

THE REPORTER

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Federation to launch Campaign 2021 on Oct. 18

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton announced that it will launch its annual fund-raising Campaign on Super Sunday, October 18. The theme for this year's Campaign is "Socially Distant, Spiritually Connected."

"Running a fund-raising campaign during a pandemic is not something I ever thought I would be challenged to do, but here we are, and I look forward to working hard to make the Campaign a success," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "Due to the pandemic, we are not holding any in-person programming and we need to limit the time volunteers gather to make phone calls. So, in order to keep our volunteers safe, we are asking people to pledge early."

Campaign Chairwoman Marilyn Bell

SOCIALLY DISTANT,
Spiritually Connected
Annual Campaign 2021



added, "Our community needs us even more now, but we also need to keep our volunteers safe. Please do a mitzvah and pledge early."

Pledges can be made three ways:

- ◆ Visit the Federation website at www.jfgb.org and click on "make a pledge."
- ◆ E-mail Hubal at director@jfgb.org with "pledge" in the subject line.
- ◆ Fill out the form in the ad on page 7 and mail it to the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.

"I know that the past months have been difficult for most of us," Hubal continued.

"Many of our local Jewish institutions are in great need and we need to keep our organizations strong. By working together, we can make this happen. I know this community and am so

proud to be a member of it. I look forward to a time when we can gather in person. Although we may be keeping our distance socially, we are all spiritually connected as Jewish people."

Answer the call!

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton announced that it is seeking to complete its Super Sunday phone calls in one day: on Sunday, October 18. "Please answer the phone when we call," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "We



want to keep our volunteers safe and limit their exposure.

So we are hoping that everyone will answer their phone on Super Sunday if they receive a call and make their pledge."

Don't want a phone call on that day? Hubal suggests that people pledge early. "We have already been receiving pledges and have several easy ways for you to pledge early,"

Hubal continued. "You can visit our website at www.jfgb.org and click on 'make a pledge,' you can e-mail me at director@jfgb.org with 'pledge' in the subject line, or fill out the form in the ad on page 7 and mail it to the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850."

Fall CJS series to focus on two new books in Jewish history

The fall College of Jewish Studies program will feature presentations from the authors of two new scholarly books in modern Jewish studies. The talks—presented via Zoom—are scheduled for Thursdays, October 29 and November 5, at 7:30 pm.

On October 29, Nancy Sinkoff, professor of Jewish studies and history, and the academic director of the Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life at Rutgers University, will discuss her new biography "From Left to Right: Lucy S. Dawidowicz, the New York Intellectuals, and the Politics of Jewish History" in a talk titled "From Left to Right: Lucy Dawidowicz and the Representation of the Holocaust." Lucy Dawidowicz has been called "a crucial, but neglected figure" in the history of American Jewish politics. The Polish-born Dawidowicz immigrated with her parents to New York City between the world wars. The author of "The War Against the Jews," she would come

to be considered one of the first and most influential interpreters of the Holocaust to American Jews during the 1960s and '70s. As Sinkoff shows, it was Dawidowicz's immersion in the Yiddish culture of her youth alongside her Holocaust consciousness that fueled her shift from early communist beginnings to her emergence as one of the founders of the Jewish neoconservative movement. "Sinkoff, a scholar of both Eastern European and American Jewish history, is ideally situated to treat this geographically and thematically wide-ranging topic," said organizers of the program. "The product of a decade of archival research,



Professor Magda Teter (Photo © Chuck Fishman 2019)



Professor Nancy Sinkoff (Photo © Nan Melville 2016)

her new book is the first comprehensive biography of this brilliant, pioneering and controversial woman."

On November 5, Professor Magda Teter of Rutgers University will discuss her book "Blood Libel: On The Trail of an Antisemitic Myth"

about the history of the blood libel accusation. "Also the product of years of research in multiple languages, Teter's monograph is the most comprehensive examination yet produced of this immensely consequential and destructive fabrication," organizers said. The myth emerged in the Middle Ages and, while other anti-Jewish tales, like

those of well-poisoning or desecration of consecrated hosts, disappeared, the blood libel has persisted even to the present day. Teter's talk will explore the role print media and iconography played in the rooting of this "pernicious canard in the Christian European imagination." Teter is professor of history and the Shvidler chair of Judaic Studies at Fordham University. She is a fellow of the American Academy for Jewish Research and, in addition to her most recent book, the author of "Jews and Heretics in Catholic Poland" and "Sinners on Trial."

Both programs are open to the community. Prior registration is required. To register for one or both of these events, send an e-mail to jkarp@binghamton.edu with the subject heading "fall 2020 CJS." Registrants will be sent the Zoom link via e-mail one day prior to the talk. Because tickets cannot be sold at the door, the organizers ask that See "CJS" on page 6

Spotlight

Navigating difference: Dina Danon explores Jewish history in the Ottoman Empire

By Jennifer Micale

Reprinted with permission from Binghamton University

In the 19th and 20th centuries, European societies debated the "Jewish question." How should the Jewish minority assimilate into homogenous nation-states? How much of their religion, language and culture should they relinquish to survive?

By contrast, the Ottoman Empire offered a different social model, one in which the "Jewish question" simply wasn't asked.

"There was a completely different relationship to religious difference in the Ottoman Empire," said Assistant Professor of Judaic Studies Dina Danon, author of "The

Jews of Ottoman Izmir: A Modern History," published in March by Stanford University Press.

A part of Binghamton University since 2013, Danon conducts research centered on the Ladino-speaking diaspora. A vernacular language also known as Judeo-Spanish, Ladino has its roots in the Iberian peninsula. After Sephardi Jews were expelled from Spain in 1492, they traveled eastward into Ottoman lands, and the languages they encountered—French, Greek, Italian and Turkish—made their mark on Ladino. By the early 17th century,



Professor Dina Danon

Sephardi Jews settled in Izmir, located on the Aegean coast of what is now Turkey.

While many people assume there was some level of antagonism between Jews and Muslims in the Middle East during this period, that actually wasn't the case, Danon said. In many places, they lived side by side and socialized together; their shared zones of contact with one another were based more on class than religion or ethnicity.

Unlike today's nation-states, Ottoman society was not just tolerant of difference, but predicated upon it. The Empire's

various ethno-religious communities didn't face pressure to abandon their language or culture—something that allowed the Ladino language to survive for hundreds of years. Acceptance of cultural differences doesn't mean, however, that life in Izmir lacked tension, Danon noted. The advent of the modern era created different anxieties as social hierarchies were reordered, particularly in terms of poverty and social class.

For example, she explained, once considered a profession with a guild and behavioral rules, begging was no longer tolerated in the modern period. Views on poverty had shifted, with communities regarding it more See "Danon" on page 8

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Jewish resources to occupy your family during social distancing – part 21

By Reporter staff

A variety of Jewish groups are offering online resources – educational and recreational – for those who are not allowed out of the house. Below is a sampling of those. *The Reporter* will publish additional listings as they become available.

◆ A video of the Jewish Review of Books Editor Abe Socher in conversation with award-winning author and theologian Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks can be found at <https://jewishreviewofbooks.com/conversation-with-rabbi-jonathan-sacks/>. The former chief rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Commonwealth discussed his newest book, “Morality: Restoring the Common Good in Divided Times,” the place of religion in politics and more.

◆ The Schusterman Center for Israel Studies, in partnership with the Historical Society of Israel, will hold the webinar “The Saga of the Citron: Historical and Global Perspec-

tives” to discover what the etrog, or citron, can reveal about larger historical trends. The event will take place on Wednesday, September 30, from noon-1:30 pm. Speakers will include Zev Eleff, associate professor of Jewish History, Touro College; Debra Kaplan, associate professor, Department of Jewish History and director of the Halpern Center for the Study of Jewish Self-Perception, Bar-Ilan University; and Alexander Kaye, Karl, Harry, and Helen Stoll Assistant Professor of Israel Studies, Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, Brandeis University. For more information or to register, visit www.jewishtogether.org/virtual-meetups/12-pm-the-saga-of-the-citron-historical-and-global-perspectives-362365.

◆ JDC Entwine: Off the Shelf Book Club will discuss “The Jew in the Lotus” by Rodger Kamenetz on either Tuesday, October 6, at 1pm, or Wednesday, October 7, at 8 pm. Sign-up is required at <https://www.tfaforms.com/4841338>.

◆ The Hadassah-Brandeis Institute will offer the virtual

program “Braided Memories: A Journey of Words and Photographs” on Tuesday, October 20, from 8-9 pm. Poet and scholar Marjorie Agosin and photographer Samuel Shats will explore the truth that lies in fragmented memories, the legacy of refugees defined by truncated pasts and the power of art as a vehicle for healing across generations. There will be a multimedia presentation and panel discussion. For more information or to register, visit www.brandeis.edu/hbi/events/index.html.

◆ On Tuesday, September 29, at 7:30 pm, the Bennett Center for Judaic Studies will present the Adolph and Ruth Schnurmacher Scholar-in-Residence Lecture, “People of the (Printed/Digital) Book: Printing and the Birth of the Jewish Bookshelf,” by Rabbi Joseph A. Skloot, Ph.D. He will explore these questions as well as the implications of digitization for Jewish books and their readers. The September 29 lecture will be held online and is free and open to See “Resources” on page 3

Opinion

Who’s the king here?

By Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu

This epidemic demands from us not only medical and economic coping, but also spiritual morality. From the heights of the power and might of the hand of modern man – from the illusion that there is no other besides him and that he is truly omnipotent – his short-sightedness becomes increasingly clear to him: a tiny, microscopic creature makes fun of humanity, destroys its illusion of security and twists it on its little finger. Slowly it becomes clear to us that we have no one to rely on but our Father in heaven.

In order to understand this situation morally and spiritually it is necessary to repeat the words of *chazal* about Titus (in an abbreviated and adapted form): Before Titus, the Roman emperor, burned the temple, he “sharpened and cursed upward.” He entered the Holy of Holies and desecrated it. This was not just rudeness, but an upward defiance, to say “I am the King of the world,” and not God.

On his way back to Rome by ship, Titus returned and defied God and said, “If he is a hero [God], he will go

ashore and make war with me.” “*Yizta bat kol*” (a voice from heaven) “said to him: ‘Evil son of evil, son of the son of evil, I have a light creature in my world and a mosquito named.... Come and go ashore and make war with it.’ He went ashore, a mosquito came and entered his nose and poked his brain for seven years.”

From here the sages describe in colorful descriptions of Titus’ suffering, of his weariness in his life, of his grotesque attempts to get rid of the tiny creature that pierces his mind and of his eventual death from this suffering. (Tractate Gittin, p. No., P. 2)

Modern man thought he was omnipotent. He developed science and was sure that medicine would allow him to get along, even without God. He built enormous economic systems under the illusion that they would give him economic security and he would no longer need the mercy of heaven. He was sure that there was no one else but him and that his strength would suffice for everything.

This belief has grown to the point of making the post-modern man – who thinks he is completely autonomous – feel that he can create values, call darkness by the name of light and call light by the name of darkness, be free to create truth and falsehood, good and evil according to the arbitrariness of his heart. And even in it one cannot believe.

Modern man has developed the illusion that he can get along better without faith and without reverence and that they are a primitive matter. He thought that nothing obliged him to take on the yoke of the kingdom of heaven, and that he was the king of the world, just like Titus. Rather, said the postmodern man, God will come and war will be made.

So He came and brought us the virus, and proves to us that even in front of a small mosquito, a tiny, microscopic creature, we cannot prevail, and returns us to our true dimensions until we realize that we have no one to rely on, but our Father in heaven.

Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu is the head of Judaic and Hebrew studies of Hillel Academy of Broome County.

In My Own Words

Anger

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

There is an enormous amount of anger boiling across the United States. Some people are angry at what they see as restrictions on their rights to act, think or behave as they wish. Others are angry because they don’t believe they have the same protection under the law due to their skin color, ethnicity or sexual orientation. One side sees the other as trying to take away what they believe rightly belongs to them. The other side responds that they are only demanding their just share.

This anger is not new. Before the last election, I wrote about the large amount of anger in our country and how, no matter who won the election, we needed to find a positive way to deal with it so we could work together for the good of our country. Unfortunately, the past few years have brought greater distance and even more anger.

I understand the anger because I feel it when I see people ignoring COVID-19 restrictions – spreading a deadly disease through thoughtless or careless behavior – sometimes hoping those people suffer from COVID before they spread it to someone else. But this is *not* the way I want to think or feel. I know whenever I have overwhelming sense of emotion, there is usually something else behind it – some other problem I’m trying to avoid thinking about.

So what is really behind the anger sweeping across our country? Fear. Fear of an unknowable future and our place in it. We need to address people’s fears because we won’t

be able to resolve other issues until we do. What are these fears? Below are just a few of them. (And believe me, this list is far from all inclusive.)

◆ People are afraid that they’re going to lose their jobs and livelihoods. They see gains by others as a loss to themselves. They may believe there is only so much – jobs, money, homes, luck, etc. – to go around and, if someone else has it, there won’t be enough for them.

◆ People of color fear for their lives. They aren’t just protesting for equal rights – although that plays a large role – but because they fear they might be killed at a routine traffic stop or walking down the street because someone assumes that a person of color is automatically more dangerous than someone white.

◆ Policemen’s families fear that their loved ones might not survive their latest shift and that a simple action – a traffic violation or stopping a fight – will lead to their loss and sorrow.

◆ LGBTQ people want to be able to marry, hold a job and live safely. They don’t want to be killed because someone finds their existence offensive or believes what they do is against God’s laws.

◆ People are afraid that they will no longer feel special if everyone is equal. After all, if everyone is equal, then how can they be better than someone else? And the need to feel better helps them when their lives aren’t perfect. They can look at someone else’s life and feel superior due to their

religion, skin color, ethnicity, etc., even if they don’t have the same social or financial status.

◆ People rage against wearing masks because they fear the government is taking over their lives – dictating how they should live, eat, etc. Safety is less important to them than their version of freedom.

How does this fear become anger? That’s simple: it’s so much easier to be angry and blame someone else than it is to stop and face your fears. But yelling at each other isn’t going to help. Demonizing the other – no matter how tempting it is – is not going to help. Trying to reach out and understand each other just might.

I know: It’s not that simple, especially if you are a member of a group that’s been oppressed. It’s not fair to make those American citizens wait one more minute to get their fair share of the promise this country makes to *all* its citizens. But realizing that the other side is acting as much of out fear as anger may make it possible for the two sides to meet. It gives them both something tangible to talk about.

Is this a complete answer? I have no idea, but we need to do something because I am afraid for our country. I am afraid that the promise of the United States will be lost forever among these waves of anger. No one group owns this country. No one group is the only one with rights. No one group is greater or lesser than another. Coming together is the only way to survive.



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LETTERS

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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TC to hold Simchat Torah concert on October 9

Temple Concord will hold a virtual concert "Celebrate Torah-Celebrate Life!" featuring "Nefesh Mountain" on Friday, October 9, beginning at 8 pm. Advanced registration is required to receive the login information. Contact Temple Concord for the Zoom registration link at templeconcordbinghamton@gmail.com or 723-7355.

"Temple Concord is excited to celebrate Simchat Torah this year in a unique way," said organizers of the event. "In past years, we had danced with the Torahs, then unrolled one Torah around the social hall with different people reading a few verses in each book of the Torah. This year, we will be celebrating the holiday from our homes on Shabbat. We will also be honoring

the memory of Richard Frankel, who died this past summer, in joining with other smaller Union for Reform Judaism congregations for a live concert with Nefesh Mountain. Dick Frankel set up the Harriet and Richard Frankel Shabbat and Holiday Music Fund several years ago to support musical programs for Jewish holiday and Shabbat celebrations and Services."

TC Sisterhood paid-up program Oct. 11

Temple Concord Sisterhood will hold a paid-up program, "Bingo Under the Tent," on Sunday, October 11, at 1 pm. It will be held outdoors under the tent in the Temple Concord

garden, 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton. The program is free and open to all Sisterhood members who have paid their 2020-21 dues of \$30, or who will pay them at the tent on October 11.

Reservations should be made by Wednesday, October 7, to Phyllis Kellenberger at pweinste@stny.rr.com or 727-8305 or 723-2193.

Resources.....

the public. To register, visit fairfield.edu/bennettprograms.

◆ The Leo Baeck Institute will present a discussion of chapters 1-5 of "Berlin Alexanderplatz," by the Jewish author Bruno Alfred Döblin, featuring Peter Jelavich, a professor of history at Johns Hopkins University and the author of "Berlin Alexanderplatz: Radio, Film, and the Death of Weimar Culture" (2006), on Wednesday, September 30, at 2 pm. The book tells the story of Franz Biberkopf, ex-con, pimp, small-time criminal and ordinary Joe trying to stay on the straight and narrow. The novel is said to capture life in 1920s Berlin like no other document. For more information or to register, visit <https://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/event/lbi-book-club-berlin-alexanderplatz-by-alfred-doblin/>.

◆ *The Forward* will present the virtual program "Still Small Voice: Talking about God in the midst of a plague" on Thursday, October 1, at noon. Abigail Pogrebin, author and *Forward* contributor, will be joined by four of the 18 rabbis she interviewed for *The Forward's* recent series on God: David Wolpe of Sinai Temple in Los Angeles, Angela Buchdahl of Manhattan's Central Synagogue, David Ingber of Manhattan's Romemu and Laura Shaw. For more information or to register, visit https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_J7BE0389SZqMWxuMDww50A.

◆ The Skirball Culture Center is offering classes online that allow participants to explore Jewish life. Classes include "Photographing Jews: Race, Gender, and Power in the Mediterranean" and "Women in Yiddish Song: A Sing-Along History Class." There is a cost to attend classes. For more information, visit www.skirball.org/programs/classes.

◆ The Center for Jewish History will hold "Theodor Herzl: The Charismatic Leader - Live on Zoom" with Derek Penslar, who will discuss his book "Theodor Herzl: The Charismatic Leader." The event will take place on Wednesday, October 14, at 4 pm. For more information or to register, visit <https://herzl.bpt.me/>.

◆ The Center for Jewish History is holding the online exhibit "George Salter: A Legacy of Book Design" at <https://cjhexhibitions.cjh.yourcultureconnect.com/bottom-nav-bar/e/salter/test-introduction>. George Salter has been called one of the most prolific and influential book designers of the 20th century whose career included works for all the major publishing houses in both the United States and Germany. His work has become the benchmark by which contemporary book design is still measured today.

◆ Let My People Eat (<https://letmypeopleeat.com/>) is a podcast devoted exclusively to a kosher, holistic nutrition lifestyle, with weekly episodes focused on the health of the Jewish community. Co-hosts Jill Sharfman, a holistic nutritionist, and Dr. Andrea Moskowitz, M.D., a psychiatrist, seek to demystify confusing talk about food and wellness, and arm their audience with the knowledge and confidence to eat, feel and be healthy.

◆ The National Library of Israel has launched "Jewish Journeys," a new virtual exhibition that is part of European Days of Jewish Culture 2020. The exhibition presents a thematic exploration of the wanderings of the Jewish people over the centuries, through the prism of select treasures from the NLI collection. A section for children also includes games and activities. To view the exhibit, visit <https://journeys.nli.org.il/>.

◆ The Center for Jewish History will hold the webinar "Family History Today: Donating Your Family Papers - How, When, Where and Why?" on Wednesday, October 7, at 4 pm. Karen Franklin, director of family research at the Leo Baeck Institute, is donating her family papers to LBI, and will address how to organize and prepare collections for donation to ensure that the material will be accessible and meaningful to future researchers. Topics covered will include the types of collections that are accepted, what to do with difficult and personal information, and requesting access restrictions. For more information or to register, visit <https://programs.cjh.org/tickets/family-history-today-2020-10-07>.

◆ The Hazon Seal of Sustainability Summit 2020 will take place online on Thursday, October 8, from 9:30 am-2 pm. It will be a day of learning for the extended Hazon Seal of Sustainability community to engage in learning, resource-sharing and community building. Individual registration is \$18. Groups may also register. For more information or to register, visit <https://hazon.org/calendar/hazon-seal-summit-2020/>.

Continued from page 3

◆ Jewish Fiction Net, www.jewishfiction.net/index.php/current-issue/, has a new issue. There is no cost to read the online magazine, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary.

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

OF NOTE

Appel

Stephen J. Appel's exhibit "Water - Different Forms" is being shown at the Marica Brown and Raymond Loft Galleries, Chenango Arts Council, 27 West Main St., Norwich, through October 2. Masks and social distancing are required. The exhibit is also featured on the Council's website ChenangoArts.org, as well as its Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages.

Appel's photos depict water as droplets, snow, streams, ice crystals and other wonders of nature. Much of the imagery is a study in macro-photography, or an extreme closeup of a tiny subject, allowing the viewer a new perspective on objects they might never even notice.

The gallery's hours are Tuesday-Friday, 10 am-5 pm. Any questions can be directed to 336-2787 or info@chenangoarts.org.

*The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to Julie Piaker on the death of her mother,
Lucille Janofsky*

DEADLINES	
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Deepest condolences to Beth Slater on the loss of both parents and her only sibling in the last 14 months, and to her children, Ruth and Robert Cooper, on the loss of their grandparents and uncle. May your memories of them always be a blessing.

The Hillel Academy family wishes to express its heartfelt condolences to Julie Piaker on the passing of her mother, Lucille Janofsky, Leah bat Shmuel v'Faigah. May her memory be a blessing.

In Lucille's honor, donations can be made to Magen David Adom (<https://afmda.org/>) or the Parkinson's Foundation (<https://www.parkinson.org/>).

May the Almighty comfort the entire family among all the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.



Off the Shelf

Women's roles and history

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Ever wonder what would happen if characters from different novels were to meet? In the case of those featured in this review, there would be arguments about the role women should play in public and private life. However, that is not their only purpose: the authors also portray Jewish life in different time periods – showing how Jews were viewed by the surrounding culture.

“Beyond the Ghetto”

What is the place of Jews in the larger world? What role should women take within the Jewish world? Those questions are among the many asked in Michelle Cameron's “Beyond the Ghetto Gate” (She Write Press). The novel takes place in Italy from 1796-97 during the French conquest of the country. France has offered equality to all its citizens, although it frowns on religious practice. Religion, however, still plays a major role in the lives of Catholics and Jews alike in Ancona. When the French troops – including the Jewish Daniel who volunteered for the army – rip down the walls of the Jewish ghetto, not everyone is pleased, especially when Jews are given a role in the new city government.

Equality is not offered to everyone, though. Mirelle is forbidden to work at her father's workshop because the local rabbi thinks it is inappropriate for a young woman to be in the same building as the men who write religious documents. Yet, Mirelle is far better with numbers and bookkeeping than her father and has often prevented him from being cheated. When disaster hits the family, Mirelle is expected to make a good marriage. Unfortunately, she finds herself in love with a French soldier, a Christian friend of Daniel's. Her love choice is not only between duty and love: neither religious community would accept their marriage. At the same time, the Catholic Francesca is faced with her own religious dilemma, although in her case, the lives of

many will be affected by her decisions.

“Beyond the Ghetto Gate” definitely had a feminist feel, although Cameron never lets that negatively affect the action or get in the way of the multifaceted plot. While this kept me turning pages to learn what would happen to its many characters, I didn't find myself emotionally engaged. The novel is very well done, though, and perfect for book clubs because it offers a great deal of food for thought.

“A Ceiling Made of Eggshells”

Some women feel productive working outside the home; others long for family and children. The latter opinion expresses the desires of Loma in Gail Carson Levine's tween novel “A Ceiling Made of Eggshells” (Harper), which takes place in Spain in from 1483-92. According to Loma's grandmother, Spain is a safe place for Jews who have lived there for more than 1,000 years. However, Loma discovers that the place of Jews in Spain is far more precarious than she thought when she begins to accompany her grandfather on visits across the country, including audiences with King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. The monarchs not only want money from the Jewish community, but wish its members would convert to Christianity for the good of their souls. Balancing being friendly with the royal court and remaining true to Judaism is not easy, but Loma helps her grandfather deflect potential problems. However, as the years go by, she not only misses her nieces and nephews when she travels, but longs for children of her own. Do her personal desires outweigh what her grandfather accomplishes, or should she be satisfied with helping the community?

Although aimed at younger readers, “A Ceiling Made of Eggshells” offers much to adults, particularly when asking what is more important: the community or personal desires. This question arises not only with Loma's hope for a family of her own, but about whether to convert and

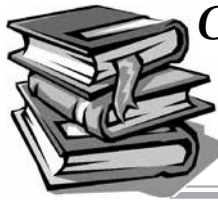
remain in Spain, or remain Jewish and leave the only home one has ever known. The last section of the novel was very suspenseful, but to reveal why would spoil the surprise. Parents and tweens may want to read this work together and discuss the decisions that Loma and her family make.

“The Book of V”

The most unusual novel in this review is Anna Solomon's “The Book of V” (Henry Holt and Company). Taking place in three time periods, it offers an original take on the book of Esther. The section focusing on the biblical Esther is unlike any other reading of the megillah I've seen, although parts are based on rabbinical discussions of the text. However, none of the characters and little of the action closely resembles that found in the Bible.

The other two characters live in more contemporary times. Vivian's story begins in the 1970s and readers soon discover her connection to the megillah. As the wife of a rising politician in Washington, DC, she resembles Vashti, since she is also asked to do something horrible. That one action changes the course of her life. Then, in contemporary times, Lily struggles with her role as a wife and mother, hoping to retain some sense of herself as a writer and a human being. The community is preparing for Purim and, although Lily dislikes the children's version of the megillah she reads to her daughters, she's promised to make them costumes for the Purim parade.

Solomon keeps readers guessing about the fates of her characters and wondering if there is any connection between them. “The Book of V” is not any easy book to read because, at first, there seem to be no connections between the three sections. Esther's story contains magical realism that felt out of place. Yet, Solomon managed to pull all the strings together and create a satisfying ending, one that kept me thinking about her work long after I read the final page.



Off the Shelf

Outsiders of the shtetl

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

An idealized view of the shtetl used to exist in the American mind – a wonderful place, filled with happy, observant Jews who lived joyous Jewish lives. Over the past several decades, scholars have been disputing that view, showing that shtetl life was more complex and far from perfect. A new work “Stepchildren of the Shtetl: The Destitute, Disabled, and Mad of Jewish Eastern Europe, 1800-1939” by Natan M. Meir (Stanford University Press) focuses on one specific aspect of shtetl life: its treatment of outsiders, those who, for a variety of reasons, needed help from the community in order to exist.

The treatment of these people varied over the large time period Meir discusses. That's partly because the world changed due to economic and political shifts, many of which left Jews destitute and homeless. Although it's an oversimplification of Meir's complex work, there were roughly three different ways of viewing outsiders: 1) they were seen as having a special connection to God, which meant they should be well treated; 2) they were thought to have medical and emotional problems that could be taken care of through treatment and training; and 3) they became symbolic representatives of the Eastern European Jewish community as a whole – part of a larger malady that the Zionist Movement hoped to erase.

The author notes how the Jewish community always had mixed feelings about these outsiders, and those with very different problems – physical, psychological and economic – were often lumped together. He writes that “irrespective

of their particular difference, marginal people are bounded together by their status as outsiders. Disabled people are visibly other in terms of the physical body; mentally ill people fall outside the cognitive mainstream that we are familiar with in everyday life; itinerant beggars and vagrants lack the fixed abode associated with ordinary settled life. These differences represent a tear in the fabric of everyday life and serve as a reminder of all that is base, ugly, unfair, repulsive in this world.” Outsiders made people feel pity, but also revulsion. Yet, madmen were considered to have a link to the supernatural. The same was true for orphans, who were often asked to lead the last prayer service of the Shabbat because their prayers were considered especially effective.

As Jewish populations modernized, their thoughts about outsiders changed, particularly those who begged for a living. Beggars began to be treated as idlers; some people believed that beggars were poor because they didn't want to work. The problem was made worse by increasing economic problems that were no fault of those forced from their homes. Even villages that wanted to help the poor often didn't have enough money to care for the poor in their own communities, let alone those traveling from place to place. Many villages restricted how long beggars could stay within their borders, forcing them to leave after that stated time. Rather than allow individuals to give money to the poor, communal organizations were created to distribute the funds. This led to the division of the poor into two classes: the deserving poor, who received funds,

and the undeserving poor, who were not given money.

Matters did not improve in the early 20th century. Meir notes how these outsiders came to symbolize the entire Jewish community: “After the expulsions and massacres of World War I and its aftermath created hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees and orphans, many of them with serious physical and mental injuries, figures that had previously been outsiders now represented the mainstream of Jewish society.” Numerous philanthropic organizations were organized to help, while the Zionist Movement saw a return to the land of Israel as an answer to many of these problems. Yiddish writers also used outsiders in their writings in order to represent the decline of Jewish European society.

The low status of outsiders allowed them to be abused when, in 1827, Czar Nicholas I instituted a draft. Jewish communities were forced to send recruits to the Russian army for a 25-year term of service. The question of how these conscripts were picked was a troublesome one. Rich families found ways to keep their sons safe, sometimes paying someone to take their place. Other times communities deliberately picked those who were on the margins: those who depended on the community for financial support and/or whose behavior was considered unacceptable. However, Meir notes that as unjust as some of the decisions were, “the ultimate responsibility lay with the brutal Nicholaevan regime, which had already made the task difficult enough by freeing prosperous merchants from the draft. The kahal was forced to act callously in order to meet the demands made of it.”

Meir covers a wide variety of material, too much to do justice in a short review. Perhaps one of the most important things he considers is how rarely were the actual voices of outsiders heard – whether in official documents or in the works produced by Yiddish writers. He also reminds readers that these are real people he's writing about: “women and men, children and old people, who lived lives of extraordinary challenge, pain, and misery.” “Stepchildren of the Shtetl” is an attempt to discover the truth of their lives. It is also a complex scholarly work, filled with great detail. But anyone who wants to truly understand the reality of Eastern European Jewish life will learn a great deal from its pages.

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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BD held Selichot service



Beth David Synagogue held a Zoom Selichot service on September 12.

Virtual film fest event

At right: The Jewish International Film Fest of Greater Binghamton held a virtual showing of the documentary "They Ain't Ready for Me" during the second weekend in September. Fifty-five households signed up to watch the film. Around 20 people attended the virtual discussion, which was held on September 14 and led by Ben Kasper, professor emeritus of social science at SUNY Broome and a member of the Temple Israel Executive Board. Shown is a screen shot of the discussion. Those attending said they respected the work of Tamar Manasseh, an African American rabbinical student who is leading the fight against senseless killing on the south side of Chicago, who was the subject of the documentary.



Jews in Sports

Aly Raisman: Olympic travail and triumph

BILL SIMONS

Summer has come and gone, and the 2020 Summer Olympics number amongst the many casualties of the Coronavirus pandemic. For Jews, the Olympics have brought both tragedy and victory. The 1936 Berlin Olympics, hosted by Adolf Hitler, enabled the Third Reich to pose as a reasonable regime, thus sadly encouraging Western appeasement and German ambition. The 1972 Munich Olympics were the setting for the slaughter of 11 Israeli athletes by Black September terrorists. The Olympics have, however, also provided the venue for extraordinary achievements by Jewish athletes. Mark Spitz won a then unprecedented seven gold medals in the tragic Munich Olympics. At the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, GA, gymnast Kerri Strug, despite injury and excruciating pain, summoned valor and talent to perform a memorable vault that enabled the United States to take the gold from the favored Russian team. And the great Jewish-American gymnast Aly Raisman has experienced both Olympic travail and triumph.

Only 18 years old at the time of the 2012 Olympics, Raisman, a photogenic 5'2" brunette from Needham, MA, emerged as an athletic and media phenomenon during the London competition. Even Raisman's two biggest boosters, her engaging and animated parents, Lynn and Rick, acquired a measure of celebrity. As captain of the U.S. women's gymnastics team, "the Fierce Five," Raisman projected athletic mastery, steely resolve and preternatural leadership. Taking on the balance beam, Raisman, fortified by mettle and intense preparation, defied the laws of gravity. Performing her floor routine—punctuated by dramatic leaps, acrobatic flips, pneumatic cartwheels and theatrical tumbling turns—to the choreographed music of the iconic Israeli folk song "Hava Nagila," Raisman highlighted her connection to fellow Jews.

Although Jacques Rogge, president of the International Olympic Committee, rebuffed the request for a moment of silence at the opening ceremony to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the murder of Israeli athletes at the Munich games, Raisman's support for a prime-time remembrance led many Jews to cast her as a standard bearer. Abraham Foxman, director of the Anti-Defamation League, said of Raisman: "She is a remarkable young woman who stood up for what she believed was right." Two years short of her 20th birthday, Raisman, in a landmark performance, won two gold medals and a bronze at the 2012 Olympics, as well as admiration for her character and commitment. She had attained the status of American and Jewish hero.

The 2016 encore Rio de Janeiro Olympics proved a memorable encore for Raisman. Although the spotlight frequently shown on the nonpareil athletic artistry of teammate Simone Biles, Raisman again captained the U.S. women's gymnastic team and turned in another stellar performance. She won three medals, a gold for the first-place finish of the U.S. squad in team competition and two silvers in, respectively, the individual all-around and floor exercise events. Now the eldest member—the "Grandma"—of her team, Raisman at Rio de Janeiro still possessed her signature virtuosity, strength and determination, yet expressed unselfish appreciation of teammate Biles' dominance. *USA Today* pundit Luke Kerr-Dineen observed of Raisman's dignity at the 2016 Olympics, "She wasn't being driven by the darkness that comes with trophy hunting... It was the love of the sport pushing Raisman forward. It wasn't about winning or losing anymore, it was about what it meant to her. There's something beautiful about that."

Celebrity brought recognition and rewards. Raisman's image and activities pervaded media platforms. With Jews from all over the world, including the legendary Israeli President Shimon Peres, in attendance and applauding, Raisman lit the ceremonial torch to commence the quadrennial Maccabiah Games, the "Jewish Olympics," at Teddy Stadium in Jerusalem on July 19, 2013. With her "Fierce Five" teammates, she met with President Barack Obama, who proved more adept at statecraft than gymnastic splits, in the Oval Office. Time 100 honored Raisman as one of the most influential people in the world. Partnered with

Mark Ballas, Raisman radiated glamor and dynamism on "Dancing with the Stars." Her evocative photos appeared in the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue. Extensive publicity surrounded Raisman's romance with handsome NFL tight end Colton Underwood. Seemingly, Raisman had morphed into a real life Jewish-American Wonder Woman.

The journey to excellence, however, often exacts a heavy toll, particularly on those who attain that status in their youth. Serious gymnastic competition requires long, grueling hours of practice commenced at an early age. By age 10, Raisman practiced four hours a day and that would lengthen to seven-hour daily workouts. Bullying boys mocked her muscles. Summoning the resolve to project a confident demeanor belied the fear of heights that Raisman felt on the bars. Like all elite athletes, Raisman

experienced cycles of pain, injury and rehabilitation. Relationships and a balanced coming of age were casualties of her demanding regimen. The taxonomy of competition immersed Raisman in the autocratic residential training camp of coaches Bela and Martha Karolyi. Raisman's frenetic schedule of practice, travel and competition left little room for extracurricular activities, family gatherings, parties, dating or friendships rooted in just hanging out. Training for the 2012 Olympics necessitated Raisman completing her senior year of high school online.

Even more disturbing, for years, USA Gymnastics failed to protect more than 140 young women athletes under its domain from the predatory sexual abuse of Dr. Larry Nassar, the team physician. Indeed, USA Gymnastics participated See "Raisman" on page 8

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The College of Jewish Studies was founded in 1986

as a coalition between the Judaic Studies Department at Binghamton University and several local Jewish sponsoring institutions, including the Jewish Community Center, the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, Beth David Synagogue, Temple Concord and Temple Israel. Its mission is

to provide opportunities for quality adult Jewish education in Broome County. The CJS Committee strives to bring scholars from local and regional campuses for enlightening lectures; an effort is made to combine broad appeal with intellectual and stimulating content and challenge.

Congregational Notes

Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
 Rabbi: Rachel Safman
 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
 Presidents: David Weiner and Linda Aigen
 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.

For High Holiday services, all activities will be virtual, except as noted, and led by Rabbi Rachel Safman and Cantor David Acker. A full listing of activities may be found at www.tbeithaca.org.

On Sunday, September 27, Kol Nidre, at 6:15 pm, there will be the calling of past presidents into assembly; at 6:30 pm, the recitation of Kol Nidre declaration and evening service; and at 7:35 pm, drasha followed by the president's address.

On Monday, September 28, Yom Kippur, morning devotions will begin at 9 am and include Torah service (in-person attendance by prior invitation) at 10:30 am; drasha (sermon) at 11:15 am; and Musaf from 12-1:30 pm. The afternoon/evening program will begin at 5:30 pm and include Yizkor at 6 pm; Mincha at 6:30 pm; and Neilah from 7-7:45 pm.

For families on Yom Kippur, Monday, September 28, there will be a tot program from 8:30-9 am; pre-recorded congregational singing at 10:15 am; elementary/family service from 11:30 am-noon; and discussion of Yonah at 5:30 pm (requires pre-registration). Note: Packets of asynchronous (offline) activities will be available for children/youth all day.

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 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
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 E-mail: zchein@Jewishbu.com, rchein@Jewishbu.com
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 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

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 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.twcbb.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.

On Saturday, September 26, Shacharit services will be held at 10:30 am via Zoom. The Torah portion is Deuteronomy 32:1-52 and the haftarah is Joel 2:15-27. At 7:30 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom. Both will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown.

On Sunday, September 27, at 12:30 pm, Rabbi Geoffrey Brown will lead Torah study services via Zoom.

For High Holiday services on Monday, September 28, see the High Holiday schedule.

On Saturday, October 3, the Torah portion is Leviticus 22:26-23:44 and the haftarah is Zechariah 14:1-21. At 7:30 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom. Both will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown.

On Sunday, October 4, at 12:30 pm, Rabbi Geoffrey Brown will lead Torah study services via Zoom.

An Executive Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 6, at 7 pm, via Zoom.

The temple office will be closed Monday, October 12.

Office hours for Tuesday-Wednesday, October 13-14, will be 2-4 pm.

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

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.

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, September 25, light candles before 6:36 pm
 Saturday, September 26, Shabbat before 7:35 pm
 Sunday, September 27, light candles before 6:33 pm
 Monday, September 28, yom tov ends 7:32 pm
 Friday, October 2, light candles before 6:24 pm
 Saturday, October 3, light candles after 7:22 pm
 Sunday, October 4, yom tov ends 7:21 pm
 Friday, October 9, light candles before 6:12 pm
 Saturday, October 10, light candles after 7:11 pm
 Sunday, October 11, yom tov ends 7:10 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 September and October.

Friday, September 25: Shabbat Shuvah service at 7 pm led by Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell at <https://bit.ly/3hC7Qf5>.

Saturday, September 26: Torah study at 9:15 am at <https://bit.ly/3muj34U>, or call 1-929-205-6099 and enter meeting ID 342 411 102.

Saturday, September 26: "Havdalah with a Bonus" at 7 pm at <https://bit.ly/33ytm6>, or call 1-929-205-6099 and enter meeting ID 526 246 866, or on www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Sunday, September 27: Erev Yom Kippur service at <https://bit.ly/3hC7J39>. Nidre instrumental prelude at 7:30 pm; Kol Nidre - Amidah from 7:50-8:35 pm; and confessional, sermon and Kaddish from 8:50-9:35 pm.

Monday, September 28: Family service at 9 am at <https://bit.ly/3c6Qy8x>. Adult services at <https://bit.ly/3hzMhfe>: morning prayers, silent prayer 10:15-11 am; Avinu Malkeinu, Torah service 11:30 am-12:15 pm; sermon, confessional, Great Aleinu 12:30-1:15 pm; "Jews of Color, Racism and Reform Judaism: A Dialogue" 2 pm; meditative music 3 pm; Yizkor 4 pm; Healing Service 4:45 pm; Neilah concluding service 4:45 pm; and Havdalah 6:30 pm.

Friday, October 2: Sukkot Shabbat services from the sukkah.

Saturday, October 3: Torah study 9:15 am; Havdalah from the sukkah.

Sunday October 4: Sisterhood Rummage Sale 10 am-2 pm.

Friday, October 9: Atzeret Simchat Torah Shabbat service at 7 pm and Nefesh Mountain Simchat Torah Concert at 8 pm. To register for the concert, visit <https://bit.ly/3mtmLMg>.

Saturday, October 10: Torah study at 9:15 am; Festival Shabbat Service with Yizkor at 10:30 am; "Havdalah with a Bonus" at 7 pm.

Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated
 Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045
 Phone: 607-756-7181
 President: Carol Levine, 315-696-5744
 Cemetery Committee, 315-696-5744
 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.

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.



Reflections on *shuvah* on Shabbat Shuvah

Haazinu, Shabbat Shuvah, Deuteronomy 32:1-52

RABBI MOSHE SHMARYAHU, HILLEL ACADEMY

The Shabbat between Rosh Hashanah, when the moon is covered, and Yom Kippur, the 10th of Tishrei is called Shabbat Shuvah – the Shabbat of 10 days of *te-shuvah*. *Te-Shuvah* means “to return,” not in the sense of answer, but a turning back.

Although this Shabbat is called Shabbat Shuvah, the *parasha* a week ago was called Shabbat Vayelech – “and he went.” The intention to go and return are complete opposites. Such is our life: back and forth, back and forth.

If we follow the phrase *shuv*, we will see that it comes in the context of the poor spiritual and practical condition of the children of Israel, whose level of sin was so high that God destroyed their Temple, and killed and exiled them from their land.

The prophet, therefore, asks that the children of Israel return to the condition they were in before they sinned by seeking repentance – *teshuvah* – and the promise of God that if they return to Him, He will return to them, bringing the people of Israel back to the land of Israel and rebuilding the Temple for them.

It can be summed up and said that the degree of sin of “Israel in the time of the prophets,” which led to general destruction, was much higher than the “degree of Israel of today,” where we see the return of Israel to its land in the midst of redemption.

The Jewish philosopher Franz Rosenzweig says that the word *teshuvah* exists only in the Hebrew language. It does not translate exactly into any other language, and, hence, the return journey is an original, ancient and profound Hebrew idea, which has no equivalent in other world religions.

And so, the question I ask myself every year on Shabbat Shuvah, is: Where do we go back to? Of course, if we are talking about returning, then it is clear that this is a place we have already been to. But I have not been in a worse place than I am now, I have never been in the position of my ancestors, who sinned in idolatry, incest and bloodshed, slander and gossip at very high social levels. I clearly see around me men and women with high morals who are gracious, merciful, givers of charity, lovers of God and who make every effort to preserve and cultivate Judaism and Jewish tradition.

Modern discourse yields new and contemporary answers to the question of return; the most common of all is to return to ourselves. But what is returning to ourselves? Where is this self located? In a wonderful article on Rabbi Nachman’s thought, titled “And Your Faith in the Nights,” Rabbi Elisha Tzur writes the following: “Man (plural to male and female)... seeks his way, wants to find meaning for life, meaning to all who go through it, a cure for his pain. He wants to know how he can live better, reconcile contradictions, find openings for meaning, understanding and a sense of wholeness.... The root, the fundamental substance of life, the very essence of life – disappears from human attainment, and therefore there will always be a state of ambiguity that envelops all life and the whole human spirit... and despair and fear of failure lurk for all human actions. Anything can fail, get lost, die ... in the end.” (From an eclectic and daring collection of articles on Rabbi Nachman’s thought, “The Universe Has a Heart.”)

The article seeks to find the spiritual infrastructure that Rabbi Nachman sought all his life – the same solid and eternal foundation, the spring from which all existence in the universe springs, the root that nourishes and satisfies all existence, from which reality comes, and to which everything returns.

The universe, Rabbi Nachman believed, has a heart. Religious language calls the heart of the universe, this root, “God,” or “*ha’va’ya*.”

Man will never stop searching for the heart of the universe because to this existential root human beings long. Something in us knows and remembers that this essence is within us from which we were created. And it is every cell and every molecule in our body. And to it, we will return at the end of our lives. And not only man came from there and returned there. Everything – every living thing and every plant and every inanimate thing – comes from the same existential root, to which it returns.

But the truth is there is no need to wait for the end of our lives to return to the root we came from. This divine molecule – the root of existence – is not waiting for us at

the end of the journey. He’s here all the time! He is the infrastructure of existence. He constitutes and sustains every cell and every molecule: “For the thing is very near to you” (Deuteronomy 5:14) as Moses said to the children of Israel.

The problem is – and this is why most human beings are so unhappy – that the true divine particle – or the root of existence to which we long and yearn and miss – “has no body image and no body,” as Maimonides puts it.

Although it is all there is – all matter – but it, itself, is not there. That is, it does not exist in the simple physical sense, and therefore it will not be detected in the particle accelerator in Switzerland. If He were a physical “there,” He could not be the root of existence or the heart of the world.

And here, in this period of time, Moses is exactly 120 years old. His birthday – the day he came from infinity – is also the day of his death, the day he will return from the world back to infinity. Do not worry, Moshe’s separation from the people is spread over several *parashot*, and we have at least two more Shabbats left.

See “Shuvah” on page 8

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NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Ginsburg to be first woman, Jewish person to lie in state at U.S. Capitol

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the first Jewish woman to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court, will now also become the first woman and the first Jewish person to lie in state at the U.S. Capitol building, following her death on Sept. 18 at the age of 87 at her home in Washington, DC. Ginsburg, a heralded liberal judicial, feminist and Jewish icon who was the second woman to serve on the nation's highest court, died from "complications of metastatic pancreas cancer," according to a statement from the Supreme Court shortly after her death. U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) said on Sept. 21 that Ginsburg will lie in state in National Statuary Hall in the U.S. Capitol on Sept. 25. A formal ceremony was planned for the morning of Sept. 25. The honor will come after Ginsburg will lie "in repose" at the Supreme Court building on Sept. 23-24. Both the Supreme Court and the Capitol building are closed to the public, also due to the pandemic. Ginsburg will be just the second Supreme Court justice and the 35th person overall to lie in state at the Capitol, which is an honor reserved for those who have made a significant impact on American life. She will do so despite Jewish law, which requires a body to be buried within 24 hours of the person's death, with some exceptions such as the Sabbath and allowing relatives to be present for the burial. No information on the shiva, where immediate family members of the deceased sit in mourning for seven days (with exceptions that end it early such as Yom Kippur, which begins on Sunday night, Sept. 27), has been released. No information on Ginsburg's funeral has yet been released. She will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia, which is reserved for military veterans and their spouses and children, but also for statespersons such as Supreme Court justices. She is expected to be buried next to her late husband, Martin, a military veteran and tax lawyer who died in 2010. Although Ginsburg will be the first woman to lie in state at the Capitol, civil-rights hero Rosa Parks was the first woman to lay "in honor" at the Capitol in 2005. Along with Parks, three other people have lain in honor at the Capitol.

Report: U.S., UAE seek agreement on F-35s by December

In the wake of the peace agreement signed between the United Arab Emirates and Israel, the United States and the UAE are seeking to reach an initial agreement on buying the advanced F-35 stealth fighter jets by December, sources close to the talks said. The sources told Reuters that the aim of the negotiations is to reach an agreement by UAE National Day on Dec. 2. The deal between the UAE and the United States must honor an agreement with Israel that guarantees a "qualitative military edge" over any Middle Eastern states that purchase U.S. weapons, the Reuters report says. According to the report, one solution being discussed is to have the Lockheed Martin Corporation make the F-35 more visible to Israeli radar systems. Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz was in Washington and was to meet with his U.S. counterpart Mark Esper on Sept. 22 to discuss the matter.

Guy Niv becomes first Israeli to complete Tour de France

Israeli cyclist Guy Niv made history on Sept. 20, becoming the first-ever Israeli cyclist to complete the Tour de France. He was riding as part of the Team Israel Start-Up Nation squad, which was competing in the Tour for the first time. Completing the biggest professional cycling race of all represents a "remarkable accomplishment" for the 26-year-old who, until three years ago, was primarily a mountain biker and had little experience in road racing. "I felt shivers when I crossed the finish line on the Champs-Élysées," said Niv. "It was a sense of vast relief and sheer happiness: I have done it for the next generation of young Israeli cyclists. They can now dream of achieving this and more." He was visibly emotional as he finished the race, acknowledging that it was far from a "walk in the park," saying, "I had to dig deep inside at times." Team owner Sylvan Adams said that Niv faced "the country's and the team's expectations, and never blundered. As a team, we were in

Shuvah. Continued from page 7

This Shabbat – Shabbat Shuvah – is a great invitation for each and every one of us to remember that, at any moment in our lives, we can return to the source of life, the eternal "spring of youth," to be charged with life energy and to go out again into the toil of our lives because the world, as Rabbi

Nachman said, has a heart. The true religious/spiritual work: Back and forth, back and forth, from the heart of the world, (God?) out into our existing world up to 120. Wishing us all a happy new year, a good signature and a good heart.

the game in almost every stage, and although we did not get the coveted stage win, ISN finished with seven 'top 10's, and we were part of many breakaways. I can promise you that we will be back next year with a strengthened team, which will be led by the greatest cyclist of the generation: Chris Froome. We are just getting started."

Report: El Al plans to restart passenger flights in October

Israeli airline El Al plans to resume passenger flights in October and cargo flights in late September. The El Al cargo flights were scheduled to begin on Sept. 21, while on Oct. 1 passenger flights will start to Athens, reported Israeli business daily Globes on Sept. 17. Sun D'Or International Airlines will offer charter flights to destinations in Greece and Croatia, according to the report. On Oct. 12, El Al plans to resume flights along its main routes to New York, London and Paris.

Enraged over Arab ties with Israel, Palestinians quit chairing Arab League sessions

Angered at the Arab world's growing ties with Israel, the Palestinian leadership has quit their chairmanship of Arab League meetings, the Palestinian Authority's foreign minister announced on Sept. 22. "Palestine has decided to concede its right to chair the League's council [of foreign ministers] at its current session. There is no honor in seeing Arabs rush toward normalization during its presidency," said P.A. Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki in Ramallah, reported Reuters. Palestinians are enraged that the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain signed peace agreements with Israel in Washington, DC, the week of Sept. 18, without being condemned by the Arab League. Meanwhile, officials from the Fatah party headed by P.A. head Mahmoud Abbas and the terrorist group Hamas were scheduled to hold talks on improving their cooperation in Turkey on Sept. 22, the report said.

Film agencies in Israel and UAE reach cooperation deal

The Abu Dhabi Film Commission of the United Arab Emirates and the Israeli Film Fund announced a cooperation agreement on Sept. 21. A government agency, the Abu Dhabi Film Commission said the agreement would lead to training programs for film and TV co-production, in addition to joint film festivals, reported the AP. Under the agreement, Emirati students will study in Jerusalem at the Sam Spiegel Film and Television School. It is the latest news of warming ties since the UAE and Bahrain signed peace agreements the week of Sept. 18 to normalize relations with the Jewish state.

New database to track antisemitism in medical field

The Canary Mission, an antisemitism watchdog group, has launched a new way to track Jew-hatred in the medical field. According to Canary Mission, the new database will serve as "a resource dedicated to helping the public become aware of antisemitic and bigoted doctors, nurses, med students and other medical professionals. ... Canary Mission recognizes that for the sake of patient safety, there is an urgent need for greater scrutiny of medical professionals," said the organization. The "Medical List" already contains more than two dozen individuals who have expressed antisemitism online.

Danon. Continued from page 1

as a sign of laziness and backwardness that needed correction. Jewish communities instead considered ways to centralize charity, judge the "worthiness" of recipients and remove Jewish beggars from the streets.

with four other scholars, from the American Academy for Jewish Research as part of the New York State Working Group on Jewish Women and Gender in Global Perspective, a forum for scholars across the region. Danon's new work on gender is connected to the working group's focus area.

At the same time, members of these communities were also seeking to enter the middle class themselves, and looking to restructure both institutions and taxation to relieve the burdens of the poor.

"What can we learn about the history of Jewish women in the Sephardic world?" she said.

Keeping Ladino alive

"A lot of the questions that preoccupied the Jews of Ottoman Izmir are questions we continue to grapple with today: how to best alleviate poverty, how to facilitate entrance into the 'middle class,'" Danon said.

Assistant Professor of Judaic Studies Dina Danon and Assistant Professor of Romance Languages and Linguistics Bryan Kirschen recently received a grant from the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities to set up the Ladino Lab, which begins this fall. The lab will train students in the best practices for the preservation and transliteration of Ladino sources.

While researching her book, she came across a treasure trove of marriage records, including dowry negotiations and trousseau lists. That planted the seed for her latest project: a look at the marketplace of matchmaking, marriage and divorce in the Ottoman Sephardic world. Matchmaking was a profession in those days, she said.

To help spread awareness of the language, Kirschen and his research assistant, Nathan Gross, launched the website Documenting Judeo-Spanish in Solitreo, https://documentingjudeospanish.com/.

This summer, she received a grant, along

Raisman. Continued from page 5

in the coverup of Nassar's heinous behavior and later sought, unsuccessfully, to absolve its negligence by offering a modest financial settlement. A once trusted expert on hip and back pain, Nassar, with gifts and faux solicitude, groomed these young girls for abuse. Raisman's sessions with Nassar began when she was 15. At Nassar's trial, Raisman was one of those who bravely confronted her abuser. Looking Nassar directly in the eye, she stated, "I am not sure I will ever come to terms with how horribly you manipulated and violated me... The effects of your actions are far-reaching. Abuse goes way beyond the moment, often haunting survivors for the rest of their lives, making it difficult to trust and impacting their relationships." Influenced by the forceful and wrenching victim impact statements of Raisman and other women, Nassar's sentence amounted to lifetime incarceration.

help, and Raisman, with the help of therapy, meditation, yoga, journal entries, supportive dogs and reading, has done that. She has opened herself to new friendships and new experiences. While remaining close to her loving family, Raisman is, for the first time, living in a place of her own. She is excited to work with Olay on its skin sun-protection campaign. The initial outlines of a new life agenda with recalibrated goals are starting to emerge. Although Raisman will not try out for the rescheduled Olympics, she still loves gymnastics and is committed to making the sport safe for girls and young women. With protection and assistance, Raisman wants girls and young women to be able to express the dreams and excitement she felt when proclaiming as an 8-year old, "I'm gonna do that." Setting her own schedule and following her own compass, Aly Raisman will notch new milestones. Count on it.

For Raisman, the present is a time for respite, recovery and reflection. Years of intense training, sexual abuse and the rigors of advocating for other victims have taken a toll on her in the form of exhaustion, anxiety, depression and migraines. Nonetheless, an underlying template of strength endures. It takes courage to acknowledge the need for

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.

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