Daniels

Grandparents: Deb and David Daniels

Great-grandparent: Lottie Bennett

Minako Fae Green

Parents: Mandi and Mark Green

Grandparents: Linda and William Green

Penelope Shifra Gwendoline Leja

Parents: Meg Leja and Alex Chase-Levenson

Naomi Lillian Lyons

Born: January 15, 2024

Parents: Andrea Kastner and Colin Lyons

Grandparents: Jeffrey Kastner and Karen Ocaña, and Mike and Jackie Lyons

Great-grandparents: Baylie Kastner, Rotraud Ocana and Joan Lyons

Freddie Jack Rosenberg

Born: December 26, 2023

Parents: Eric and Barrie Rosenberg

Grandparents: Louis and Maxine Rosenberg, and Michael and Ann Rosen

Eliana Michal Wolff

Born: February 26, 2024

Parents: Aaron and Carly Wolff

Grandparents: Michael and Wendy Wolff, and Neil and Sheri Cooper

Great-grandparents: Shayne Cooper and Alvin Franklin

Ezekiel Gavriel Yonaty

Parents: Inessa and Mark Yonaty

Grandparents: Ellana (Raytenberg) and Christopher Barton, and Marcy and Gavriel Yonaty

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Israel tops birth rate in OECD

Israel has the highest fertility rate among a group of 38 industrialized nations in which births have dropped by more than half over the past 50 years, according to a new report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The total fertility rate has dropped to 1.5 per woman in 2022 from 3.3 in 1960 on average across the OECD, according to the annual report released the week of June 17. The highest birth rates among OECD countries were in Israel at 2.9, followed by Mexico and France with 1.8 each. The lowest fertility rate was in South Korea, at an estimated 0.7 children per woman. Italy and Spain also came in on the low end of births with 1.2 children per woman, the survey found. “While OECD countries are using a range of policy options to support families, the economic cost and long-term financial uncertainty of having children continue to significantly influence people’s decision to become parents,” said Stefano Scarpetta, director of the OECD’s Employment, Labor and Social Affairs Directorate. The average age of women giving birth in the group rose from 28.6 in 2000 to 30.9 in 2022, the report found. One out of every two young adults in their 20s lived with their parents. When comparing women born in 1935 and in 1975, the percentage without at least one child doubled in Estonia, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal and Spain, according to the data. The Paris-based international organization which seeks to promote economic growth was founded in 1961.

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To find out more about signing up for PJ Library go to www.jfcb.org and click on the “Local and Global Community” and “PJ Library” tabs, or call the Federation office at 607-724-2332.

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Weekly Parasha

Shelech Lecha, Numbers 13:1-15:41

Encountering the other, encountering ourselves

CHAZZAN ABBE LYONS, JEWISH CHAPLAIN AND BUSINESS MANAGER, HILLEL AT ITHACA COLLEGE

Fear: of the other / Fear: they are more powerful than you – you are not powerful enough / Fear: they seem so much bigger – you feel small, like a grasshopper / Fear: you feel inferior – they seem superior / Fear: they will overwhelm you – there are so many of them / Fear: there is not enough room for both you and them / Fear: knowing them will change you – knowing you won't change them / Fear went viral. One post amplified another. / "They made their report."

In Shelach Lecha, encountering the other occurs both between the Israelite community as a whole and other groups, and also within the Israelite community, between native born and immigrants. How do we categorize others as friends, foes or foreigners? From outer all the way to inner, we may use othering as a way to deal with our own fears and discomforts. Sometimes we seek to deal with our own fears about the world by going outwards and

othering someone who is different from us. Even with our own selves, we may seek to deal with what we don't like about ourselves by othering those parts of ourselves. Two passages in Shelach Lecha can teach us to be more empathetic to both ourselves and others.

First, Moshe, at God's direction, sends a scouting team representing each of the 12 tribes into Canaan on reconnaissance. There they encounter other peoples: Amalekites, Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, Canaanites and Anakites, who "were regarded as giants, as human ancestors often were in antiquity," as Everett Fox writes. The Torah does not report that they had any actual interactions, only what they saw from a distance, as well as the enormous cluster of grapes they returned with that had to be carried by two people. During their post-foray debrief, the scouts emphasized the strength and size of all these other peoples, the Anakites (the "long-necked" people) in particular. Ramban notes

that, when food and water is scarce, people are less likely to grow tall, and also posits that their size indicates that the land is robust and fruitful enough to support human beings growing to significant heights, yet also that only people of strength and stature could thrive in such robustness.

Much has been written about how the scouts began to amplify their concerns about the Anakites by saying they also saw nefilim (giants of uncertain origin from Genesis 6) and comparing themselves to these tall people: "We looked like grasshoppers to ourselves, and so we must have looked to them!" Many commentators have written about the pitfalls of this comparison and how we shouldn't allow our fears to distort our own self-image. When we react from our subconscious survival instincts, we may automatically equate size with power. Yet, we also have the intellectual ability to consciously observe, analyze See "Other" on page 7

Congregational Notes

Temple Israel

Orientation: Conservative
Rabbi: Micah Friedman
Address: 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal, NY 13850
Phone: 607-723-7461 and 607-231-3746
Office hours: Mon.-Thurs., 8:30 am-3:30 pm; Fri., 8 am-3 pm
E-mail: office@templeisraelvestal.org
Website: www.templeisraelvestal.org
Service schedule: Tues., 5:30 pm; Fri., 5:30 pm; Sat., 9:30 am
On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Micah Friedman via Zoom and in-person.
On Saturday, June 29, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person. The Torah portion is Numbers 13:10-15:41 and the haftarah is Joshua 2:1-24. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 9:45 pm.
Rabbi Micah Friedman's installation weekend will take place Friday-Sunday, June 29-30. For more information, see the article on page 1.
The temple office will be closed Thursday-Friday, July 4-5.

On Saturday, July 6, Shacharit services will be held at 9:45 am via Zoom and in-person. The Torah portion is Numbers 16:1-18:32 and the haftarah is Isaiah 66:1-24. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 9:45 pm.

Temple Beth El of Oneonta

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Cantor: David Green
Address: 83 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY 13820
Mailing address: P.O. Box 383, Oneonta, NY 13820
Phone: 607-432-5522
E-mail: TBEOneonta@gmail.com
Regular service times: Contact the temple for days of services and times.
Religious School/Education: Religious School, for grades kindergarten through bar/bat mitzvah, meets Sunday mornings.
For the schedule of services, classes and events, contact the temple.

Penn-York Jewish Community

President-Treasurer-Secretary: Harvey Chernosky, 570-265-3869
B'nai B'rith: William H. Seigel Lodge
Purpose: To promote Jewish identity through religious, cultural, educational and social activities in the Southern Tier of New York and the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania, including Waverly, NY; Sayre, Athens and Towanda, PA, and surrounding communities.

Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated
Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045
Phone: 607-756-7181
President: Nick Martelli
Cemetery Committee: 315-696-5744
Website: templebrithsholomcortland.org
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/Temple-Brith-Sholom-114006981962930/
Service leaders: Lay leadership
Shabbat services: Either Friday evening at 7:30 pm or Saturday at 10 am from Rosh Hashanah to Shavuot. Holiday services are also held. Check the Facebook page or weekly e-mail for upcoming services. Contact the president to get on the e-mail list.
Religious School: Students are educated on an individual basis. Temple Brith Sholom is a small equalitarian congregation serving the greater Cortland community. Congregants span the gamut of observance and services are largely dependent on the service leader. The Friday night siddur is "Likrat Shabbat," while the Saturday morning siddur is "Gates of Prayer." The community extends a warm welcome to the Jewish student population of SUNY Cortland, as well as the residents of local adult residences.
Services and programs are held by Zoom on the first and second Fridays of the month.

Synagogues limit face-to-face gatherings

For specific information regarding services (including online services), meetings and classes at any of the area synagogues, contact them by phone or e-mail.

Beth David Synagogue

Affiliation: Orthodox Union
Rabbi: Zev Silber
Address: 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905
Phone: 607-722-1793, Rabbi's Office: 607-722-7514
Fax: 607-722-7121
Office hours: Tues. 10 am-1 pm; Thurs. 9 am-1 pm
Beth David e-mail address: bethdavid@stny.rr.com
Rabbi's e-mail: rabbisilber@stny.rr.com
Website: www.bethdavid.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/bethdavidbinghamton
Classes: Rabbi Zev Silber will hold his weekly Talmud class every Tuesday evening after services.

Rohr Chabad Center

Affiliation: Chabad-Lubavitch
Rabbi Aaron and Rivkah Slonim, Directors
E-mail: aslonim@binghamton.edu
rslonim@chabadofbinghamton.com
Address: 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal, NY 13850
Phone: 607-797-0015, Fax: 607-797-0095
Website: www.Chabadofbinghamton.com
Rabbi Zalman and Rochel Chein, Education
E-mail: zchein@Jewishbu.com, rchein@Jewishbu.com
Rabbi Levi and Hadasa Slonim, Downtown and Development
Chabad Downtown Center: 60 Henry St., Binghamton
E-mail: lslonim@Jewishbu.com, hslonim@Jewishbu.com
Rabbi Yisroel and Goldie Ohana, Programming
E-mail: yohana@Jewishbu.com, gohana@Jewishbu.com
Regular service times: Daily 7:30 am, Friday evening 6 pm, Shabbat morning 9:30 am, Maariv and Havdalah one hour after candle-lighting time, Sundays 9:30 am.
To join the mailing list, for up-to-date information on adult education offerings or to arrange for a private tutorial, for details concerning the Judaica shop and resource center, or for assistance through the Piaker Free Loan Society or Raff Maasim Tovim Foundation, call Chabad's office at 797-0015.
Chabad will be holding pre-Shabbat virtual programs. For more information, visit www.JewishBU.com/S2020Partnership.

Congregation Tikkun v'Or

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism
Address: PO Box 3981, Ithaca, NY 14852; 2550 Triphammer Rd. (corner of Triphammer and Burdick Hill), Lansing, NY
Phone: 607-256-1471
Website: www.tikkunvor.org, E-mail: info@tikkunvor.org
Presidents: Martha Armstrong and Mitch Grossman, presidents_22@tikkunvor.org
Education Director/Administrative Coordinator: Naomi Wilensky
Bnai Mitzvah Coordinator: Michael Margolin
Services: All services currently on Zoom. E-mail info@tikkunvor.org for the times and links. Contemplative morning services every Tuesday from 8:30-9:30 am. Saturday mornings, Gan Shabbat and other special services at least once a month. Call for the weekly schedule.
Jewish Learning Experiences (JLE) for second through seventh grade classes meet on Sunday mornings. Sixth and seventh grades also meet on Wednesday afternoons. Family programs for kindergarten and first grade held monthly.
Adult Education: Offered regularly throughout the year. Check the website for details.

Friday, June 28, light candles before..... 8:25 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, June 29 9:25 pm
Friday, July 5, light candles before 8:24 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, July 6 9:24 pm
Friday, July 12, light candles before 8:21 pm
Shabbat ends Saturday, July 13 9:21 pm

Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism
Rabbi: Leah Moser
Address: 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905
Office hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 am-2 pm
Phone: 607-723-7355
Fax: 607-723-0785
Office e-mail: TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com
Website: www.templeconcord.com
Regular service times: Fri., 7:30 pm; Sat., 10:35 am, when religious school is in session.
Hebrew school: Hebrew school meets at 4:15 pm and 5:15 pm on Tues. and Thurs. during the school year unless otherwise noted.

Some services and programs are online only.
Friday, June 28: At 6 pm, there will be a potluck dinner, which will be in-person only. It will include candle lighting, the blessing over the wine, the healing prayer, the Mourner's Kaddish and the blessing over the challah.

Saturday, June 29: At 9:15 am, Torah study in person and on Zoom (<http://bit.ly/3XDnvRE>, meeting ID 825 1226 2831 and passcode 743892).

Tuesday, July 2: At 10:30 am, the Tuesday Morning Book Club will discuss "Kunstlers in Paradise, a Novel" by Cathleen Shine. For more information, contact Merri Pell-Preus at 607-222-2875 or merriPELL.preus@gmail.com. To join via Zoom, visit <https://bit.ly/3CXVd9b>, meeting ID 881 6469 4206 and passcode 653272

Friday, July 5: At 7:30 pm, Shabbat service with Rabbi Leah Moser. Join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3hRmW2Y>, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330, or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Saturday, July 6: There will be no Torah study.

Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive
Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815
Phone: 334-2691
E-mail: fertigj@roadrunner.com
Contact: Guilia Greenberg, 373-5087
Purpose: To maintain a Jewish identity and meet the needs of the Jewish community in the area.
Adult Ed.: Call ahead, text or e-mail to confirm dates.

Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Rabbi: Caleb Brommer
Rabbi Emeritus: Scott L. Glass
Address: 402 North Tioga St. (the corner of Court and Tioga streets), Ithaca, NY 14850-4292
Phone: 273-5775
E-mail: president@tbeithaca.org and secretary@tbeithaca.org
Website: www.tbeithaca.org
Presidents: Melanie Kalman and Alexis Siemon
Sisterhood President: Gail Zussman
Director of Education: Calle Schueler
Services: Friday 8 pm; Saturday 10 am, unless otherwise announced. Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sundays and legal holidays).
Religious School/Education: September-May: Classes meet on Sunday, 9 am-12:30 pm and Wednesday afternoons, 3:45-5:45 pm. The teen No'ar program meets twice per month (every other Sunday from 5-7 pm) and is designed with the flexibility to accommodate busy student schedules.
Adult Ed.: Numerous weekly courses, several semester-long courses and a variety of mini-courses and lectures are offered throughout the year. Call the temple office for more details.

For upcoming services and events on Zoom, visit www.tinyurl.com/HappeningAtTBE.

Jewish online resources

By Reporter staff

A variety of Jewish groups are offering educational and recreational online resources. Below is a sampling of those. *The Reporter* will publish additional listings as they become available.

◆ American Jewish University will offer “Summer Book Talks: The Boy with the Star Tattoo” on Monday, July 15, at 3 pm. Author Talia Carner and AJU’s Michael Berenbaum will discuss Carner’s new novel, “The Boy with the Star Tattoo,” which “delves into the stories of Jewish children hidden in Christian homes during the Holocaust, and the postwar efforts by the Youth Aliyah movement to find and rescue these orphans.” For more information or to register, visit <https://open.aju.edu/event/aju-summer-book-talks-the-boy-with-the-star-tattoo>.

◆ Tivkah is offering the five-part online course “Zionism and Anti-Zionism: The History of Two Opposing Ideas” with Dr. Einat Wilf and Zoé Tara Zeigherman. For more information or to register, visit <https://tikvahfund.org/course/zionism-and-anti-zionism-the-history-of-two-opposing-ideas/>.

◆ Aleph will hold the virtual program “Honoring the Life and Legacy of Reb Zalman” on Sunday, July 14, at 4 pm. Donations are requested. During the tribute to Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, Rabbi Geela Rayzel Raphael will be joined Schachter-Shalomi’s friends, family and students, who will share their memories. To register, visit <https://aleph.org/civircrm/event/register/?reset=1&id=556>.

◆ Roundtable will hold the four-part virtual course “British Prime Ministers and the Jewish People” on Thursday, July 11-August 1, from 10:30-11:45 am. The cost to attend is \$140. The course will look at four prime ministers – Ministers Benjamin Disraeli, Arthur Balfour, Winston Churchill and Neville Chamberlain – who affected the Jewish people. For more information or to register, visit <https://roundtable.org/v2/live-courses/history/british-prime-ministers-and-the-jewish-people>.

◆ The Museum of Jewish Heritage will hold three virtual events in July: “Hitler and the Nazis: Evil on Trial” Discussion”

on Tuesday, July 9, at 7 pm (<https://mjhny.org/events/evilontrial/>); “Stories Survive – Imagining Jewish Futures in World War II Labor Camps: A Gendered Perspective” on Monday, July 15, at 7 pm (<https://mjhny.org/events/storiesurvivejanineholc/>); and “The History of Antisemitism – Dark Mirror: The Medieval Origins of Anti-Jewish Iconography” on Tuesday, July 30, at 7 pm (<https://mjhny.org/events/darkmirror/>). The museum requests a donation of \$10 from those attending.

◆ My Jewish Learning will hold the four-part class “Introduction to Kabbalah: Concepts and History to Enhance Your Understanding” on Wednesdays, July 3-24, at 1 pm. The cost to attend is \$80. University of Haifa Professor J.H. Chajes will offer a combination of the history and practical knowledge of Kabbalah. For more information or to register, visit <https://my-jewish-learning.teachable.com/p/introduction-to-kabbalah>.

◆ Literary Modiin’s July 2024 Author Event will take place on Sunday, July 14, at 1 pm, and feature Marcela Sulak (“The Fault”), Maya Arad (“The Hebrew Teacher”) and Mimi Ziemann (“Tap Dancing on Everest”). For more information or to register, visit www.juliezuckerman.com/event-info/literary-modiin-july-2024-author-event.

◆ Roundtable will hold the three-part class “Becoming Elijah: Prophet of Transformation” with Professor Daniel Matt on Tuesday, August 6-27, from 2-3 pm. The cost to attend is \$132. Matt will explore “the life and legacy of the prophet Elijah. How did this biblical zealot turn into the compassionate Jewish superhero and the most popular figure in all Jewish folklore?” <https://roundtable.org/v2/live-courses/literature/becoming-elijah-prophet-of-transformation>.

◆ The Biblical Archaeology Society will hold a hybrid version of its 27th Annual Fall Bible and Archaeology Fest from November 22-24. For more information or to register, visit www.biblicalarchaeology.org/travel-study/27th-annual-fall-bible-and-archaeology-fest/.

◆ The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives will hold the webinar “Religicide: Confronting the Roots

of Anti-Religious Violence” on Tuesday, July 2, from 4-5 pm. It will feature Dr. Georgette F. Bennett and Rabbi David Saperstein, and be moderated by Dr. Gary P. Zola. For more information or to register, visit https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_BvHX27xsS_uIGHPKQQA-f2g#/registration.

◆ Literary Modiin’s August 2024 Author Event will take place on Sunday, August 4, at 1 pm, and feature Ellis Shuman (“Rakiya”), Maxim D. Shrayner (“Kinship”) and Danila Botha (“Things That Cause Inappropriate Happiness”). For more information or to register, visit www.juliezuckerman.com/event-info/literary-modiin-august-2024-author-event.

◆ The American Jewish University will hold the five-week class “Hebrew Through Israeli Songs” on Sundays, July 14-August 11, at 4 pm. The cost to attend is \$96. The course will look at Israel’s musical journey from the ‘70s, ‘80s, ‘90s and today. It is aimed at intermediate and advanced Hebrew students only. For more information or to register, visit <https://open.aju.edu/event/hebrew-through-israeli-songs-3/>.

◆ My Jewish Learning will hold the virtual “Healthy Jewish Cooking: A Four-Part Class” with dietician and chef Micah Siva on Mondays, July 8-29, at 7 pm. The cost to attend is \$60. The class “will focus on nutrition hot-topics through interactive learning, recipe demonstrations and ingredient modifications.” For more information or to register, visit <https://my-jewish-learning.teachable.com/p/healthy-jewish-cooking-a-4-part-class-with-dietician-and-chef-micah-siva>.

◆ Reform Judaism.org will hold two sessions of its three-part class “A Taste of Judaism®.” Classes will be held on Sundays, August 11-August 25, from 8-9:30 pm; and Mondays, October 21-November 4, from 8-9:30 pm. The cost to attend is \$99. The class is designed for beginners from any background. For more information or to

register, visit <https://reformjudaism.org/learning/judaism-classes/a-taste-of-judaism/upcoming-classes>.

◆ Roundtable will hold the virtual three-part class “Martin Buber’s Philosophy of Dialogue” on Wednesdays, July 17-31, from 10-11 am. The cost to attend is \$132. Paul Mendes-Flohr, professor emeritus at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, will discuss the life and work of the Austrian-born Jewish philosopher Martin Buber. For more information or to register, visit <https://roundtable.org/v2/live-courses/literature/martin-bubers-philosophy-of-dialogue>.

◆ My Jewish Learning is offering a “Hebrew Word of the Day” e-mail. To sign up for the e-mail, visit www.myjewishlearning.com/hebrew-word-of-the-day/.

◆ The Sapir journal will hold the virtual discussion “The Courage to Be Uncool” with New York Times best-selling author Noa Tishby and Bret Stephens on Monday, July 8, at 2 pm. They will talk about “the new position American Jews find themselves in and the steel they will need in the battle to support Israel.” For more information or to register, visit https://maimonidesfund-org.zoom.us/join/register/9617187370182/WN_PD-QTzUghTBu-Lf0AvB61ww#/registration.

◆ Uri L’Tzedek will hold the virtual program “The Social Justice Vision of the Book of Devarim” with Rav Nati Helfgot on Monday, August 19, at 5pm. The cost to attend is \$18.

◆ Roundtable will hold the virtual three-part class “Einstein: Passionate Physicist, Political Activist, Reluctant Jew” on Thursdays, August 1-15, at varying times in the early afternoon. The cost to attend is \$132. For more information or to register, visit <https://roundtable.org/v2/live-courses/history/einstein-passionate-physicist-political-activist-reluctant-jew>.

For additional resources, see previous issues of *The Reporter* on its website, www.thereporter.org/jewish-online-resources.

Other Continued from page 6

and reason, which can help us consciously consider size and power as having many possible relationships (side note: grasshoppers actually have much more power than their size indicates). When we encounter the other, our intelligence gives us the ability to go beyond our unconscious assumptions about size and other attributes, to go beyond stereotypes, if only we will use it.

Later in Shelach Lecha, we read, “There shall be one law for you and for the resident stranger; it shall be a law for all time throughout the ages. You and the stranger shall be alike before God.” Despite the Torah’s tendency to highlight differences and distinctions, here Torah is telling us that God does not want us to focus on differences between the native born Israelite and the *ger*, which has been translated variously as stranger, sojourner, immigrant or convert.

This is not the only time God gives us this message in the Tanach. There are multiple passages about the importance of treating the *ger* equitably. In fact, in Bava Metzia 59b, Rabbi Eliezer says this is repeated in some form 36 times. These passages come in three varieties: (1) to love the *ger*, (2) to refrain from wronging or mistreating the *ger* and (3) that there should be one law that applies equally to

any resident, whether they were born into the community or came later to live there. Especially for the first two, the reason given is based in empathy: remember that you were *gerim* in Egypt. Loving someone and not mistreating them requires empathy. While the Israelites as a group might have amicable, hostile or neutral relationships with other groups, within the Israelite community, everyone should treat one another with dignity, respect and care, even across differences. God tells us there is a single law for all humans residing together in the community, not just then but for always. The context of this passage is about bringing burnt offerings, one of the most important ways that the Israelites could connect with God. Even if you as a native born Israelite are feeling a lack of empathy for someone because they are a *ger*, God is not making that distinction. God wants to be in a relationship with both of you.

If I will not be for myself, who will be for me (Hillel) / Walk on in the face of your fear / If I am only for myself, what am I (Hillel) / You and the stranger will be alike before God (Numbers 15:15) / And if not now, when? (Hillel) / Know the importance of the right time.

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Reports: IDF knew weeks before Oct. 7 of Hamas plan to take 200 hostages

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Intelligence documents compiled by the Israel Defense Forces' Gaza Division only three weeks before October 7 warned that Hamas was preparing for a massive cross-border attack during which at least 200 hostages would be taken, according to Israeli media reports.

The memo, which was internally circulated on September 19, was brought to the attention of at least some top intelligence officials in the military's Southern Command, Israel's Kan News reported on June 17.

The document detailed drills by the Gaza terrorist group's Nukhba force, which practiced raids on Israeli towns and army bases, as well as how to hold soldiers and civilians hostage once back inside the Strip.

"At 11 am, several companies were observed gathering for prayer and lunch before the start of training," the memo read. "At noon, equipment and weapons are distributed to the combatants, after which a company headquarters drill takes place. At 2 pm, the practice raid begins." Hamas terrorists were told to execute hostages to prevent their escape and received orders to raid military outposts for intelligence before returning

to Gaza, the IDF memo added.

The junior intelligence officers who observed the exercise estimated the expected number of hostages at between 200 and 250 people. During the actual October 7 attacks on the northwestern Negev, terrorists took roughly 250 people hostage, in addition to murdering 1,200.

One of the soldiers involved in the September 19 report wrote after the massacre, "I feel like crying, yelling and swearing," per Kan.

In a response to the broadcaster, the IDF did not comment on the alleged memo, but said it was probing all failures that led up to October 7 and vowed to present the findings "transparently to the public."

In April, the head of IDF Military Intelligence, Maj. Gen. Aharon Haliva, announced his resignation from the military, effective after the completion of operational investigations and an overlap process with a replacement. He added that under his command, the Intelligence Directorate "did not live up to the task it was entrusted with."

In early June, Brig. Gen. Avi Rosenfeld, commander of the Gaza Division, also announced his resignation. IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Herzl Halevi has signaled he will

step down after the war against Hamas ends.

Earlier this year, Halevi announced an internal probe into the military's failures, calling the investigation a "duty and not a privilege."

In January, Israel's Walla news site cited military sources as claiming that while the IDF was aware of Hamas's repeated attempts to blow up the security fence on the Gaza border in preparation for the October 7 attacks, it opted to dismiss the rehearsals as a "provocation."

Hours before Hamas' attack, IDF intelligence learned that hundreds of terrorists in Gaza had activated Israeli SIM cards in their phones, the military censor cleared for publication in February. The activations were reportedly detected around midnight on the night of October 6.

In October, *The New York Times* reported that Unit 8200, the IDF's leading signals intelligence unit, stopped listening to Hamas' handheld radios a year before the attacks, deciding it was a "waste of effort."

In addition, critical computer systems used by Unit 8200 broke down on October 6 and were only repaired some 90 minutes before Hamas launched its cross-border massacre, Israel's Channel 12 reported on June 15.

Israelis seeking green cards face hostile questions about IDF service

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Israelis applying for U.S. green cards (permanent resident cards) are reporting the introduction of a new line of questioning regarding their military service. While visitors to the United States have been asked basic questions about their military service before, it appears the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has singled out Israelis with a new policy.

Attorney Liam Schwartz, head of the relocation department at Tel Aviv-based law firm Goldfarb, Gross, Seligman and Co., told Ynet the new policy is "intended to 'catch' military personnel and police officers who participated in arrests in Judea and Samaria."

The hunt for information may also be used "by the authorities for the purpose of formulating their position in relation to acts defined as genocide," he told Ynet.

Yuval, identified as a senior manager at a Silicon Valley high-tech firm, received a letter from U.S. immigration services demanding more information about his military service before it could reach a final decision in his case.

"You must submit an affidavit under oath, describing your military service," the letter stated. "As part of this affidavit, the following questions must be addressed: Did you participate as a combatant in battles during your mil-

itary service? If so, please describe your activity/role in these battles." It also asked for details about his command, whether he ever guarded detainees and the types of weapons and explosives he used.

"For me, the feeling is as if questions were copied from the Office of the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in The Hague," he said.

Yuval was given 87 days to submit the affidavit or face deportation.

Those applying for visas at a U.S. embassy outside Israel also may face a grilling, Ynet reported, offering the example of Roital, who decided to continue a European trip to America. She applied for a tourist visa at an American consulate in Western Europe. "I was in an interview that lasted more than half an hour, and all the questions referred to my combat service. The interviewer was very curious about my training and skills in weapons and explosives, and wanted to know details about the reserves in Gaza," she said.

"In the end, the guy left the window for about 10 minutes, I could see he was talking passionately with someone else. He returned, handed me the passport, said, 'You are not eligible for a visa today' and closed the window blinds."

Ofer, vice president of North American marketing for a real estate company, told Ynet about his experience two weeks ago with customs officials upon entering the United States. Arriving at Los Angeles International Airport, he was ushered into a room for further interrogation after presenting his Israeli passport. "They opened my laptop. Looked up a Google Chrome account with the name of my [IDF] unit and called a translator. There was nothing classified there. Just correspondence about the unit's treatment of evacuees from several localities. It's just that there was a lot of such correspondence. I sat for four hours until they decided I could collect my things and leave," he told Ynet.

"In the meantime, I missed the connecting flight and I waited another six hours until the next flight. I travel so



An Israeli passport with visa and entry stamps (Photo courtesy of Israel.Travel)

much to the United States, I have never been bullied like this as an Israeli," he said.

When viewed in the context of other moves against Israeli citizens by the Biden administration toward Israel, it is a reasonable assumption that the inhospitable stance toward Israeli visitors comes directly from the White House. The State Department has sanctioned Israeli individuals and groups, most recently Tzav 9, an

Israeli organization protesting against aid trucks to Gaza, arguing that the supplies end up in the hands of Hamas.

In a June 14 press statement announcing the sanctions, the U.S. State Department described Tzav 9 as "a violent, extremist Israeli group that has been blocking, harassing and damaging convoys carrying lifesaving humanitarian assistance to Palestinian civilians in Gaza."

Mark Zell, chairman of Republicans Overseas Israel, who announced that he would take the U.S. government to court for sanctioning four Israelis in February, told JNS that the executive order was an "overreach" by the Biden administration. "None of this falls under U.S. jurisdiction," he said. "The Biden administration is trying to shut down organizations such as Tzav 9 and Regavim using an executive order, which is improper, illegal and unconstitutional."

Regavim monitors and pursues legal action against illegal Arab construction in Judea and Samaria.

Dozens. . . . Continued from page 3

proposed cease-fire agreement, as approved by the United Nations Security Council on June 10. However, he noted that Hamas made "substantial changes to dozens of items" in the outline.

The terror group is demanding an end to the war and full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza, he said, adding that Jerusalem's war goals still stand – the defeat of Hamas as a military and governing power in Gaza, the return of all of the hostages and the guarantee that Gaza can never again pose a threat to Israel.

More than 250 people were abducted to Gaza during Hamas' October 7 terrorist invasion of the northwestern Negev, during which thousands more were killed and wounded, with numerous atrocities documented.

One-hundred and twenty hostages remain in the Strip, of whom 116 were abducted on October 7 (the other four were captured earlier). The figure includes both living and deceased men, women and children.



A pedestrian walked past pictures of Israelis held hostage by Hamas terrorists in Gaza at "Hostage Square" in Tel Aviv on June 16, 2024. (Photo by Miriam Alster/Flash90)

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