



Off the Shelf

A biography, a memoir and a history

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Courage and determination: that's what ties the stories found in the three non-fiction works in this review. Whether it's fighting for the right of workers to unionize, helping the French resistance, or using a road race to symbolically represent a defeat of fascism, each character or narrator offers lessons in courage and determination.

"Rebel Cinderella"

From poverty to riches and then back to poverty: that summary doesn't do justice to the life of Rose Pastor Stokes, whose name once graced newspaper headlines and who is now largely forgotten. In his "Rebel Cinderella: From Rags to Riches to Radical, the Epic Journey of Rose Pastor Stokes" (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), Adam Hochschild not only tells Rose's story, but places it into historical and sociological context.

Rasiel (Rose) Wieslander was born in 1879 in a small town in Eastern Europe, but later took her stepfather's last name, Pastor, as her own. When she was 3, her family traveled to the U.S. to join her stepfather, who had already immigrated to Cleveland, OH. Times were difficult and it wasn't long before she, her mother and her half siblings were left to fend for themselves. Rose began working in a cigar factory at age 11 and remained there for 12 years. Fortunately, she had some writing talent and was offered a job with the *Yiddish Tageblatt*, which was located in New York City. Rose's life changed when her editor forced her

to interview James Graham Phelps Stoke, who belonged to one of the richest families in the city. Graham, as he was called, had joined others in his social class who volunteered at settlement houses in New York helping the poor. The two fell in love and, against the wishes of his family, married.

At first, their story seems like a version of Cinderella, as was noted by many newspapers at the time. The two became involved in the socialist and the labor union movements, as well as mixing with members of the radical literary scene. Unfortunately for their marriage, Rose was the more dynamic speaker and writer. She also became far more radical than her husband, who later began to embrace his family's conservative attitudes. Their fairy-tale love story had a very unromantic ending.

However, it's not the love story that will speak to readers, but rather Hochschild's vivid descriptions of life in America and the radical differences between economic classes at that time. He also does a wonderful job showing how people embraced World War I (before they realized what a wasteful slaughter the war was) and socialism (before they learned how their socialist ideals would be perverted by the newly socialist Soviet Union). The cast of characters that pass through the book – from Emma Goldman to Eugene V. Debs to Margaret Sanger – shows the wide range of Rose's interests and the many causes for which she struggled. This rich biography also serves as a view of the Gilded Age of

America by those who did not share in its glories. In addition, it portrays the men and women who willingly risked for their lives to create a better and more just world.

"The Art of Resistance"

Justus Rosenberg almost makes surviving World War II sound simple and easy. That's helped by the conversational tone the 99-year-old author takes in his memoir "The Art of Resistance: My Four Years in the French Underground" (William Morrow). The subtitle doesn't do justice, though, to the breadth of the work, which includes details of his life before and after the war.

Rosenberg does an excellent job placing his early family life in context. His parents left their Polish shtetl because their families would not have accepted their marriage. (They were from two different social classes). Settling in Danzig, which was a free republic at the time, the family assimilated, considering themselves Germans first and foremost. For example, Yiddish was not spoken in the house and Jewish holidays were only rarely observed. Then, in 1937, a Nazi-inspired pogrom against the Jews of the city made them realize the danger they faced. Shortly afterward, Rosenberg left for Paris in order to continue his studies, although he was only 16 at the time. He notes that neither he nor his parents realized they would not see each other again for another 15 years.

See "History" on page 7

Opinion

From the Desk of the Federation Executive Director

With gratitude

SHELLEY HUBAL

I am typically not a procrastinator. I love to make a list and dutifully check off each item after it is accomplished. I even start each day by making my bed, a quick and easy accomplishment. Check!

So, I find myself asking: why have I been procrastinating writing this op-ed? Truth be told, writing is not something I enjoy, but this, it seems, goes deeper. As a leader, I have learned there is a time to speak and there is a time to listen. Right now is a time to listen. What can I say to add to the conversation about equity and justice for people of color? What is there left to say about staying safe during the pandemic?

These topics are complex and how we respond to them will forever change our country and our community. We need to listen to one another with an empathic ear. We need to withhold judgment and gather our strength. We will need strength to endure what will surely be long-term isolation. We will need strength to stand up for what is just. To me, strength comes from knowledge and faith. Knowledge and faith come from careful listening, thoughtful questions and stillness.

I want you all to know that I am still here, keeping the Federation going. I am busy planning for the fall. Before

we know it Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur will be here, the 2021 Campaign will be on its way and, God willing, we will all be finding our way forward in the new landscape of COVID-19. Whatever is to come, the Federation will always be here to serve its community members and organizations.

So, to the members of the Binghamton Jewish community, I send my apologies for not sharing my voice right now. There is a lot of talking going on. I am here listening. I have faith that we will make it through this difficult time together. Please continue to take safety precautions. I'm sending you all my best wishes for a happy and healthy summer.

In My Own Words

Symbols

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

When the U.S. Veterans Affairs first received complaints about gravestones with swastikas and references to Hitler in U.S. military cemeteries, it originally refused to remove the inscriptions, which are on the gravestones of German prisoners of war. Only after it received more complaints and pressure from Congress did it agree to remove them, noting that it is distressing for families whose relatives died fighting the Nazis to see those symbols when visiting their deceased loved ones. There was no mention of the Jewish community being distressed by this, but it's easy to imagine the protests that might have occurred.

I read about this only a few weeks before I heard the news that Quaker Oats is replacing the Aunt Jemima brand and that the owners of Uncle Ben's Rice are considering doing the same. There has been some outrage and distress from those who think the changes are terrible. However, changing those brands is similar to the removal of swastikas from a military cemetery: seeing those symbols causes pain. Yes, Aunt Jemima has been updated several times to no longer look like the happy slave she did when the brand first appeared, but I don't think that makes a difference to those folks who recognize that the image is based on a racial

stereotype. I don't feel the same pain, but I understand it. Hook-nosed evil Jews and happy contented slaves: both images should be offensive to everyone.

Why are people objecting to the change? It's not like the food line is being discontinued and no one will be able to buy their favorite syrup or brand of rice. Would there be the same kind of complaints if Kellogg's axed Tony the Tiger or Pillsbury retired Poppin' Fresh, AKA the Pillsbury Doughboy? While some people might be unhappy, there would not be the same kind of backlash because the real reason for the complaints – whether people recognize it or not – is the change comes because of the Black Lives Matter movement. They wonder why that movement should be allowed to make cultural decisions affecting white America.

Once again, I can only compare this to what people say about "thin-skinned Jews" who don't want Amazon to sell Hitler's "Mein Kampf" or souvenirs featuring the Nazi version of a swastika or the lightning bolt of the SS. These symbols are considered offensive to the Jewish community, although other people see them as harmless or even embrace them. Shouldn't I then give the same consideration to those who find other symbols offensive?

How can I say I want a symbol removed if I don't give others the same right?

Again, I am not trying to speak for Black Americans; I am trying to listen and understand what they are saying. And if they say Aunt Jemima reminds them of slavery, who I am say that it shouldn't? Who am I to say that they should forget that pain? How would we feel if someone told the Jewish community to forget the Holocaust, that it was years ago, and they are tired of hearing about it and about how everything affects the Jews. At least some Jews received reparation from Germany after the Holocaust. The U.S. has never offered any to the freed slaves and their descendants. Even a conversation about reparations has been off limits. Perhaps it's time to reconsider that.

If we Jews want our voices to be heard about antisemitism, then we have to listen to the voices condemning systemic racism. If we want our feelings to be taken into consideration, then we need to listen to the feelings of other minorities. A swastika and Aunt Jemima: they may not seem to have much in common at first, but they are both reminders of past sins that should never be forgotten.



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Suzanne Holwitt, President
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HOW TO REACH THE REPORTER

Mail ~ The Reporter, 500 Clubhouse Rd. Vestal, NY 13850

E-mail ~ TRReporter@aol.com

Phone ~ 607-724-2360 or 800-779-7896

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Antisemitism from “The Twilight Zone”: Rod Serling’s “He’s Alive”

By Bill Simons

Rod Serling is perhaps the most famous and significant writer to hail from Binghamton, as well as its most prolific. Recently, Lawrence Kassan, director of special projects for the Binghamton City School District, demonstrated this in an interesting and informative Zoom program: “Pioneering Mind of Television: The Life and Times of Rod Serling.” Kassan did an excellent job examining Serling’s personal and professional biography, particularly his Binghamton and Jewish roots. Although Serling’s credits include screenplays for several iconic films, including “Requiem for a Heavyweight,” “Seven Days in May” and “Planet of the Apes,” his greatest impact came as the chief writer, executor director and host of the television science fiction anthology series “The Twilight Zone,” which ran on CBS from 1959-64.

In order to address controversial issues, such as racism, antisemitism, censorship, conformity, political paranoia and corporate greed on the small screen in an era of cautious advertisers and media moguls, Serling employed fantasy. As an addendum to Kassan’s good work, it is timely at this moment in America to reconsider arguably the most influential “Twilight Zone” episode, “He’s Alive.” It originally aired from 9-10 pm EST on Thursday, January 24, 1963.

“He’s Alive” details the rise and fall of Peter Vollmer, “a bush-league fuhrer,” who traffics in antisemitism as well as hostility toward Blacks, Catholics and immigrants in pursuit of his own affirmation and power. Vollmer delivers street corner diatribes against “foreigners” and other conspirators who seek to turn the United States over to “Palestine,” Africa, the Vatican and “yellow men.” Initially, Vollmer, commanding a handful of uniformed American neo-Nazis, meets derisive hostility, rebuke and splattering projectiles in response to his nativist invectives. Hecklers tauntingly term Vollmer a “punk,” who merits institutionalization in a facility for the criminally insane. Vollmer whines that someday people will listen and salute him. After defeat and humiliation in a brawl, Vollmer, played brilliantly by Dennis Hopper, subsequently acclaimed for his role in the film “Easy Rider,” seeks refuge in the apartment of an old man, Ernst.

Played by the actor Ludwig Donath, himself a Jewish refugee from the Third Reich, Ernst is a survivor of the Dachau concentration camp. Ernst has provided shelter, food and empathy for Vollmer since, as a silent little boy, he would show up at the old man’s door in flight from a physically abusive father and alcoholic mother. Ernst, on occasion, provides Vollmer a place to sleep for the night on a couch. Vollmer is now in his 20s, but Ernst still remembers him as the scared, insecure and confused child. With the authenticity of experience, Ernst confronts the sickness and destructiveness of Vollmer’s bigotry. Pathetically, Vollmer tells the old Jew that they are friends who simply have different political views and that Ernst is the closest he has ever had to a father. Ernst recoils from sick rationalizations, but retains a residue of compassion for Vollmer.

At outdoor rallies in the dark of night and poorly-lit meeting halls, a figure whose identity is hidden by shadows begins to mentor Vollmer. Frightening and mesmerizing, there is something eerily familiar – in body language, hand gestures and timbre of voice – about the shadowy figure. Over time, the authoritarian mentor counsels Vollmer, with

effect, about crowd psychology and how to merge with the audience to grow their fears and resentments. Sharpening attacks on Jews, Blacks and immigrants, whom he calls “Izzy,” “Rufus” and “Poncho,” Vollmer attracts gatherings swelling in numbers and rabid enthusiasm. He stokes supporters’ fears that aliens will take over their homes and sully their daughters. In vitriolic rants, Vollmer affirms frenzied supporters, calling them the true minorities, the last remaining America patriots willing to expunge Communists, monied internationalists and other enemies of white Christians. Vollmer tells his acolytes that they are the sanctified minority who “will not give up the fight” against those “who stabbed us in the back,” the traitors responsible for gifting the Soviets with nuclear weapons. The fierce, feral emotions of the mob and of Vollmer are now one.

Tamping down Vollmer’s new euphoria, the shadowy figure cautions Vollmer that this is only the beginning. The movement needs a martyr. Under the mentor’s guidance, Vollmer orders the murder of Nick, the weakest of his uniformed bully boys, in a manner that will place blame on their enemies.

Subsequently, to even larger and more volatile mobs, Vollmer deifies Nick as a hero, slaughtered by “Judas” and “pig” assassins. On a summer night, with the temperature approaching 100 and windows open, Ernst hears the vile bombast, recognizes it as a resonance of Berlin 1933, emerges into the nocturnal street and climbs the speaker’s platform to verbally confront Vollmer, exposing the demagogue as a pathetic charlatan, a whimpering “gift from the sewers.” Ernst remembers that his contemporaries once thought the loud paranoia of a few hooligans could never bring madness to Germany, but they were wrong. With visceral determination, Ernst vows, “We can’t let it happen again.”

An enervated Vollmer is now alone in a space once shared with hundreds, until the shadowy figure again speaks. “Do not be weak; do not be sentimental and soft – kill the old Jew,” roars the mentor, “and the movement will surge and you, ‘Mr. Vollmer,’ its leader, will become ‘immortal.’” Vollmer challenges the shadowy figure to come forth from the darkness, and this time he does: Adolf Hitler steps forward. With this dramatic and unexpected epiphany, Vollmer, transformed into steel and will, snaps to a Nazi salute and then posthaste enters Ernst’s apartment and shoots him to death, but not before the old man warns his executioner, “You cannot kill an idea with a bullet.”

Investigating the mayhem, the police mortally wound a fleeing Vollmer, but the ending is unsettling, chilling. As a demonic Hitler stealthily moves on with calibrated resolution, the intense voice of Rod Serling intones, “Anyplace, everywhere, where there’s hate, where there’s prejudice, where there’s bigotry. He’s alive... Remember it when you hear a name called, a minority attacked, any blind, unreasoning assault on a people or any human being.”

OF NOTE


Rosefsky

Flora Rosefsky, formerly of Binghamton, had an exhibit “Reflections: The Art of Flora Rosefsky” showing at the Metro Atlanta Community Mikvah earlier this year. Since the mikvah has been closed due to the pandemic, the show has been placed online at www.reflectionsbyflora.com. Included are works from her “Ritual Series,” “Songs of Praise: Bird Series” and “Conceptual Judaism” series.

Serling depicts the police favorably in “He’s Alive.” Beyond terminating Vollmer’s reign of terror, they demonstrate contempt for his racial and ethnic bigotry. One of the police officers is Black.

Hitler, presumably a suicide in 1945, would have been 73 years old when “He’s Alive” originally aired. Ten days before, on January 14, 1963, George Wallace, the defiant governor of Alabama, pledged, “Segregation now, segregation tomorrow, and segregation forever!” Rod Serling received more than 4,000 hate-mail messages in response to the episode. The 1960s would witness landmark civil rights victories but also endure demagoguery, polarization, race riots, assassination and conflict over the American journey. “He’s Alive” has a relevance to our own time. It is available for viewing on several streaming platforms.

Bill Simons is a professor of history at SUNY Oneonta, whose course offerings include sport and ethnic history. He is also the co-director of The Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American Culture, and served as a speaker for the New York Council on the Humanities.



The following are deadlines for all articles and photos for upcoming REPORTER issues.

ISSUE	DEADLINE
July 17	July 8
July 31	July 22
August 14	August 5
August 28	August 19





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Happy Independence Day

from
**Town of Vestal Councilwoman
Patty Fitzgerald**



TikTok Continued from page 1

lagging behind its rivals, who have had more time to grapple with how to protect their users from disturbing and harmful contents. Yet, TikTok should have learned from these other platforms’ experiences and apply TikTok’s own Terms of Service that does not allow postings that are deliberately designed to provoke or antagonize people, or are intended to harass, harm, hurt, scare, distress, embarrass or upset people, or include threats of physical violence.”

Under the study’s methodology, Weimann and Masri first identified TikTok accounts of known extremist groups. They then collected posts that featured hashtags associated with extremist movements. Finally, they examined the aforementioned accounts and posts as well as accounts that showed interest in extremism through liking, commenting or following the accounts.

“While most of the scholarly attention focused on social media has examined content from leading platforms like Twitter, Facebook or Instagram, antisemitism and other forms of extremism occurring on platforms like TikTok had gone largely unnoticed until this new study,” said Karen Berman, CEO of the American Society of the University of Haifa. “The insights and data revealed in the report will influentially inform the efforts of social-media platforms, regulatory bodies and the general public to expunge hate and extremism from the internet.”

TikTok got a “C” on the Simon Wiesenthal Center’s recent digital terrorism and hate report card for how well social media and other digital platforms have combated extremism on their platforms.

Quick Reference Guide to Planned Giving

Use this planned giving quick reference guide to help determine the best strategy for achieving your philanthropic and financial goals.

For further information or assistance, please contact Shelley Hubal at 724-2332 or director@jfgb.org

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Avoid the two-fold taxation on IRA or other employee benefit plans	Name a charity as the beneficiary of the remainder of the retirement assets after your lifetime	Tax relief to your family on inherited assets
Make a large gift with little cost to you	Contribute a life insurance policy you no longer need or purchase a new one and designate a charity as the owner	Current and possible future income tax deductions
Reduce taxable income from IRA Required Minimum Distributions	Make a qualified charitable donation directly from your IRA (after age 70½)	Reducing taxable income



FAMILY LIVING

Babies bounce into community families



Emilia Rose Altmann

Information was supplied by area synagogues:
Emilia Rose Altmann
 Born: May 26, 2020
 Parents: Ilana and Rob Altmann
 Grandparents: Michael and Malka Weinstein, and Betty Altmann
Olivia Dahlia Britton
 Born: May 25, 2020
 Parents: Sean and Danielle Britton
Eva Sophia Cohen D'Agostino
 Parents: Mollie Cohen D'Agostino and John Osborn D'Agostino
 Grandparents: Ellen Cohen-Rosenthal and Michael Katz



Olivia Dahlia Britton

Cairo Avery Grant-Keane
 Parents: Devin and Danielle Grant-Keane
 Grandparents: Paula and Thomas Keane
Levi Greenblott
 Born: October 1, 2019
 Parents: Mae and Eric Greenblot
 Grandparents: Chuck Greenblott, Ellen Green and Mel and Annabelle Siao
 Great-grandmother: Cookie Greenblott
Solomon Ross Haas
 Grandparents: Robin and Donald Haas
Isaac Samuel Kohn
 Born: October 30, 2019
 Parents: Daniel and Anna Kohn
 Grandparents: Ilya and Irina Elashvili, and Harold and Toby Kohn



Isaac Samuel Kohn

Robert Leo Kooperman
 Grandparents: Jane and David Powers
Aria Rose Premkumar
 Born: September 18, 2019
 Parents: Dr. Ajay and Alexandra Prekumar
 Grandmother: Dr. Andrea Rothe
Isaac Levi Joseph Robi
 Born: September 13, 2019
 Parents: Tiffany and Nevin Robi

Grandparents: Dennis and Linda Robi
Elia Faye Weinbaum
 Born: May 18, 2020
 Parents: Lauren Thirer and David Weinbaum
 Grandparents: Heidi and Joel Thirer, and Elena Weinbaum.
Aizen Dimitri St. John
 Born: April 25, 2020
 Parents: Lauren Daniels and Kris St. John
 Grandparents: Deb and Dave Daniels
Charles David Tanenhaus
 Born: July 17, 2019
 Parents: Gabriel Tanenhaus and Amanda Cronk
 Grandparents: David and Teri Tanenhaus



Aizen Dimitri St. John

Newborn at the zoo

The Ross Park Zoo in Binghamton announced the birth of a Geoffroy's marmoset on June 11 to parents Maxine and Clark. The newborn joins its parents and siblings Finn and Quincey on exhibit in the Wonders of Nature building.



The newborn Geoffroy's marmoset at the Ross Park Zoo.

Geoffroy's marmosets are native to the forests of southeastern Brazil. They are a small primate with a lifespan of approximately 10 years. They live in family groups of up to 10, with all participating in carrying the young. Geoffroy's marmosets are considered "Least Concern" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, but widespread destruction of their natural habitat is causing their populations to decline.

For more information about the Ross Park Zoo, visit the zoo website at rossparkzoo.org.



Charles David Tanenhaus



Elia Faye Weinbaum

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Don't miss these signs of school bullying

(NewsUSA) - Results of a study published in School Psychology Review found that nearly half of children in grades 4-12 reported being bullied by other students at least once during the previous month. According to the National Bullying Prevention Center, a slightly higher portion of female than of male students report being bullied at school (23 percent versus 19 percent.)

- Possible signs that a child is being bullied at school include:
- ◆ Acting in a way that is out of character for the child, such as becoming more angry or anxious.
 - ◆ Trying to avoid school with excuses such as increased physical complaints.
 - ◆ Demonstrating trouble with schoolwork.
 - ◆ Exhibiting unusual eating or sleeping habits.
 - ◆ Losing valuables, such as lunch money or possessions.
- "Bullying behavior tends to peak in middle school years, but it can happen at any age," says Dr. Michael Golinkoff of

AmeriHealth Caritas. "Victims of bullying may be reluctant to inform their parents or others." Parents can help stop bullying before it starts and be part of the solution when it occurs. Some steps parents can take to help their child include:

- ◆ Be informed. Find out your school's policy on bullying and speak to the principal or other administrator.
- ◆ Be engaged. Talk to your child about his or her experience. Don't judge, just listen.
- ◆ Be a team. Involve your child in strategies to help stop the bullying. Get the teachers on board so everyone knows what to do when problem behavior occurs.

"The most important advice for a child who is being bullied is to help them develop assertiveness skills and conflict resolution skills," says Golinkoff. "This includes standing up for their beliefs and ignoring negativity directed toward them. Role playing exercises can help children learn how to take a stand against an aggressor."

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Spaying and neutering is a win win "fix"

(NAPSI) - Philip Bushby, a veterinarian and professor of shelter medicine at Mississippi State University, believes that spaying and neutering pets at an early age not only reduces the economical and societal impact of pet homelessness, but also improves the long-term health of the pet, with benefits such as:

- ◆ Cats and dogs that have been spayed/neutered are less aggressive than unaltered pets, which means fewer fights, less risk of contracting contagious diseases and lower vet bills.
- ◆ Pets that aren't fixed are more likely to stray away from home in search of a mate.
- ◆ Dogs and cats mark with urine when they are trying to "claim" their territory - like your couch. After a spay/neuter operation, pets become less territorial and this behavior decreases dramatically.
- ◆ Fewer health problems: "Pets that have been fixed are less likely to develop mammary and reproductive cancers, as well as some potentially fatal infections," said Bushby. And, there's evidence that the earlier it's done, the better. "Contrary to belief, having the surgery performed before your pet's first heat period actually amplifies these benefits."

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YOUR CARE. YOUR WAY.

U.S. V.A. to remove gravestones with swastikas, Hitler references

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Gravestones inscribed with swastikas and messages referencing Hitler will be removed from military cemeteries, announced U.S. Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie in early June.

“It is understandably upsetting to our veterans and their families to see Nazi inscriptions near those who gave their lives for this nation,” said Wilkie in a statement. “That’s why V.A. will initiate the process required to replace these POW headstones.”

The inscriptions were found in V.A. cemeteries in Texas and Utah on graves of German prisoners of war. Initially, the V.A. refused to remove the inscriptions, but agreed to

do so following backlash from U.S. lawmakers and others. U.S. House Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee Chairwoman Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL) was one of the lawmakers calling for the removals and applauded the V.A.’s decision to reverse course.

“The families of soldiers who fought against intolerance and hatred must never be forced to confront glorification of those very ideologies when visiting their loved ones,” she said in a statement. “V.A.’s initial decision to leave the gravestones in place was callous and irresponsible, but [Monday’s] decision is an honorable move in the right direction.”

See “V.A.” on page 8



At right: Two undated photos of POW gravestones inscribed with swastikas at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery in San Antonio, TX. (Photo by Military Religious Freedom Foundation)

FAMILY LIVING



Off the Shelf

Using Jewish ideas to parent

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

There are numerous books on how to raise children, including several with Jewish themes. For Rabbi Amy Grossblatt Pessah, the seder (Jewish prayer book) gave her the tools she needed to become a better parent. In “Parenting on a Prayer: Ancient Secrets for Raising Modern Children” (Ben Yehuda Press), she discusses what she learned while acknowledging there is no magic formula that fits every child. However, she believes the prayer book offers values that children need to assimilate in order to become worthwhile adults. While the book focuses on what children learn, adults will also find many of her lessons relevant to their own lives.

When placing her work in context, Pessah notes that she sees God taking the role of a parent in the Torah, particularly in the story of Adam and Eve. When God tells Adam and Eve not to eat from one tree in the Garden of Eden, like many children, they are tempted by the forbidden. However, Pessah believes that when God then calls to them asking where they are, God knows exactly where they are and what they are doing, much like a parent knows when a child has his hand in the cookie jar. She writes, “As the ultimate parent, I believe that God knew what His children were doing, just like we know when our children are being sneaky. For me, this story is a great example of how the Divine can be seen as a parent looking after Her children.”

The author picked 18 prayers – the number that is the Hebrew equivalent for life – and offers each in transliteration and English. Pessah writes about the meaning of the text and then uses personal stories to illustrate the parenting lesson it taught her. To help readers better assimilate her

message, each chapter includes concrete suggestions for what parents and children can do to better incorporate the text into their lives, and questions for them to consider.

In the chapter called “Choices (*Ahser Yatzar*),” Pessah notes how a poem read on Yom Kippur that compares God to a potter is relevant to parenting. Since she’s taken pottery classes, she knows the clay doesn’t always do what she wants. Sometimes she thinks she is going to create one type of pottery, for example, a bowl, but finds herself producing a plate. The same can occur when dealing with children. She notes, “[Children] come to us as ‘lumps of clay,’ unformed and waiting to be molded. It is our job as parents to mold and fashion the clay using all the tools we have and the tools we acquire along the way.” However, Pessah also realizes that “as hard as we try to move our children in a certain direction, sometimes they don’t move the way that we envisioned.” Parents need to accept that since, even when their children do not take the shape they expected, “something beautiful and unique always emerges.” The author makes it clear that parents have to be aware that their children can be different from them, but still wonderful.

When writing about “Gratitude (*Birkot Hashachar*),” the morning blessings, Pessah offers an interesting and enlightening interpretation of the prayer that thanks God for opening the eyes of the blind. She notes that the prayer should be taken figuratively, in addition to literally; “All of us are metaphorically ‘blind’ in different situations. Some of us are ‘blind’ to the feelings of others; some of us are ‘blind’ to new experiences; and some of us are ‘blind’ when

dealing with certain subjects like physics, economics, or English. Asking God to open our eyes means allowing us to see things from a fresh perspective or gaining an understanding that we might not have had previously.” This idea should resonate as much with adults as it does with children, Her “Ways to Promote Gratitude” are aimed at children, but can be easily used by adults. For example, her suggestion to “before bedtime, share three things you experienced during the day for which you are grateful” has been used to help adults achieve happiness.

Pessah also acknowledges that, even if she does everything she thinks is right, the result might not be what she wants or expects. She tells readers to do the best they can and trust their instincts, but to also double check to make certain their impulse feels right. This lack of control over a child’s fate is noted in the book’s afterward, although readers get a clue from the dedication page, which lists the names of her three children: Pessah’s eldest child died at age 20 of illness. She notes all the trials and trouble he caused over the years and also the joys: Each of these just made her love him more.

“Parenting on a Prayer” doesn’t pretend to offer a magical formula so parents can produce perfect children. Pessah is too wise for that. What she has written instead are suggestions for using Jewish values to help shape and mold a child. Her book also offers insights those without children will also find meaningful.

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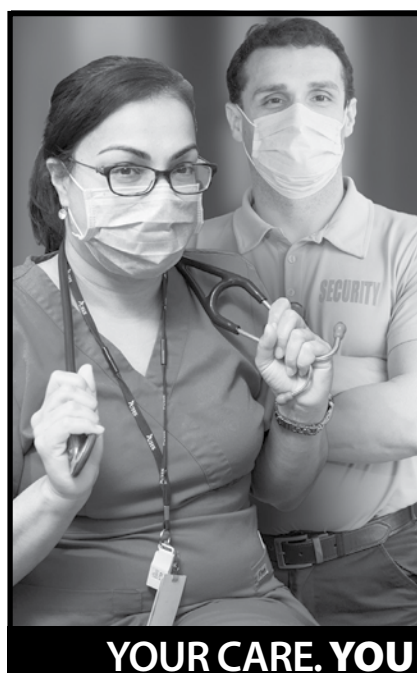
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Weekly Parasha

Chukat-Balak, Numbers 19:1-25:9

Bilam's blessing and Israel's mission

RABBI ZEV SILBER, BETH DAVID SYNAGOGUE

The portion of Balak contains the unusual story of the attempt by Balak and Bilam to curse the Jewish people. Bilam's desire to accede to Balak's request is obvious throughout the story, and would have succeeded if not for the direct intervention of God. Even what may seem to us as a blessing in the poetic statements of Bilam may actually contain curses, as well, if not for God's intervention. As it says in the book of Devarim, God changed the curse into a blessing.

This is an interesting story, which contains many beautiful poetic statements, such as *ma tova* (how goodly are your tents, Israel), and speaks about the strength of the

Jewish people, its destiny, its pride and its attributes. But is it really important?

The Talmud seems to think so. In Berachot 12b, there is a statement by Rabbi Yehuda bar Zevida that the sages wanted to include this portion in the twice daily recitation of the *Shema*, but refrained from doing so because of its length, and not to cause a great burden on the people by lengthening the daily prayers more than necessary. Why is this portion considered so vital to consider including it with the *Shema*?

Let us look at the *Shema* and what it contains. The first paragraph contains the concept of love of God, the one-

ness of God and the acceptance of God's kingship. These are very major and lofty concepts, and God requires us to recite them twice daily.

The second paragraph contains the concepts of the requirement to lead our lives through the fulfillment of *mitzvot*, and reward and punishment. Again, major concepts that define Jewish belief and action, that God, again, requires us to recite twice daily. The third paragraph of *tzitzit* was added by the sages, primarily because it includes reference to the Exodus, which we are also required to verbalize daily both during the day and at night. Remembering the Exodus and See "Blessing" on page 7

Congregational Notes

Temple Israel

Orientation: Conservative
Rabbi: Geoffrey Brown
Address: 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal, NY 13850
Phone: 723-7461 and 231-3746
Office hours: Mon.-Thurs., 8:30 am-3:30 pm; Fri., 8 am-3 pm
E-mail: titammy@stny.twcbc.com
Website: www.templeisraelvestal.org
Service Schedule: Tuesday, 5:30 pm; Friday, 5:30 pm; Saturday, 9:30 am

On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown via Zoom.

The temple office will be closed on Friday, July 3, and Wednesday, July 15.

On Saturday, July 4, the Torah portion is Numbers 19:1-25:9 and the haftarah is Micah 5:6-6:8. At 9:30 pm, Rabbi Geoffrey Brown will lead Havdalah services via Zoom.

On Sunday, July 5, at noon, Rabbi Geoffrey Brown will lead Torah study services via Zoom.

On Saturday, July 11, the Torah portion is Numbers 25:10-30:1 and the haftarah is Numbers 30:2-17. At 9:30 pm, Rabbi Geoffrey Brown will lead Havdalah services via Zoom.

On Sunday, July 12, at noon, Rabbi Geoffrey Brown will lead Torah study services via Zoom.

Temple Israel is collecting for CHOW during regular business hours. The bin is between the two sets of glass doors at the entrance. Buzz to enter the first set of doors to access the bin.

Beth David Synagogue

Affiliation: Orthodox Union
Rabbi: Zev Silber
Address: 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905
Phone: 722-1793, Rabbi's Office: 722-7514
Fax: 722-7121
Office hours: Mon. closed; Tues. 10 am-1 pm; Wed. closed; Thurs. 9 am-1 pm; Fri. 10 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

Temple Beth El of Oneonta

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Rabbi-Cantor: George Hirschfeld
Address: 83 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY 13820
Mailing address: P.O. Box 383, Oneonta, NY 13820
Phone: 607-432-5522
Website: www.templebetheloneonta.org
E-mail: TBEOneonta@gmail.com
Regular service times: visit the temple website 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, see the website.

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: 797-0015, Fax: 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.

Synagogues limit face-to-face gatherings

Area synagogues have announced that they are limiting face-to-face gatherings. That means there will be no services or programming held until further notice. Some meetings, services and classes will be available online or by phone.

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

Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
Rabbi: Miriam T. Spitzer
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: rabbi@tbeithaca.org and secretary@tbeithaca.org
Website: www.tbeithaca.org
President: Randy Ehrenberg
Sisterhood President: Julie Paige
Director of Education: Rabbi Suzanne Brody
Administrative Assistant: Jane Griffith
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 Midrashah (eighth grade and high school) classes will meet at times designated by their respective teachers.
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.

Congregation Tikun 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: Lauren Korfine and Shira Reisman
Rabbi: Brian Walt
Religious School Director/Admin. Coordinator: Naomi Wilensky
Services: Fridays at 7:30 pm unless otherwise noted. Intergenerational Shabbat, music services, and other special services. Call for the weekly schedule.
Religious School: Preschool through seventh-grade classes meet on Sunday mornings.
Sixth-grade Hebrew and seventh-grade b'nai mitzvah classes meet on Wednesday afternoons.
Adult Ed: Mini courses throughout the year. Adult Hebrew offered regularly. Call the office for details.

Kol Haverim

Affiliation: Society for Humanistic Judaism
Address: P.O. Box 4972, Ithaca, NY 14852-4972
Phone: 607-277-3345
E-mail: info@kolhaverim.net
Website: www.kolhaverim.net
Chairwoman: Abby Cohn
Kol Haverim: The Finger Lakes Community for Humanistic Judaism, is an Ithaca-based organization that brings people together to explore and celebrate Jewish identity, history, culture and ethics within a secular, humanistic framework. KH is part of an international movement for Secular Humanistic Judaism and is affiliated with the Society for Humanistic Judaism, a national association with over 30 member communities and congregations around the country. Established in the spring of 1999, it offers celebrations of Jewish holidays, monthly Shabbat pot-lucks, adult education, a twice-monthly Cultural School for children, and a bar and bat mitzvah program.
KH welcomes all individuals and families, including those from mixed religious backgrounds, who wish to strengthen the Jewish experience in their lives and provide their children with a Jewish identity and experience.

Friday, July 3, light candles before 8:24 pm
Saturday, July 4, Shabbat ends 9:25 pm
Friday, July 10, light candles before 8:22 pm
Saturday, July 11, Shabbat ends 9:22 pm
Friday, July 17, light candles before 8:18 pm
Saturday, July 18, Shabbat ends 9:17 pm

Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism
Rabbi: Barbara Goldman-Wartell
Address: 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905
Office hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 am-2 pm
Phone: 723-7355, Fax: 723-0785
Office e-mail: TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com
Website: www.templeconcord.com
Regular service times: Friday, 8 pm; Saturday, 10:35 am, when religious school is in session.
Hebrew school: Hebrew school meets at 4:15 pm and 5:15 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the school year unless otherwise noted.

All services and programs are online only. Friday night Shabbat services will start at 7 pm for the month of June.

Friday, July 3: Shabbat services celebrating the United States at 7 pm. The service will include patriotic songs and readings for the July 4th weekend. To attend, visit <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/97613250758>, or call 1-929-205-6099 and enter meet ID # 976 1325 0758 and password 610020, or visit www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Saturday, July 4: There will be no Torah study or "Havdalah with a Bonus" program.

Tuesday, July 7: Zoom Talmud study at 7 pm with Rabbi Amy Scheinerman. Register in advance for the Tuesday meetings with this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZMtcO-sqjotH9Xbq11k-3FZuB2dBa8KX9jj>.

Thursday, July 9: Zoom Talmud study at noon with Rabbi Amy Scheinerman. Register in advance for the Thursday meetings with this link: <https://binghamton.zoom.us/join/register/tJElf-CgrTgoHdfyNj8VpZB-SmTQOHa43bC4j>.

Friday, July 10: Shabbat services with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell at 7 pm at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/97613250758>, or by calling 929-205-6099 and entering meeting ID # 976 1325 0758 and password 610020, or at www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Saturday, July 11: Torah study at 9:15 am at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/342411102>, or by calling 1-929-205-6099 and entering meeting ID # 342 411 102.

Saturday, July 11: "Havdalah with a Bonus" at 7 pm at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/526246866>, or by calling 929-205-6099 and entering meeting ID # 526 246 866, or at www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

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.

Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive
Rabbi: David Regenspan
Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815
Contact: Guilia Greenberg, 336-1523
Purpose: To maintain a Jewish identity and meet the needs of the Jewish community in the area.
Adult Ed.: Saturday morning study is held at 10 am. Call for more information and to confirm.

Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated
Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045
Phone: 607-756-7181
President: Bruce Fein, 607-423-3346
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 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.



Weekly Parasha

Pinchas, Numbers 25:10-30:1

Standing up with passion and zeal

RABBI AARON SLONIM, ROHR CHABAD CENTER

Editor's note: This issue of The Reporter features two parashot as the writers for July 3 and July 10 had written their assigned parasha prior to the decision to go bi-weekly. As there will not be a July 10 issue of The Reporter, that week's parasha is being included in this week's paper.

Passion and zeal have fallen on hard times. Nowadays, they are most often linked with the words fanaticism and extremism, terms laden with innuendo and laced with disdain. This week's *parasha*, however, gives us reason to reconsider this notion in a different, perhaps more expanded, light. The *parasha* reminds us that there were in our national history situations that called for extreme, albeit carefully qualified, action, and that at those junctions nothing less would do. Similarly, there are times in each one of our personal lives when as Jews we must stand up with passion and zeal – and what may even appear as extremism – to the forces that seek to separate us from God and our Torah.

Our *parasha* is actually named for the chief protagonist in a drama that unfolds at the very end of last week's *parasha*, Balak: A group of Jewish men are overcome with desire and engage in illicit relations with women of surrounding heathen tribes. The episode climaxes with the heinous act of Zimri, the son of Salu, a tribal prince, who publicly sins with a Midianite princess in front of Moshe and the people of Israel. All are dumbstruck and rendered momentarily paralyzed by the shocking act, save for Pinchas, a grandson of Aaron the high priest, who is consumed with righteous rage and kills both offenders with one movement of his spear. At that moment, the deathly plague, which God had sent upon the Jews in retribution, ceases. Pinchas' act is both bold and controversial. An argument rages in the Jewish camp concerning the veracity of his deed. Only God can judge.

Blessing..... Continued from page 6

God's providence is a fundamental action and belief that defines the Jewish people.

What is so vital and of primary definition of the Jewish religion in the portion of Balak that the sages wanted to include it? The Talmud asks this question and provides the following answer. For it states in 24:9, (Israel) lies down as a lion and lioness – who dares rouse him. A beautiful metaphor, describing the strength and endurance of the Jewish people, but does this verse make it so compelling to consider including the entire portion with the *Shema* to be recited twice daily?

Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook answers this question by developing an important principle for the definition of the Jewish people. Yes, we are required to accept the sovereignty of God; and, yes, we are required to accept the responsibility of performing the *mitzvot*. But there is a greater purpose to this expectation besides each of us being a good and observant Jew. We have a responsibility to make the world a better place by teaching these concepts to other nations and people. We must also become an "*or lagoyim*" – a light unto the nations of the world. The only way this is possible is by first becoming a nation, and that this nation shall have the moral, political and military strength to influence others.

Rabbi Kook believes that this is the message of this statement in Bilam's blessing: That the Jewish nation is like a sleeping lion, ready to be aroused when the time is right to be able to influence the world towards the acceptance of the one God who created the universe.

He further posits that there are three components that make up the uniqueness of the Jewish people: God, Torah and *mitzvah*, and the Jewish nation residing in the land of Israel. All three are necessary for us to

The opening verses of *parashat* Pinchas record God's reaction as told to Moses: "Pinchas the son of Eleazar and grandson of Aaron the priest was the one who zealously took up my cause among the Israelites and turned my anger away from them so that I did not destroy them in my vengeance. Therefore, tell him that I have given him my covenant of peace. This shall imply a covenant of eternal priesthood to him and his descendants after him. It is given to him because he zealously took up God's cause and made atonement for the Israelites."

In these words are found not only God's judgment, but a clarification of Pinchas' motives and a lesson to his detractors and supporters alike. Rashi questions the need for God to reiterate Pinchas' lineage that the Torah had earlier made clear. He explains that there were Jews who cast doubt on Pinchas' motives in the slaying. They knew that he had acted according to the law as taught by Moshe (Sanhedrin 82a), but they cast dispersion on his motivation: "Why did he and not Moshe react," they thundered. "Who was he to take this action upon himself? Was there some underlying cruelty in his character and background that compelled him to such action?" In answer, the Torah reiterates his illustrious lineage, taking pains to draw our attention to his connection to Aaron.

Aaron's position as high priest was important, but it is his unparalleled love for his fellow that is best and eternally remembered. Rashi states (Numbers 20, 29): Aaron pursued peace and caused love to descend between contending parties. When Pinchas, his grandson, saw the insolence of Zimri and the resultant plague that engulfed the Jews, he perceived the need for action even as he was not charged with the duty to act. The underlying nature of Pinchas's zealotry, God testified, was a deep love of peace that he had inherited from Aaron and a passionate desire to remove contention and bitterness from between God and His people, and thus save them from great harm.

fulfill our mission, and fulfill God's desire of *tikkun olam* – making the world a better place through the belief in the one God.

If it is the case that this verse is so important to our mission, the rabbis could have just included it, or perhaps this one blessing, in our daily prayers, if the entire portion is too long.

The Talmud considered this possibility, yet rejects it because we have a principle that any section that Moshe did not break into various components, we are not permitted to divide. The entire story of Balak and Bilam is one long paragraph in the Torah scroll, so we couldn't just include that section.

This answer leaves much to be desired, since we find many single verses in our liturgy, even though in the Torah it is just one verse in a long section. Perhaps this talmudic answer is a code word to search for a deeper meaning in not quoting just this one verse or section.

Perhaps, if we were to detach this one verse from the rest of the prophecies, we would create a special danger. This verse talks about the strength of the Jewish people. The unique strength of the Jewish people is not self-centered nationalism, military conquests or political superiority. As a matter of fact, these things would really be a weakness.

The nature of Israel must be understood within the context of its special mission, which is spelled out throughout the entire portion. Nationalism cannot be separated from the responsibility to promulgate God's Name to the entire world. Thus, this verse cannot be separated from the rest of the portion.

It may not always be possible to fulfill this mission, but I believe that now it is, if only we as individuals, communities and nation can accept and internalize it, and begin acting in the way that the Torah desires.

But unbridled passion is not enough; in fact, it can be wrong, dangerous and tragic. God, therefore, testified of Pinchas "he took up my cause" with a purity unsullied by personal agenda or calculation.

Indeed, Pinchas did so at great personal risk. His action was in full sight of many who were angered and sought to avenge the death of their prince (tribe of Shimon). In fact, Zimri himself could have swiftly turned the spear on Pinchas. In addition, we are taught, that before this act, Moshe considered Pinchas his successor, but this action, as exalted as it was, disqualified him for a position that called for calculated, rather than zealous, leadership.

In light of Pinchas' motives, we can understand why Pinchas would be rewarded for a seemingly violent act with a covenant of peace. The Torah teaches that at the root of his action lie a fountainhead of love and

a deep quest for peace between God and the Jews. Moreover, he acted with the specific consent of Moshe, for God's sake alone.

Pinchas, who heretofore was not anointed into the priesthood, now was inducted into that role. He later became a high priest and many of his descendants served in the Holy Temples for generations. Most notably, however, Pinchas lives on. The *midrash* and Zohar state (Pirkei de Rabbi Eliezer ch47, Zohar Part 2 190a): "Pinchas is Elijah," the very same Elijah who is present at each circumcision; the very same Elijah who is present at our Passover seder; the very same Elijah whom we speak of in our grace after meals: "May the merciful one send us Elijah the Prophet to bring us good tidings, salvation and comfort." This is the very same Elijah who will be the harbinger of the Messianic Age, a time of ultimate and everlasting peace.

History..... Continued from page 2

At first, his life in Paris went well, but that changed when the Germans invaded the country. No longer able to attend school, he worked with Varian Frye, helping him save Jewish artists and writers, although Rosenberg was unable to get a visa for himself. Then, rounded up with other foreign Jews, he managed a rather daring escape and was able to take an active part in the resistance. For the most part, Rosenberg makes those years sound far less dangerous than they must have been. After the Allies liberated France, he worked for the American Army and took part in the denazification of Germany. Then Rosenberg made his way to the U.S., where he became a professor.

"The Art of Resistance" is fast paced and easy to read. One of the most interesting scenes occurs when Rosenberg visits his uncle in Berlin and hears Hitler speak in person. The author does not blame all Germans for Nazi actions against his family. His is a more nuanced approach: he sees no purpose in punishing innocent people for what the guilty few have done. The memoir concludes with a very satisfying epilogue in which he tells what happened to the people he met before and after the war. This well-done work will be of interest to those who want to learn more about the resistance and the life of this modest, and impressive, man.

"Faster"

Even readers who are not interested in discussions of car engines and the aerodynamics of different car body shapes should enjoy "Faster: How a Jewish Driver, an American Heiress, and a Legendary Car Beat Hitler's Best" by Neal Bascomb (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt). Although the outcome of the final race is revealed in the title, the book is still filled with action and suspense.

The subtitle also reveals something with which one of its subjects would disagree: race car driver René Dreyfus, the son of a Catholic mother and a Jewish father, considers himself to have no religion. However, his name alone was enough to get him

blackballed by German car manufacturers, who were looking to receive funds from the Nazi government and knew better than to have someone with a Jewish name driving their cars. Lucy Schell, one of the few women race drivers, gave up her career to back her own series of cars – working with a non-German car manufacturer that needed the money. Bascomb writes of their races and cars, before and after Lucy and René joined forces to break German dominance in the Grand Prix – something Hitler thought proved German superiority. Although René did not consider himself Jewish, he considered a victory in the Grand Prix a symbolic victory against Hitler.

For those not interested in racing or cars, the real focus of the book are the stories of the different race car drivers. Bascomb explains why these men raced when they could easily be killed or crippled. They loved the travel and competition, the push to perform better each time and beat a record and, of course, the money, fame and attention. This desire to race – the idea that life is meaningless without it – is personified in the most interesting character in the book: Rudolf "Rudi" Caracciola. Rudi returned to racing after being seriously injured – so much so that his legs were different lengths – and continued to drive even though he was in pain during the races. He was also willing to lend his name to the Third Reich and praise Hitler if that was what he needed to do in order to race.

"Faster" ends by explaining what happened to the people it features during and after the war. Fortunately, René survived although, after the invasion of France, his wife asked for a divorce on the grounds that he was Jewish. Bascomb also informs readers about the location of the winning car, although there is a debate over which of two cars actually ran in the race. This well-done, well-researched work is perfect for car lovers and racing fans, but it also tells a human story that will be of interest those who are neither.

LEGAL NOTICE

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NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Israel moves a step closer to decriminalizing cannabis

Israel's Knesset on June 24 passed in preliminary votes a pair of bills dealing with the decriminalization and regulation of the use and possession of cannabis. The first bill, submitted by Likud Knesset member Sharren Haskel, would decriminalize the possession of up to 50 grams of the drug while fully legalizing the possession and personal consumption of up to 15 grams by individuals above the age of 21. The second bill, introduced by MK Ram Shefa of the Blue and White Party, seeks to regulate the personal-use cannabis market and fully legalize the personal consumption of cannabis by individuals above the age of 21. In advance of the vote, Haskel said "regulating the issue of cannabis for self-consumption is one of the symbols of my generation of a person's freedom to make choices about his body on his own. This is an expression of a person's right to privacy ... and his right to maintain his lifestyle of choice, as long as he doesn't harm anyone else." Both laws passed with large majorities and will now head to the Knesset House Committee for further deliberations and possible amendments before returning for the second and third vote in the plenum. The decriminalization of cannabis has been a contentious issue in Israel, with many in the religious community, including the ultra-Orthodox parties, opposing it.

Israeli defense exports reached \$7.2 billion in 2019

Israel, one of the world's largest exporters of military technology and expertise, exported \$7.2 billion worth of arms in 2019 – down from \$7.5 billion the previous year due to the coronavirus, according to a Defense Ministry report published on June 22. Nevertheless, the Jewish state remains one of the top 10 arms exporters in the world, with 17 percent of all sales radar and electronic systems, reported Ynet. Missiles, rockets and air-defense systems made up 15 percent, and unmanned drone-type aircraft 13 percent, of the total. Most of the sales (41 percent) went to the Asia Pacific region, with 26 percent to Europe, 25 percent to North America, and 4 percent to Africa and South America. "We are making sure, as a cornerstone of our activity, that Israel's sensitive military capabilities will not leak overseas," said the head of the Defense Exports and Cooperation Division at the Defense Ministry (or SIBAT), Brig. Gen. (res.) Yair Kulas, according to the report. Kulas noted expectations that growth will continue to slow in 2020 because of the coronavirus global pandemic.

Undercover reporter poses questions to Palestinians on annexation, citizenship

Israeli reporter Zvi Yechezkel went undercover with a hidden camera into Judea and Samaria to see what Palestinian Arabs really think about Israeli plans for annexation. And he received some surprising answers. Yechezkel's conversations revealed a large chasm between what Palestinian Authority leaders say and what residents really feel. As he explained, "the understanding that this is an opportunity for a different life extracts from the gut things once heard only behind closed doors, very quietly." One Palestinian

woman speaking to the reporter by phone estimated that in her village, about 80 percent of people would prefer Israeli citizenship and 20 percent want it but would not say so publicly, according to the report posted on Channel 13 earlier this month. The Kohelet Policy Forum posted the video with an English translation on YouTube on June 23. Another man noted that many Palestinians support getting Israeli identification papers. "That's what everyone thinks. Believe me, ask a child. Even he will tell you, even if he doesn't work in the settlements, he prefers to get Israeli citizenship as a child and then he won't be restricted at the checkpoints or anywhere." Speaking to a man leaning on his car, Yechezkel asked him, "Do you prefer living under Israeli sovereignty or the P.A.?" He answered, "No, Israel, really. The soldier's military boots are preferable to Abu Mazen [P.A. head Mahmoud Abbas] on my head." Another Palestinian man on the street said, "The Palestinians are a nation of idiots. Come on! The Israelis are a million times more compassionate than the P.A." "You mean it's better if Israel's responsible for the whole area," asked Yechezkel. Answered the man: "A million times better."

Resources Continued from page 1

director of the Dr. Bernard Heller Museum at HUC-JIR/New York. The Bergen-Belsen Displaced Persons Camp was the largest Jewish refugee camp in post-war Germany. The self-governed community's political, cultural, religious, educational and social activities renewed the survivors' return to life and played a role in the struggle for the creation of the state of Israel. The case will use archival film, photographs and documents to teach about that time. To register, visit <http://huc.edu/rebirth-after-holocaust-bergen-belsen-displaced-persons-camp-1945-1950-jean-bloch-rosensaft>.

◆ The Center for Jewish History will hold "Being Heumann with Judy Heumann – Live on Zoom" on Wednesday, July 15, at 4 pm. Judy Heumann is an internationally recognized leader in the disability community and a lifelong civil rights advocate. From fighting to attend grade school to winning a lawsuit against the New York City school system for denying her a teachers license, her actions throughout her life set a precedent that have fundamentally improved rights for disabled people, sparking a national movement that led to the creation of the Americans with Disabilities Act. She has worked with a wide range of activist organizations, NGOs and governments since the 1970s, serving in the Clinton and Obama administrations, and as the World Bank's first adviser on disability and development. In "Being Heumann: An Unrepentant Memoir of a Disability Rights Activist," she recounts her lifelong battle to achieve respect, acceptance and inclusion in society. Ticket costs are on a sliding scale. For more information, or to register, visit <https://heumann.bpt.me/>.

◆ The Yiddish Book Center will offer "Jews in Hollywood, with Kenneth Turan" on Zoom and Facebook on Thursday, July 16, at 7 pm. Kenneth Turan is a retired film critic for the *Los Angeles Times* and National Public Radio's "Morning Edition," a former staff writer for *The Washington Post* and director of the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prizes. In this program, he will touch on aspects of some of the movies that speak to the Jewish-American experience. To reserve a virtual seat in the Zoom audience, which allow people to submit questions, registration is required. For registration links, visit www.yiddishbookcenter.org/visit/calendar-events.

◆ The Lower East Side Jewish Conservatory will hold the "Congregation Shearith Israel – A Virtual Presentation of the First Congregation in North America" on Thursday, July 16, from 7-8:15 pm. Congregation Shearith Israel, commonly known as the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, was the first Jewish congregation in North America founded in 1654. Janet R. Kirchheimer, a licensed New York City tour guide and longtime member of the synagogue, will talk about the founding of the congregation, the Spanish Inquisition, pirates and the struggles with Peter Stuyvesant. She will also discuss Jews' efforts to create a community, as well as contributions by members to American Jewish history, from Asser Levy to Gershom Mendes Seixas, Emma Lazarus and more. Janet will also discuss other members who were founders of important institutions such as Columbia University, Yeshiva University and the New York Stock Exchange. Tickets are a minimum of \$5 each or a donation of \$10 or \$18. For more information, or to purchase a ticket, visit <https://www.nycjewishtours.org/event-log/shearith-israel-thurs-july-16>.

◆ The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion will offer the virtual class

"The Book of Job in Art: From Byzantium to Blake and Beyond" with Abby Schwartz on Wednesday, July 22, at 3 pm. Schwartz is the director of Skirball Museum at HUC-JIR/Cincinnati. From Byzantine manuscripts of the ninth century to paintings by Albrecht Dürer and Georges de la Tour, the Book of Job has inspired artists through the ages. Most notable is the cycle of illustrations produced by the 19th-century English poet, painter and printmaker William Blake. Also included will be representations of the Job story in works from the Skirball Museum's collections and temporary exhibitions. To register, visit <http://huc.edu/book-job-in-art-byzantium-blake-and-beyond-abby-schwartz>.

◆ The Yiddish Book Center will hold a multi-media talk "America's Jewish Lower East Side, with Annie Polland" on Zoom and Facebook on Thursday, July 23, at 7 pm. Dr. Annie Polland – executive director of the American Jewish Historical Society, former vice president for programs and education at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, and co-author, with Daniel Soyer, of the award-winning "Emerging Metropolis: New York Jews in the Age of Immigration" – will talk about the early days of the Lower East Side through the shifts that have occurred there over time, including the new generation of Jewish food purveyors who are re-imagining and carrying on the tradition. To reserve a virtual seat in the Zoom audience, which allows people to submit questions, registration is required. For registration links, visit www.yiddishbookcenter.org/visit/calendar-events.

◆ The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion will offer the virtual class "Curating Cantorial Education: Breadth and Depth in Jewish Musical Life" with Cantor Richard Cohn on Wednesday, July 29, at noon. Cohn is the director of the Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music at HUC-JIR/New York. The class will look at the what music cantors learn while studying at HUC-JIR, and how those repertoires influence their leadership of contemporary communities. The class will explore emerging musical forms, while viewing and listening to selected examples in representative styles. To register, visit <http://huc.edu/curating-cantorial-education-breadth-and-depth-in-jewish-musical-life-cantor-richard-cohn>.

◆ The Yiddish Book Center will hold a multi-media talk "Bertha Kling's Yiddish Bronx Neighborhood, with David Mazower" on Zoom and Facebook on Thursday, August 13, at 7 pm. The program will feature a virtual tour of Yiddish life in the Bronx in the early-to-mid-20th century and include archival photos and a conversation with David Mazower, Yiddish Book Center bibliographer and editorial director, and Dr. Steven Payne, library archivist at the Bronx Historical Society. To reserve a virtual seat in the Zoom audience, which allows people to submit questions, registration is required. For registration links, visit www.yiddishbookcenter.org/visit/calendar-events.

◆ Friends of the IDF will hold a 2020 National Virtual Gala on Sunday, September 13, at 7 pm. This year, the gala will seek to bring together thousands of FIDF supporters representing all chapters from across the United States, to express their appreciation for the young soldiers of the Israel Defense Forces. Registration is now open for the event at <https://www.fidf.org/events/2020-national-gala>.

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

V.A. Continued from page 5

Wasserman Schultz noted that she "will eagerly monitor how [the] V.A. moves forward with this process, including how they choose to provide historical context to enemy prisoners of war

buried in U.S. veterans cemeteries. We must make sure we don't erect totems to intolerance, allowing their history to be studied without causing pain for those most affected by it."

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