

# THE REPORTER

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## Happy Passover



*Katya Miller*

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## Opinion

A meltdown at *The New York Times*

By David Suissa

(*Jewish Journal* via JNS) – When the top editor of the world's newspaper of record flips and flops and flips again on a subject as sensitive as the use of the N-word, you know things are getting messy at *The New York Times*. And when a Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist claims that the paper “spiked” his column on the subject, well, it just gets messier.

This sad story started when longtime *New York Times* science reporter Donald McNeil was accused in 2019 of using a racial slur while on an overseas trip chaperoning high-school students. At the time, the paper reprimanded but chose not to fire him because there was no malicious intent: McNeil allegedly was referring to the N-word as part of a debate, not using it as a slur. So Editor-in-Chief Dean Baquet gave him a “second chance.”

But when the story resurfaced recently in *The Daily Beast*, an internal firestorm erupted at the *Times*, with 150 outraged employees writing a joint letter to management saying that “intent is irrelevant” and demanding an apology and further investigation.

After McNeil apologized and then was forced to resign, Baquet changed his tune on intent and declared: “We do not tolerate racist language regardless of intent.”

This triggered yet another firestorm for the simple reason that it's hard to justify the notion that intent shouldn't matter. Liberal columnist Jonathan Chait explained that distinction in *New York Magazine* in a piece titled, “Describing a Slur is Not the Same as Using it.”

That is so self-evident that Baquet himself flip-flopped yet again recently by acknowledging in a staff meeting: “Of course intent matters when we're talking about language in journalism. Intent matters.”

Maybe he was influenced by the canceled Bret Stephens column, which, according to reports, began as follows:

“Every serious moral philosophy, every decent legal system, and every ethical organization cares deeply about intention. It is the difference between murder and manslaughter. It is an aggravating or extenuating factor in judicial settings. It is a cardinal consideration in pardons (or at least it was until Donald Trump got in on the act). It's an elementary aspect of parenting, friendship, courtship and marriage.”

The columnist added: “A hallmark of injustice is indifference to intention.”

What I find especially noteworthy about this brouhaha is how tedious it is. Does a Pulitzer Prize winner really need to invest a whole column on an idea as obvious as the value of intent?

**But when we become afraid to even mention a word to describe something, when we're petrified that the cancel mob will come after us and our livelihood, I'd say we're due for a sober reckoning, or at least some candid analysis.**

But this is *The New York Times*, so it's hard to look away. The drama of a top editor who gets an obvious thing right the first time, but then panics when bullied by a mob, and then panics again and redresses himself, is endemic of how low and fearful our discourse has become.

In a cancel culture run amok, one of the biggest fears in America today is the fear of saying the wrong thing. I can understand that impulse if the “wrong thing” is insulting someone because of their race, religion, gender, ethnicity or otherwise. I'd love to live in a world where people are extra careful before unleashing such insults, even as I appreciate that the insults are generally protected by the laws of free speech.

But when we become afraid to even mention a word to describe something, when we're petrified that the cancel mob will come after us and our livelihood, I'd say we're due for a sober reckoning, or at least some candid analysis.

As Columbia linguistics professor and author John McWhorter wrote on Substack, “My own observation of this sort of thing... is that the people hunting down McNeil are swelling with a certain pride in claiming that ‘We decide what we will tolerate,’ as if this constitutes what Black nationalists would term ‘self-determination.’ But the issue is whether what is being determined for the self is good for the self in question.”

McWhorter, who is Black and has written often on these issues, adds that “it is only a certain mob who are making this ‘determination’ [and that] the idea that it is inherent to Black American culture to fly to pieces at hearing the N-word used in reference is implausible at best, and slanderous at worst.”

The more important point, he writes, is that “insisting on this taboo makes it look like Black people are numb to the difference between usage and reference, vague on the notion of meta, given to overgeneralization rather than to making distinctions.”

It would be useful to see more reporting and courageous commentary on this subject. New taboos that are silencing people through fear of losing their jobs is not just a “problem” – it is an alarming trend and condition that must be exposed through maximum sunlight.

And speaking of exposure, I would hope the *Times* will flip-flop yet again and decide to publish Stephens' column. Even a meltdown can use some sunlight.

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## In My Own Words

## Idealistic vs. realistic politics

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

The last time I wholeheartedly admired a politician was Robert F. Kennedy in 1968. That's one reason I've never read any books about him: I don't want to know anything that might tarnish his image in my mind. From that time on, I've admired people's actions, but never expected them not to have said or done things of which I don't agree or approve. In fact, if there is one thing I've learned about politics it's that nice guys' agendas often aren't implemented. Sometimes you have to get down and dirty in order for real change to occur.

I'm not saying that I like this idea. I much prefer idealistic politics to realistic ones, but if I've learned anything over the past 12 years, it's that idealistic politics often get us nowhere. Take for example, a highly educated, kind, charming person like former President Barack Obama. I think he's a wonderful person, but his politics left something to be desired. He should have attacked the Republicans who refused to vote for policies that would have helped their constituents. He should have called out the racism of those who kept saying he wasn't born in the U.S., even after he displayed his birth certificate. He should have called out the lies of those who refused to accept him as a Christian even as he regularly attended church. But Obama thought too well of his fellow man and his policies paid for that.

Perhaps Obama was worried about being labeled an angry Black man. Black anger scares people and angry Black men, who are not the president of the United States, often find themselves in prison for the crime of expressing their anger against systemic racism. Contrast Obama's

attitude with the president who took office after him – a man who often presented an in-your-face posture and attitude that people applauded. It's hard not to believe that white privilege played a role when analyzing the difference between the two men.

Anyone who regularly reads this column knows that I am not a fan of former President Donald Trump, but he was a master of realistic politics because he created his own reality – fake as it was – and convinced people to believe it. The pandemic was not a problem, according to Trump, and even after more than 543,000 Americans have died from COVID-19, many people still believe his claim. Trump also declared the election a fraud and the people who believed that lie attacked the Capitol building, including a few who carried a noose to use on Mike Pence, the Republican vice president.

Everything that has happened leaves me feeling conflicted about Governor Andrew Cuomo. The latest news is that his office has always been a toxic place for women. I can't support that and feel horrible for the women who felt everything from uncomfortable to threatened. Yet, I find myself wanting to follow the practical politics of having a Democratic governor for New York state. After all, former President Trump was accused of not only multiple sexual assaults, but rape, yet *no one* suggested that he resign. The last rape charge, which was revealed during his presidency, barely made it through one news cycle. So, looking at politics from a realistic standpoint means that Cuomo should not resign until he has been found guilty. Plus, the same people who are demanding that Cuomo resign before the investigation concludes should do the same when *anyone* – Republican or Democrat – is accused of sexual impropriety.

The last time Cuomo ran for office, members of New York state public unions were wearing T-shirts saying,

“ABC.” That meant “Anyone but Cuomo.” Yes, Cuomo took on the unions (one of which I am a member of for my chaplaincy work) and won: pay raises were postponed and other benefits delayed. I seriously debated whether to vote for him, but when I looked into the policies of his Republican opponent Rob Astorino, I just couldn't support him. So, even though I had problems with Cuomo, I voted for him.

However, the major reason I don't want Cuomo to resign is the pandemic. You don't have to like Cuomo to see that he took us from being the state with one of the highest percentages of COVID cases to one of the lowest. Yes, I know there was some fudging of numbers and that not every policy he implemented worked. Then again, at the beginning of the pandemic, everyone was playing it by ear because no one knew much about COVID. I've appreciated Cuomo's hard-line, hard-hearted approach, even when it meant I wasn't able to see my mother for months. I want a governor who takes this seriously, especially when we had a president who didn't – whose COVID response committee refused to implement a national policy during the early part of the pandemic because it seemed that Democratic states were being hit harder than Republican ones. That's something that I hope people remember during the next election cycle.

I will be horrified if all the charges against Cuomo are true. In an idealistic world, no woman would be made to feel uncomfortable in her place of work, in her community and in her private life. But we don't live in an idealistic world and, while it pains me to say this, sometimes we have to focus on one thing and ignore the rest. If you think this is terrible, you're right. I think it is, too, and I regret that the politics of the last 12 years have brought me to this point. But if those years have taught me one thing, it's that the political reality of our world is basically and fundamentally unjust.

## About the cover

This year's Passover cover was illustrated by Katherine Sochor of Vestal.



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## OPINIONS

The views expressed in editorials and opinion pieces are those of each author and not necessarily the views of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton.

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

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# Federation to sponsor Yom Hashoah program on April 8

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold a community Yom Hashoah program on Thursday, April 8, at 7 pm. The virtual event will include a live Zoom session with Holocaust survivor Rachel Malmed Epstein, readings by local rabbis and a short introduction from an Israeli dignitary. The event will feature a documentary about Epstein, as well as allow her to share her memories of that time. To register for the Zoom link, visit the Federation website at [www.jfgeb.org](http://www.jfgeb.org).

Epstein was born Rachel Malmed in 1932 in Compiègne, France. By 1942, after English bombs destroyed their home, Malmed, her parents and her younger brother found themselves living in the upstairs apartment of a three-apartment building. One day, the French police came to take her parents to the station for "interrogation" and left the children to fend for themselves. A Gentile neighbor volunteered to watch after 10-year-old Malmed and her 5-year-old brother, Leon, until their return. Their parents did not return. The family hid the children openly throughout the war, risking their lives and the lives of their own children. Out of the approximately 400 Jewish citizens of Compiègne, the two

children were the only ones who survived. After the war, Malmed and her brother did everything they could to honor that family for saving their lives.

In 1950, at the age of 17, Epstein came to the United States where she met her husband, Izzy. They were married a year later, and 13 years after that they were able to bring Leon and his family to the United States. Rachel and Izzy live in Roslyn and have two children, four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

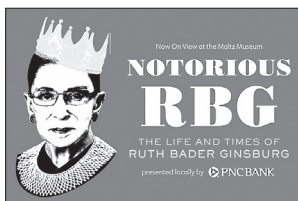
"I am pleased that we will be able to once again hold a Holocaust commemoration," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "This is our second year holding a virtual one, but I feel it's important for the community to gather to recognize the significance of Yom Hashoah. This event is special because we'll be having a Holocaust survivor speak."

Hubal noted the importance of hearing a Holocaust survivor speak. "The survivors of the Holocaust are aging and there are fewer opportunities to speak with them directly," she said. "I look forward to hearing Rachel speak about her experience. There is nothing like hearing someone in person, even if it is through a computer. We need to cherish these opportunities and honor the survivors while we still can."

# Federation to hold online tour of "Notorious RBG" exhibit on April 1

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold a virtual tour of the "Notorious RBG: The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsburg" exhibit from the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage in Cleveland. The 60-minute private tour will be held on Thursday, April 1, at 7 pm. Virtual attendees will enjoy a webinar-style narrated exploration of key ob-



jects and artifacts, followed by a docent-led question-and-answer period.

People can register for the event by visiting the Federation website, [www.jfgeb.org](http://www.jfgeb.org). There is no cost to attend, but donations are appreciated. The event is being sponsored by the Judaic Studies Department at Binghamton University and Hillel at Binghamton.

See "Tour" on page 13

## "Hello Muddah, Hello Faddah"

# CJS spring series on "The American Jewish Summer Camp Experience"

The spring 2021 lecture series of the College of Jewish Studies will showcase "The American Jewish Summer Camp Experience." There will be two lectures in the virtual series. On Thursday, April 22, Stanford University scholar Dr. Sandra Fox will speak on "The Jews of Summer: Going to Camp in Postwar America," which is based on her forthcoming book. On Thursday, April 29, there will be a panel discussion on "How to Run a Jewish Summer Camp," featuring former and current camp directors, Sima and Neil Auerbach, and Dr. Eliav Bock, as well as a summer camp alumna, Sarah Kliensky. Both programs will begin at 7:30 pm, and are free and open to the general public. Those wishing to attend should register on the College of Jewish Studies Facebook page [www.facebook.com/bingcjs](http://www.facebook.com/bingcjs) in order to receive a link to the program.

Fox will look at American Jewish culture in the decades following World War II, when American Jews climbed the socioeconomic ladder and left urban enclaves for the suburbs. Some communal leaders worried that the postwar comforts Jews found there would threaten the vitality of Jewish life. "Jewish educators, rabbis and lay leaders from

across the ideological and religious spectrum – Zionist, Yiddishist, Reform and Conservative alike – came to see See "CJS" on page 11

**REPORTER DEADLINES**

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

ISSUE	DEADLINE
April 9-22.....	March 31
April 23-May 6.....	April 14
May 7-20.....	April 28
May 21-June 3.....	May 10*

**All deadlines for the year can be found at [www.thereporter.org/contact-us/faqs](http://www.thereporter.org/contact-us/faqs) under "Q: What Are the Deadlines for the Paper?"**

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## OF NOTE

### Rozen

Rachel Rozen, the daughter of Bonnie Rozen of Vestal, was named one of the top 30 Women in Food 2021 by the website Lunchbox. Rozen is the chief customer officer for the site and has worked in a variety of different roles within the restaurant industry for more than 20 years. She also has a bachelor's degree in culinary nutrition.

*The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to Larry Bleier on the death of his brother,*  
**Steven Arnold Bleier**

*The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to Myron Ernst on the death of his wife,*  
**Shirley Ernst**

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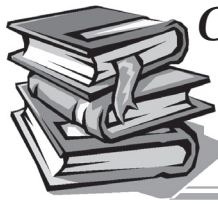
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Off the Shelf

## Searching for paradise

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Pardes, paradise, the orchard: the opening epigraph of David Hopen's novel "The Orchard" (Ecco/HarperCollins) quotes from the Talmud, telling the story of four rabbis who visited paradise. One dies, the second becomes insane, the third becomes an apostate and only the fourth emerges whole. Readers will rightfully wonder how this legend will relate to the life of Ari Eden, the high school senior who narrates "The Orchard." After moving with his parents to Florida, this transplant from a traditional background in Brooklyn will now attend a Modern Orthodox high school that resembles a prep school more than a yeshiva.

Ari's father is almost immediately uncomfortable with the Jewish nature of their new community – starting with their neighbors who invite them to a barbecue where, although the food is kosher, women's arms are not covered, men are drinking beer, and teenage boy and girls swim together in the pool. Ari feels out of his element, but is more open to change because he was unhappy in Brooklyn. When he is befriended by Noah, the neighbor's son, Ari finds himself in the elite group at his new high school and in a world that seems almost completely foreign to him. At first refusing the alcohol and drugs that members of the group regularly partake, Ari finds himself slowly and clearly changing.

The elite group Ari becomes a part of have been friends since grade school. Noah is the prince of the group: friendly, charming and a superior athlete, and the only one with a steady girlfriend. Oliver, the richest, cares little about school and lives to get high or drunk. Amir is the most serious: his focus is on school and getting into college, although, at times, his competitive nature – he wants the best grade and the best test scores – irritates his friends. The one puzzling figure is Evan. Clearly the intellectual of

the group, he continually challenges Ari, competing with him not only for the interest of Rabbi Bloom, the principal of the school, but for Sophia, Evan's former girlfriend. Ari finds himself intrigued and in love with Sophia, an excellent pianist who suffers from doubt and sorrow. Evan has also known sorrow: his beloved mother passed away the previous year and he dislikes his father.

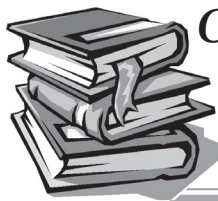
Yet, as much as part of him wants to belong, the group's behavior disturbs Ari, particularly that of Evan who clearly seems unstable. Taking part in their activities – which includes staying out late, even on weeknights, drinking and drugs – puts him at odds with his father who begins to regret moving to Florida, especially when he sees his son becoming less observant. When Ari begins to contemplate attending a secular university, his father makes it clear that he wishes Ari would spend a year or two studying in a yeshiva before looking for a secular occupation. However, Ari has come to love discussing philosophy with Rabbi Bloom, something that makes him desire an education wider than can be found in a yeshiva.

"The Orchard" contains some fascinating thoughts about Judaism and Jewish practice. For example, Ari and his mother appreciate spending time together on Shabbat for different reasons: "For my mother, Shabbat suspended time, providing a moment to breathe. For me, Shabbat restored equilibrium. We went to shul, we ate together, we sang, and for twenty-five structured hours, time resumed a more bearable pace. I grew up finding beauty in Shabbat for precisely the opposite reason that Erich Fromm and most Jews loved Shabbat: once a week, I had the chance not to overthrow time, but to slip happily back into its shackles." Evan, on the other hand, challenges everything he and his friends have learned about Orthodox life. When

talking about their upcoming graduation, he asks his fellow students, "[Now that independence is] here, what will we do with it? Will we live, after all, like everyone else? Will we opt to be precise replicas of our parents' lives? Will we perpetuate what's broken? Gossip, hypocrisy, greed, overpriced food, competition over cars and houses and tzedakah – everything we've been born into.... can end." Unsatisfied with his life, Evan is looking for something beyond the mundane world and wants to share that experience with his friends.

However, the most beautiful thought about religion comes from Rabbi Bloom when he describes to Ari and his friends how God is both an adversary and a comfort: "We need [God] when we need something larger than ourselves to thank and something larger than ourselves to blame. We need Him to feel as if we're not alone. And we need Him to feel as if our loneliness isn't our fault. We need Him when we rejoice, when we want happiness, peace and quiet, but we also need Him when we mourn, when we experience dread, loss, insanity... We need Him more than He needs us. And that, I think is what it all amounts to. So did we make [God] up... Does it matter?" It's clear to readers that Rabbi Bloom's answer to that question is, "No."

"The Orchard" is a complex, compelling novel because it not only discusses the daily lives of the students, but their thoughts about religion, philosophy and life. Hopen has created fascinating characters whose depths and secrets are slowly revealed. Yet, some of their decisions may chill and horrify readers, leading one to wonder if the academy's attempts to educate its students failed or succeeded. Readers may also find themselves returning to the story of the four rabbis as they ponder whether that ancient text came to accurately reflect the lives of these young men.



Off the Shelf

## Parasha and prophet

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

There are many different ways to contemplate and study words of Torah. We can study the intricacies of the Chumash, the first five books, mining them for how best to live our lives. Or we can focus on the prophetic writings, which speak to ethics beyond ritual. Fortunately, we don't have to choose only one option because there are books for every type of spiritual searcher. Those who prefer to study the *parasha shel shavah* (the portion of the week) can look to "Exodus: A Parsha Companion" by Rabbi David Fohrman (Aleph Beta Press/Maggid Books), which focuses on individual sections of the Chumash. Anyone looking for inspiration from the prophets in order to create a more just world will appreciate Abraham Joshua Heschel's "Thunder in the Soul: To Be Known by God" (Plough Publishing House), which is edited by Robert Erlewine.

"Exodus" is Fohrman's second Torah companion and it's as excellent as the first one. (To see *The Reporter* review of "Genesis: A Parsha Companion," visit [www.thereporter-group.org/past-articles/feature-book-review/feature-book-review-stream/book-review-stream/off-the-shelf-biblical-commentary-by-rabbi-rachel-esserman](http://www.thereporter-group.org/past-articles/feature-book-review/feature-book-review-stream/book-review-stream/off-the-shelf-biblical-commentary-by-rabbi-rachel-esserman).) Even when I disagreed with his vision of the text, I found it fascinating

and well done. That's because he is an excellent teacher: he talks directly to readers as if he is having a conversation with them. He also carefully and clearly explains his interpretations in easy to read language.

Fohrman begins by noting the difference between the Hebrew and English titles of the book: Shemot (Names) vs. Exodus. Why, he asks, is this book of the Torah called "Names"? Many commentaries focus on the central event of the book, which is the Exodus from Egypt. But names are also important, especially since the Israelites grow to such multitudes that no one could have known all their names – that is, no human. Fohrman writes, "When we call the book *names* we are not attempting to evade discussion of Egyptian enslavement. On the contrary, this, itself, is a way we talk about enslavement. Through it all, God knows our names. He cares about each and every one of us, in all our pain, all our anguish."

The author also discusses about how seemingly fanciful *midrash* (rabbinic stories) can teach important lessons. When writing of Pharaoh's daughter, he notes the *midrash* that says her arm grew and stretched across the river in order to save Moses in his basket. For Fohrman, the question is not whether that literally happened, but what it can teach us. In this case, he believes it shows the princess striving to save someone almost outside of her reach: someone whom her father was trying to destroy. She exceeded her reach, metaphorically in the *midrash* and literally in the original text, to save an infant slated to die.

One of the most important lessons Fohrman teaches is

that readers should look at the biblical stories as if they didn't know the ending. That leads to great insight. For example, although we know that Moses will be saved, that is not true of Miriam and her mother when they placed the basket holding their beloved relative into the Nile. Fohrman ponders whether Miriam had hope that something good would happen or even knew that things would turn out alright. His answer is, no, that "Miriam didn't have any privileged information at this point. She doesn't know the end of the story, she doesn't have the benefit of reading the book of Exodus as you and I do and flipping forward to see what happens." What she does have instead is faith that God will save her brother.

Another intriguing thought comes when Fohrman discusses the plague that turns the Nile into blood. He sees a connection between that and Pharaoh's drowning of male Israelite children in that river. That water, which is filled with the bodies of those who perished, has run clear – that is, until God uses the plague to reveal the blood of those innocent babies.

"Exodus" is filled with interesting insights and clever looks at individual *parashot*. One need not have read Fohrman's first book in order to appreciate this one. It is perfect for readers studying on their own, but would also work in classes and study groups to generate discussion. According to the publishers, Fohrman is scheduled to publish commentary on the remaining three books of the Chumash and I plan to keep a watchful eye out for those works.

See "Prophet" on page 12



**Happy Passover**



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# TC to host the community a musical program about Israel for 3-6-year-olds and their families

By Reporter staff

Temple Concord will host a musical program about Israel for 3-6-year-olds and their families featuring award-winning musician and early childhood music educator Ellen Allard on Sunday, April 11, at 11:30 am. The Zoom program will be open to the community and is sponsored by a community grant from the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton. Other smaller Jewish communities and congregations will also be joining the program. The Zoom link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86160170996?pwd=QWEwb3A1anJEVmd3clZiUW1GbTlXdz09>, meeting ID 861 6017 0996, passcode 291984. For more information, contact Temple Concord at [TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com](mailto:TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com) or 723-7355.

"It was wonderful to see our children engaged with Ellen and her puppet ZigZag joining in the songs and hand motions in the first program she did for us. I'm looking forward to the second one," said Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell, spiritual leader of Temple Concord. "I'm grateful we could

make it possible for our Jewish community to be able to come together to join in her music and learn about Passover. I look forward to her next program, which will focus on Israel."

According to the Reform Judaism website, "Ellen Allard is synonymous with the very best in children's music. She is a multi-award winning children's recording artist, composer, performer and early childhood music educator, drawing on a rich tradition of musical experiences in presenting her lively and captivating concerts, keynote presentations and workshops for family audiences and educational conferences across the country."

Allard has won several Children's Web awards for her work, including the albums "Sing it! Say it! Stamp it! Sway it! vol. 1," "Sing it! Say it! Stamp it! Sway it! vol. 3," "Sing Shalom: Songs for the Jewish Holidays" and "Good Kid." Her music has been recorded by other artists and her compositions have been used in



Ellen Allard (Photo courtesy of Ellen Allard)

schools, synagogues and summer camps. It is also taught to cantorial students attending Hebrew Union College's Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music in New York City and the Hebrew College in Newton, MA. In addition, it is also taught to students, rabbis, cantors, educators and performers throughout the country.

"I'm so pleased that the first of our community grants is going to programs for young children in our community," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "I think Ellen's second program will be a great way to introduce them to Israel."

For more information about Allard, visit her website at <https://ellenallard.com> or view her Youtube channel at [www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=Ellen+Allard](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Ellen+Allard).

## Intersisterhood event to feature Kiddush cup coaster craft project

Temple Israel will host the 2021 Intersisterhood Program on Zoom on Tuesday, April 27, at 7 pm. Once a year, the Sisterhoods of Temple Israel, Beth David Synagogue and Temple Concord share a program. This year, artist and educator Maxine Rosenberg will teach an English paper piecing project. Participants will be able to prepare a Kiddush cup coaster for Shabbat.

"This paper piecing technique was very popular in the U.S. in the early part of the 20th century," Rosenberg said. "At that time, quilts were often made with small scraps of fabric. Their affordability increased their popularity and sustainability during the Great Depression. Our project will use diamond shapes to form the Star of David and will include a contrasting colored background."

Materials needed for the project will be assembled by the Intersisterhood program organizers, and will be

available for signed-up participants ahead of the event. "Signing up for the event is essential," organizers said, "so that there is enough time to assemble the individual packets of necessary materials."

Reservations must be made by Thursday, April 22, for those who live in town. Out-of-town participants must respond by Friday, April 16, in order to receive their packets by mail on time. Reservations can be made by contacting Tammy Kunsman, Temple Israel's secretary, at 723-7461 or [titammy@stny.twcbc.com](mailto:titammy@stny.twcbc.com). Once registered, local members will need to pick up their packets at Temple Israel, 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal, on either Friday, April 23, or Monday, April 26. Participants will be sent the Zoom meeting ID for the event.

Each packet will include an explanation of English paper See "Coaster" on page 9

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# Theater that engages the head and the heart

By Rabbi Rachel Esserman

Shirley Serotsky, who was recently named the artistic director of the Hanger Theatre in Ithaca, wants to produce “relevant, riveting and joyful theatrical experiences.” She certainly has a great deal of experience as shown by her more than two decades of work in the theater, including her time at the Mosaic Theater Company, the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, Catalyst Theatre Company, Bouncing Ball Theatrical Productions and Theater J.

Serotsky has some very specific ideas about the type of theater she hopes to offer at the Hanger Theatre. “After a couple of decades creating theatrical experiences as both a director and a producer, I’ve come around to defining the kind of theater I am most invested in, and therefore the work that I am best suited to direct or produce,” she said in an e-mail interview.

She noted that she looks for stories that “engage both the head and the heart. That might sound obvious, but there have been times that theater trends moved toward cerebral, emotionally distanced work. I could never get into it. For me, the moment when a play breaks open, when the characters suddenly release everything they’ve been holding back, or the instant of a life-shifting reveal, is deeply satisfying. On the flip side, it’s not enough for me to just feel, I want to walk away from a play having thought about something outside of my realm of everyday experience. I want to keep thinking about a story for days after it ends.”

However, Serotsky wants each play to contain even more depth. “I also tend toward work that has some political or social question at its center, but that examines that question in a way that is deeply connected to character, and avoids being didactic,” she added. “I embrace humor. I revel in theatrical mood swings: what, you’re laughing? No, you’re crying. Now you’re laughing again. To me, this is what keeps theater surprising and delightful, much like life itself.”

Works that contain humor and sadness strike Serotsky as being culturally Jewish. “Sholom Alecheim called it, ‘laughter through tears,’” she said. “In fact, he used that

phrase to define an entire genre. This was a way to survive, to keep going even when it seemed impossible.”

This was true of several plays that she either directed or produced when she was at Theater J, a group that describes itself as “theater that celebrates, explores, and struggles with the complexities and nuances of both the Jewish experience and the universal human condition.”

“In 2012, I directed ‘The History of Invulnerability’ by David Bar Katz,” she said. “The play follows the development of the character of Superman in the 1930s, and really – superheroes in comic books as we know them today – as led by two Jewish creators, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster. Superman became wildly popular, and Siegel campaigned to write him into the war; he eventually succeeded, and was able to depict scenes where Superman fought off the Nazis. The historical fiction through-line of the play overlaps with an imagined plot about several prisoners in a concentration camp, who don’t survive. It’s a fascinating story, which both celebrates the innovation and drive of a forward thinking (though flawed) writer and artist, while also acknowledging that even Superman couldn’t stop that aspect of humanity, which could allow for genocide. Both of these forces co-exist in the world at all times: the will to do good, and the drive to rise up by oppressing others. We need to acknowledge and recognize both in order to be clear-sighted about the work that needs to be done to make the world a more fair and just place.”

A play she produced in 2016, “Another Way Home” by Anna Ziegler, proved to be a lighter theatrical experience. “That story fits in the great Jewish tradition of the family play, but with very modern sensibilities about the challenges of marriage and parenting,” Serotsky noted. “In the play, we meet a couple visiting their young teenage son Joey at summer sleep-away camp – also a great Jewish tradition. But Joey is a challenging kid to parent, he struggles to socialize and to manage his anxiety. When the family faces a crisis, the parents have to step back from their own expectations



Shirley Serotsky

about who they think their kid is supposed to be, and finally, really see – and embrace – him. It’s a moving story, and I think about it often as I progress in my own parenting journey.”

Part of Serotsky’s job includes teaching students of all ages. She finds that work particularly meaningful. “I learn so much by teaching,” she said. “It encourages me to apply language and guidance to craft and technique, and that clarifies my own process as a director and dramaturg. But I also learn so much from the students I work with. I have found that young people are

frequently way ahead of my generation when it comes to creating spaces that are equitable, anti-racist, transparent and conducive to being brave and supportive of each other.”

Going virtual during the past year due to the pandemic has also been a learning experience for Serotsky. She sees advantages and disadvantages to the experience. “We’ve been able to connect with audiences, though we’ve been dependent on technologies that are new to us to do so,” she added. “I’ll be honest, we’ve had some pretty frustrating technology failures during this time. I’d say the greatest advantage to creating and sharing work virtually is that we’ve been able to increase our reach well beyond the Finger Lakes region. We’ve had viewers and students from all over the country, and international participants as well – that’s been pretty thrilling to experience.”

She does note that one thing has not changed during the pandemic: “We’ve been able to tell stories, though in a manner that looks quite different than before. We’ve been able to create educational spaces where students can learn from and interact with each other, though we’ve had to be conscious to make sure that we’re staying physically, as well as mentally, engaged.”


When looking ahead to upcoming productions, Serotsky suggests a few that may be of interest to the Jewish community, including “Sweeney Todd,” with words and music by Jewish composer and lyricist Stephen Sondheim; and “Queens Girl in the World” by Caleen Sinnette Jennings. See “Theater” on page 11

## PASSOVER GREETINGS



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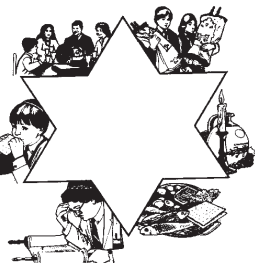


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# Deciphering the past

## Iron Age fragments of cloth dyed with Royal Purple found in Israel

By JNS staff

(JNS)—In a groundbreaking discovery, Israeli archaeologists have recovered scraps of fabric dyed in royal purple, also known as true purple, dating back to the era of the biblical King David. The remnants of woven fabric, a tassel and fibers of wool, were uncovered in a heap of industrial waste at “Slave’s Hill,” an ancient copper-smelting site in the Timna Valley.

“The color immediately attracted our attention, but we found it hard to believe we had found true purple from such an ancient era,” said professor Erez Ben-Yosef of the Jacob M. Alkow Department of Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Cultures at Tel Aviv University.

Direct radiocarbon dating confirms that the finds date from approximately 1000 B.C.E., corresponding to the biblical monarchies of David and Solomon in Jerusalem.

The dye, which is produced from species of mollusk found in the Mediterranean more than 300 kilometers (184 miles) from Timna, is often mentioned in the Bible and appears in various Jewish and Christian contexts, for example, in the following quote from the “Song of Songs” (3:9-10), which states: King Solomon made for himself the carriage; he made it of wood from Lebanon. Its posts he made of silver, its base of gold. Its seat was upholstered with purple, its interior inlaid with love.”

This is the first time that purple-dyed Iron Age textiles have been found in the entire Southern Levant. The findings were published on January 28 in the PLOS ONE journal.

“This is a very exciting and important discovery,” said Dr. Naama Sukenik of the Israel Antiquities Authority. “In antiquity, purple attire was associated with the nobility, with priests and of course with royalty. The gorgeous shade of the purple, the fact that it does not fade, and the difficulty in producing the dye, which is found in minute quantities



Wool fibers dyed with Royal Purple, dating to approximately 1,000 B.C.E., found in the Timna Valley in southern Israel. (Photo by Dafna Gazit, courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority)

in the body of mollusks, all made it the most highly valued of the dyes, which often cost more than gold.”

Ben-Yosef noted the “exceptional state” of preservation at the Timna site, paralleled only by that at much later sites such as Masada and the Judean Desert caves. “As a result of the region’s extremely dry climate, we are also able to recover organic materials such as textile, cords and leather from the Iron Age, from the time of David and Solomon, providing us with a unique glimpse into life in biblical times. If we excavated for another hundred years in Jerusalem, we would not discover textiles from 3,000 years ago,” he said.

According to Ben-Yosef, the copper-production facility at Timna was part of the biblical kingdom of Edom, which bordered the kingdom of Israel to the south. The find, he

said, should revolutionize our concepts regarding nomadic societies in the Iron Age.

“The new finds reinforce our assumption that there was an elite at Timna, attesting to a stratified society. In addition, since the mollusks are indigenous to the Mediterranean, this society obviously maintained trade relations with other peoples who lived on the coastal plain,” he said. “However, we do not have evidence of any permanent settlements in the Edomite territory. The Edomite Kingdom was a kingdom of nomads in the early Iron Age.”

When thinking of ancient kings, we often imagine magnificent stone palaces and walled cities, said Ben-Yosef, “yet in certain circumstances, nomads can also create a complex socio-political structure, one that the biblical writers could identify as a kingdom.”

This topic, he notes, has repercussions regarding our understanding of ancient Israel.

“We know that the Tribes of Israel were originally nomadic and that the process of settlement was gradual and prolonged. Archaeologists are looking for King David’s palace. However, David may not have expressed his wealth in splendid buildings, but with objects more suited to a nomadic heritage such as textiles and artifacts,” he said. “It is wrong to assume that if no grand buildings and fortresses have been found, then biblical descriptions of the united monarchy in Jerusalem must be literary fiction. Our new research at Timna has shown us that even without such buildings, there were kings in our region who ruled over complex societies, formed alliances and trade relations, and waged war on each other. The wealth of nomadic society was not measured in palaces and monuments made of stone, but in things that were no less valued in the ancient world, such as the copper produced at Timna and the purple dye that was traded with its copper smelters.”

## Israeli archaeologists unearth Byzantine church near Mount Tabor

By JNS staff

(JNS) Israeli archaeologists have announced that they have unearthed a 1,300-year-old Byzantine-era church in the Lower Galilee in the village of Kfar Kama near Mount Tabor, which Christians believe is the Mount of Transfiguration where Jesus performed one his miracles.

The excavation was conducted by the Israel Antiquities Au-

thority, in collaboration with the Kinneret Academic College and local volunteers. The head of the Greek Catholic Church in Israel also personally visited the site, which was conducted prior to the construction of a playground, at the initiative of the Kfar Kama local council and Jewish National Fund.

According to lead archaeologist Nurit Feig, “the church, measuring 12x36 [meters], includes a large courtyard, a narthex foyer and a central hall. Particular to this church is the existence of three apses (prayer niches), while most churches were characterized by a single apse.”

Additionally, Feig noted that the aisles of the church were paved with mosaics that have partially survived. “Their colorful decoration stands out, incorporating geometric patterns, and blue, black and red floral patterns,” she said.

Feig also said that a “special discovery” was the small reliquary, a stone box used to preserve sacred relics.

Additional series of rooms were also partially uncovered adjacent to the church. Ground-penetrating radar indicated that there are more rooms at the site that have yet to be excavated, leading researchers to believe that this large complex served as a monastery.

In the early 1960s, a church was excavated inside of the village of Kfar Kama, which archaeologists now



Mosaic floor of the ancient church. (Photo by Alex Wiegmann, Israel Antiquities Authority)

believe was probably the village church, while the newly discovered church was probably part of a monastery on the outskirts of the village.

The latest discovery in Kfar Kama highlights the importance of the Christian village settled during the Byzantine period near Mount Tabor.

According to the Christian Gospels, Jesus and three of his apostles – Peter, James and John – go to the Mount of Transfiguration to pray. While on the mountain, Jesus began to shine with bright rays of light with the prophets Moses and Elijah appearing next to him and speaking with him. Jesus is then called “son” by a voice in the sky, assumed to be God. Today, several major Christian traditions commemorate the event as the Feast of Transfiguration.

Later in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Circassian tribes settled in Kfar Kama and used the stones of the ancient village to build their houses.

The discovery of the church in Kfar Kama will contribute to the extensive research project on the Christian settlement in the Galilee that is being carried out by Professor Moti Aviam and Jacob Ashkenazi of the Kinneret Institute of Galilean Archaeology in the Kinneret Academic College.



Aerial view of the church remains. (Photo by Alex Wiegmann, Israel Antiquities Authority)



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# PASSOVER



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# Bnei Menashe community prepares for Passover

By Shavei Israel staff

CHURACHANDPUR, INDIA – The Bnei Menashe community throughout the remote northeastern Indian state of Manipur began preparing for Passover – including by baking matzah, the holiday’s traditional unleavened bread – at the Shavei Israel Hebrew Center in Churachandpur on March 23.

The Bnei Menashe, or sons of Manasseh, claim descent from one of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel, who were sent into exile by the Assyrian Empire more than 27 centuries ago. Their ancestors wandered through Central Asia and the Far East for centuries, before settling in what is now northeastern India, along the borders of Burma and Bangladesh. Throughout their sojourn in exile, the Bnei Menashe continued to practice Judaism just as their ancestors did, including observing the Sabbath, keeping kosher, celebrating the festivals and following the laws of family purity. They continued to nourish the dream of one day returning to the land of their ancestors, the land of Israel.

“Passover symbolizes the Jewish people’s deliverance and it is a festival that resonates deeply for the Bnei Menashe,” said Shavei Israel founder and Chairman Michael Freund. “In the far-flung regions of northeastern India, thousands of Bnei

Menashe will sit down on Passover eve to conduct the traditional seder, which embodies the hope they have been nurturing for generations: to make *aliyah* and return to the land of their ancestors, the land of Israel.

“Over the past two decades, we have brought over 4,000 Bnei Menashe to Israel,” Freund said. “We hope that after 27 centuries of exile, the remaining 6,500 Bnei Menashe still in India will be able to celebrate Passover next year in their Jewish homeland.”

Down through the generations and into the last century, the Bnei Menashe continued to practice Biblical Judaism and marked Passover with a number of rituals, which included the removal of any bread from their homes and refraining from its consumption during the holiday as well as offering the Passover sacrifice. In addition, each village priest would recite a series of ancient prayers, such as “Miriam’s Song,” which echoed the biblical account of the Exodus and its aftermath, describing how their ancestors – the Bnei Menashe – were redeemed from slavery in Egypt, crossed the Red Sea and were guided by a pillar of fire and clouds of glory until they reached Zion. In recent decades, the Bnei Menashe have embraced contemporary Judaism and adopted its practices.



Above and below: Members of the Bnei Menashe community in India prepared matzah for Passover. (Photos by Samuel Suantak, courtesy of Shavei Israel)

## Coaster . . . . . Continued from page 5

piecing; precut shapes that will already be ironed onto fabric so that participants can more easily complete the project; batting material, a “big eye” embroidery needle designed for batting; squares of fabric for the background and back of the coaster; and a roll of thread that will glide through the fabric. Participants will need to have on hand the following: scissors that can cut cotton fabric; a glue stick; a 6- or 12-inch ruler; a pencil; an iron; and an ironing surface.

Associated with the quilting tradition, English paper piecing has been called a historically significant handicraft, with the earliest known English paper pieced quilts dating back to 18<sup>th</sup> century England. EPP first came to the U.S. in 1807. The traditional quilting style makes use of paper templates that are the exact shape and size

needed to create an interconnected pattern without any gaps or overlaps. In EPP, the fabric is wrapped around the paper, then basted and glued, thus holding the fabric to its shape. Finally the fabric-covered shapes are whip-stitched together to make the finished product.



The coaster can go under a Shabbat Kiddush cup or Elijah’s Cup for Pesach.

A former kindergarten-12 visual arts teacher in the public schools, Rosenberg has taught continuing education art classes at SUNY Broome, and was an outreach educator for the Institute for Asia and Asian Diasporas, and the Confucius Institute of Chinese Opera at Binghamton University. Rosenberg volunteers her artistic talents at Temple Israel, contributing everything from graphics to centerpiece design. “My current passion is quilting,” Rosenberg said, “and I have Temple Israel member and friend Sandy Paston to thank for teaching me the art of English paper piecing. The Kiddush cup coaster for Shabbat project combines a traditional technique with a modern design. As participants will see, there’s something so lovely about the feel of hand stitching: it brings a sense of peace. Our hope is that this project will remind us of the bond we all share every time we place our Kiddush cup on our beautiful handmade coaster.”



An example of the coaster that will be made. (Photos by Maxine Rosenberg)



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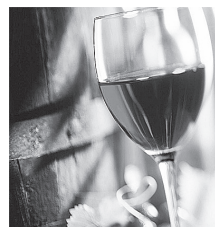
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On the  
silver  
screen

## Kirk Douglas redux, Part III: Integrating American and Jewish identities

BILL SIMONS

The quest to integrate American and Jewish identities pervaded the personal and professional life of Kirk Douglas. "Cast a Giant Shadow" (1966) represents Douglas' most ambitious cinematic exploration of the relationship between this dualism. In the film, Douglas portrays the real-life David (Mickey) Marcus (1901-48), the American Jew who provided critical leadership to the fledgling Israel Defense Forces during the War of Independence.

The Douglas movie, based on author Ted Berkman's largely uncritical Marcus biography, took some dramatic liberties under the influence of Melville Shavelson, the film's producer and director. "Cast a Giant Shadow" remains the only feature-film biography of Marcus and, unlike the 1960 movie "Exodus," examines the Israeli War of Independence from the perspective of an American Jew.

In "Cast a Giant Shadow," the movie audience first meets Douglas' Marcus enjoying the festive 1947 Christmas display at Macy's department store, an ironic but telling venue for a Jewish hero. During the celebratory Christmas vignette, Douglas' Marcus initially appears to have shown up in the wrong movie. Then, the tone of the film changes abruptly. A mysterious stranger confronts Marcus.

Direct and intense, the interloper identifies himself as Safir, a representative of Haganah, the primary Jewish military unit in British Palestine, and addresses Mickey by his U.S. Army rank, "Colonel Marcus." Referencing the approaching end of the British Mandate and the determination of Palestinian Jews to establish an independent Israel, Safir asserts that the citizens of the new Jewish state will confront 50 million Arabs intent on annihilating them.

The emergent Israel, Safir declares, needs an experienced military officer to organize and integrate their disparate militias. Marcus, insists Safir, has the expertise to mold the Jewish militias into an effective fighting force. Noting that he has not stepped foot in a synagogue since his bar mitzvah and that America is his religion, Marcus is adamant that his

wife, who endured emotional duress during his World War II absence, deserves better than his desertion to an enterprise doomed to failure and to which he feels no affinity. Safir retorts that Marcus will thus abandon a million of his fellow Jews to suffer the same end as the six million victims of the Holocaust.

Prior to the Macy's scene, "Cast a Giant Shadow" featured documentary montage, sans narration, of epic events. Even with flashbacks to Marcus' World War II service, which include his parachute jump on D-Day, the connection of the documentary footage to Marcus' pre-1947 life remains incomplete. Perhaps cinematic text scroll might have stated some of Marcus' prior experiences, including childhood poverty in Brooklyn, West Point boxing championship, law degree, prosecution of gangsters, leading the posse that put down the Blackwell's Island prison riot, New York City Department of Correction commissioner, training Army Rangers, and planning military organization of civil affairs and war crimes trials.

British Palestine 1948, soon morphed into the independent Jewish state of Israel, provides the setting for most of "Cast of Giant Shadow." Douglas' portrayal invests Marcus with a compelling combination of ambivalence about his identity, charismatic charm, natural leadership ability and courage. On screen, Douglas' Marcus is largely successful in training and integrating Haganah and other Jewish military groups under a unified Israel Defense Forces command structure. Named *aluf* (commander), Marcus, on film as in history, becomes the first Israeli general since biblical times. His strategy and tactics win battles against numerically larger forces. Marcus' singular achievement was ramrodding the building, across steep and challenging terrain, of a road to Jerusalem, which gave Israel claim to West Jerusalem prior to the cease-fire's freezing of boundary lines.

Despite his contributions to Israel independence, the cinematic and the historical Marcus faced resentment from *sabras* that an American, not an Israeli, commanded the military. To underline the tension Marcus felt between Israeli and American identities, Douglas depicts Mickey torn between a fictional Israeli lover, Magda Simon, and his wife, Emma. In the end, Douglas' Marcus resolves to return to America and to Emma.

Marcus was the last casualty of the War of Independence. In the Douglas film, Marcus, who knew little Hebrew, was shot by an inexperienced Israeli sentry when he failed to respond to the sentry's Hebrew command to provide the security password. The Douglas film does not confront charges that Marcus was assassinated by dissident Israeli militia. Indeed, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion established a commission to investigate those charges, but its report was never made public.

Although the Star of David is etched on Marcus' gravestone, he was buried neither in Israel nor at a Jewish cemetery in his native Brooklyn. U.S. Army Colonel David Marcus' grave is the only one at West Point of a soldier who fell fighting under a foreign flag.

Kirk Douglas invested a good deal of himself in "Cast a Giant

Shadow." Beyond his robust on-screen portrayal of Marcus as a hero, Douglas served as co-executive producer of the film and recruited big-name Hollywood colleagues – John Wayne, Frank Sinatra and Yul Brynner – to appear in supporting roles.

Most of the filming of "Cast a Giant Shadow" took place in Israel, and several of the film's extras, within a year after the movie's release, would find themselves fighting for Israel's survival in the 1967 Six-Day War. "Cast a Giant Shadow" contributed to widespread American support for Israel during the Six-Day War.

For Douglas and Marcus' widow, Emma, "Cast a Giant Shadow" provided a tribute to Mickey and the Jewish state Marcus helped create. There is a photograph of Douglas applauding a smiling Emma at a promotional event for the film. A New York City elementary school teacher, who bore no children of her own, Emma never remarried and battled health problems, including encroaching blindness, as well as financial travail, partially offset by a monthly pension from the Israeli government.

Through his acting, family life, funding a series of parks in Israel and Torah study, Kirk Douglas, until his death at 103, continued the quest to synthesize his American and Jewish identities.

*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.*

### NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

#### Israeli Finance Ministry announces \$120 million bailout for El Al

Israel's Finance Ministry announced on March 17 a \$210 million bailout for the country's national carrier, El Al, to help the airline overcome the losses it suffered as a result of the coronavirus crisis. The tickets are for the airline security personnel posted at airports that its carriers will fly to over the next 20 years, the finance ministry said in a statement. The sum will stay the same even if security requirements change. The aid is an advance payment on tickets for airline security personnel posted at airports, and will cover their travel for the next 20 years, according to the Finance Ministry and reported by Reuters. The plan will be submitted to the Israeli Cabinet for approval in the near future, the report said. El Al has racked up debt due its suspending of flights at the outset of the pandemic, when Israel closed its borders to most foreign citizens. The airline's new owner, Eli Rozenberg, has already invested \$160 million in two public offerings, and is expected to invest another \$40 million in the next offering, according to the Israeli business daily *Globes*. Israel's national carrier is also laying off 2,000 workers, constituting one-third of its workforce.

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# CJS. . . . .Continued from page 3

the immersive, totalizing experience of sleepaway camp as uniquely powerful solution for their communal ills,” said organizers of the event. “At the same time, campers and staff members clashed and converged, their intergenerational negotiations shaping postwar American Jewish culture both inside and outside camps’ gates.”

They added, “Dr. Fox will discuss the fantasies that drove the establishment and growth of educational Jewish camping, how educators’ high hopes for camping shaped the lived experience, and how campers responded to these efforts, impacting discourses surrounding Jewish identity, practice, language, nationalism and intermarriage for decades to come.”

Fox is a scholar of American Jewish history, Jewish youth and childhood, and contemporary Yiddish culture. A Jim Joseph Postdoctoral Fellow, she received her doctorate from New York University’s joint program in history and Hebrew Judaic studies in 2018. Fox is also the founder and executive producer of the Yiddish-language podcast Vaybertaytsh, and serves as peer-review editor at In geveb: A Journal of Yiddish Studies.

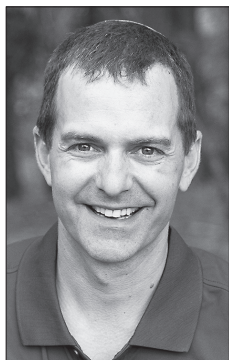


Dr. Sandra Fox  
(Photo by Alexa Klorman of Alexa Drew Photography)

The panel discussion on “How to Run a Jewish Summer Camp” will be moderated by Professor Jonathan Karp of Binghamton University’s Judaic Studies Department. It will explore the wide range of Jewish summer camp approaches of the last several decades. It will also offer a discussion of how camp directors have sought to market camps to Jews of all backgrounds and affiliations, and to deal with the many practical and logistical challenges running a camp entails.

The Auerbachs are longtime members of the Binghamton Jewish community and have operated a variety of summer camps. In addition to their camp management activities, Sima served for many years as executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton and as fund-raising director for Hadassah and Albert Einstein College of Medicine. She was a Wall Street options trader for Rothschild Inc.

Bock is the executive director of Ramah in the Rockies. Ordained as rabbi by the Jewish Theological Seminary, he holds a bachelor of arts degree in Bible and a master of arts degree in Jewish education, as well as a bachelor of arts degree in urban studies from Columbia University. Bock has been awarded the Pomegranate Prize by the Covenant Foundation and is a Schusterman senior fellow. He is joined each summer at camp by his wife, Binghamton University Professor Dina Danon, and their three children.



Dr. Eliav Bock  
(Photo by Ethan Weg)

Klionsky grew up in Binghamton and holds degrees from Brandeis University, the David Yellin Institute in Jerusalem and Lesley College. She was a leader in the regional and national boards of the Zionist Youth Movement Young Judaea and attended the national camp Tel Yehudah for four summers as a camper and three summers as a staff member. A former principal of Ohavi Zedek in Burlington, VT, she currently serves as the assistant director for counseling at St Michael’s College.

Because tickets cannot be sold at the door, the organizers ask that attendees make a voluntary contribution to support the College of Jewish Studies. Checks should be made out to the “College of Jewish Studies” and sent to the JCC, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.

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.

# Theater. . . . .Continued from page 6

“Queens Girl” is a stunning solo show that follows Jacqueline Marie Butler, a Black girl growing up in Queens, NY, from 1962 to 1965, as she transfers from her neighborhood public school to a progressive, predominantly-Jewish school in Manhattan, where she is one of very few students of color,” she added. “During this time, she finds her voice both as a writer and as a budding political activist.”

For more information about the Hanger Theatre’s summer programming, visit <https://hangartheatre.org/>.

# Jewish online resources

By Reporter staff

*Editor’s note: The first “Jewish resources to occupy your family during social distancing” article appeared in the March 27, 2020, issue of The Reporter. At that time, we thought it would be a temporary series. However, it’s become clear that even after the pandemic is over, some organizations will continue offering programs on the Internet. This column will now be called “Jewish online resources” to reflect that change.*

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

◆ The Jewish Book Council will hold a “Virtual Unpacking the Book Rachel Bloom and Tovah Feldshuh – A Conversation Between a (Television) Daughter and Mother” on Thursday, April 29, from 7-8 pm. The event will include discussions of Rachel Bloom’s “I Want to Be Where the Normal People Are” and Tovah Feldshuh’s “Lilyville.” It will be moderated by Stephanie Butnick, host of Tablet’s “Unorthodox” podcast. For more information or to register, visit [www.jewishbookcouncil.org/events/virtual-unpacking-the-book-rachel-bloom-and-tovah-feldshuh-a-conversation](http://www.jewishbookcouncil.org/events/virtual-unpacking-the-book-rachel-bloom-and-tovah-feldshuh-a-conversation).

◆ The Center for Jewish History will host “Family Affairs: Writing Parents’ Stories,” featuring Bernice Lerner and Susan Jacobowitz, on Wednesday, April 7, at 4 pm. Lerner, author of “All the Horrors of War: A Jewish Girl, a British Doctor and the Liberation of Bergen-Belsen,” and Jacobowitz, author of the manuscript “Far from Childhood: A Holocaust Memoir,” discuss with Natalia Aleksium their parents’ interrupted childhoods during the Holocaust in the Carpathian Mountains. For more information or to register, visit <https://programs.cjh.org/event/family-affairs-2021-04-07>.

◆ Hazan has launched The Shmita Prizes, which will award artists and creatives – from all levels of experience and age groups – for works of art that bring into focus the relevancy and application of *shmita* values in the contemporary world. There are five different categories for submissions. For complete information, visit <https://shmitaproject.org/about-prizes/>.

◆ The Jewish Theological Seminary will hold several programs and classes in April, including “All the Horrors of War: A Jewish Girl, a British Doctor, and the Liberation of Bergen-Belsen,” an online conversation with author Dr. Bernice Lerner on Tuesday, April 6, at 7:30 pm ([www.jtsa.edu/all-the-horrors-of-war?](http://www.jtsa.edu/all-the-horrors-of-war?)); “New Perspectives on Abortion and the Jewish Community,” an online mini-course with Dr. Michal Raucher, on Wednesdays, April 7, 14 and 21, from 8-9 pm ([www.jtsa.edu/new-perspectives-on-abortion?](http://www.jtsa.edu/new-perspectives-on-abortion?)); and “Cantors, Controversy, and Compassion: Searching for God in Musical Complexity,” an online discussion with Cantor Matthew Austerklein, on Thursday, April 15, at 7:30 pm ([www.jtsa.edu/cantors-controversy-compassion-austerklein?](http://www.jtsa.edu/cantors-controversy-compassion-austerklein?)).

◆ Pardes has new classes beginning in April, including “Opening the Heart with the Tanya – The book of the Tanya as a guide to harmony of body and soul, of earthliness and spirituality”; “Parsha, Midrash and the Rabbinic Imagination”; “Destruction and Rebirth: The Jewish Story from 1938-1948”; “The Long Walk to Freedom: Pesach to Shavuot, Holocaust and Independence Days, through classic and modern sources”; “The Writings and Philosophy of Rabbi Sacks: Arguments for the Sake of Heaven”; “Rabbinic Responses to the Pandemic: Season 2”; “A Time to Work on Ourselves: Loving More, Complaining Less; Wisdom from a Modern Mystic – Rav Kook”; “Jewish Identity Through Modern Art”; and “The Great Hebrew See “Resources” on page 15

## Passover Greetings from these Healthcare Professionals



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Sarah, John, Matthew & Lauren Hunter – Lyons, CO  
Our granddaughter Julia became a Bat Mitzvah!

# Paula Shoyer's gift this Passover: "The Instant Pot Kosher Cookbook"

By Marshall Weiss

(The Dayton Jewish Observer via JNS) – Just in time for Passover, kosher cooking maven/author Paula Shoyer's "The Instant Pot Kosher Cookbook" is now in print from Sterling Epicure. With 46 kosher-for-Passover recipes alone, from soups and salads to appetizers, sides to main courses and desserts—a number of which are vegetarian,

vegan and gluten-free – this is the time to pull out that Instant Pot you received as a gift and were afraid to use.

A pastry chef who trained in France, Shoyer is the author of "The Kosher Baker," "The Holiday Kosher Baker," "The Healthy Jewish Kitchen" and "The New Passover Menu."

She calls the Instant Pot revolutionary – "ideal for anyone who wants food fast

with less cleanup." Shoyer adds that it's especially helpful "when you already have every burner going and three more pots waiting to take their turn. Now I can check off items on my cooking 'To Do' list much faster with equally fast cleanup in between."

Recipes that used to take hours, she says, now take a fraction of the time.

In "The Instant Pot Kosher Cookbook," Shoyer provides detailed directions for how to handle the apparatus, in addition to safety rules and insider tricks. Each recipe indicates Instant Pot pressure time, which buttons to use and release type.

For those who keep kosher, Shoyer says you'll need at least one pot just for Passover. For year-round use, opinions vary among rabbis about whether an Instant Pot may be used for both dairy and meat. Though she has different ones for dairy and meat year-round in her kitchen, she notes that "you should always consult your own rabbinic authority on matters of *kashrut*."

Here is a full kosher-for-Passover (and gluten-free) menu from "The Instant Pot Kosher Cookbook."

## Georgian Quinoa With Beets and Walnuts (vegan/pareve)

Serves 6-8

In the summer of 2018, food writer Jessica Halfin took me on a kosher street food tour of Haifa, Israel, and we shot a video of the tour. She took me to bakeries, a boureka place and a fruit shop. My favorite savory stop was Baribcek, a small restaurant where I tasted this salad. They also serve a sabich bowl of warm hummus, fried eggplant, chickpeas and tahini that rocked my world.

Hands-on time: 5 minutes, quinoa and beets need 10 minutes to cook

Time to pressure: 8 to 9 minutes

Cooking time: 0 minutes

Button to use: Pressure Cook

Release type: Natural Release for 10 minutes

Advance prep: May be made two days in advance

- 1 cup quinoa, rinsed and drained
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 1 medium beet, peeled and cut into 1/4- to 1/3-inch pieces (wear gloves)
- 3 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 stalk celery, chopped into 1/4-inch pieces
- 4 green onions, sliced thinly on an angle
- 2/3 cup roughly chopped Italian parsley
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice, from half of 1 lemon
- 1/2 tsp. cumin
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 1 1/2 cups walnut halves, chopped roughly

Place the quinoa, water and beets into the inner pot and stir. Secure the lid, ensuring that the steam release handle is in the Sealing position. Press the Pressure Cook button and set the cooking time for 0 (zero) minutes.

When the cooking time is complete, let sit for 10 minutes to naturally release the pressure. Turn the steam release handle to the Venting position to release any remaining pressure.

Press Cancel and remove the lid. Stir and then place the quinoa and beets into a large bowl and let cool for at least 10 minutes. Add the oil, celery, green onions, parsley, lemon juice, cumin, salt, pepper and walnuts. Mix well.

Serve at room temperature.

## Whole Peruvian Spiced Chicken (meat)

Serves 4-6

This super-easy spice combination is easy to double or triple, and to have on hand for chicken, steak or fish. The mix of spices comes from our wonderful nanny, Betty Supo. She is from Arequipa, Peru, and has nourished our family for many years.

Hands-on time: 17 minutes

Time to pressure: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 25 minutes

Release type: Natural Release for 15 minutes

Buttons to use: Sauté and Pressure Cook  
Advance prep: May be made two days in advance

- 4 tsp. cumin
- 1 Tbsp. paprika
- 2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 whole chicken, about 3-4 lbs.
- 1 cup boiling water
- 1 Tbsp. potato starch

In a small bowl, combine the cumin, paprika, garlic powder, salt and pepper. Drizzle one tablespoon of the oil over the chicken and rub to coat. Shake the spice mixture onto the chicken and rub all over.

Press Sauté and when the display reads "Hot," add the remaining oil. Place the chicken into the inner pot, breast-side down, and cook for four minutes or until browned. Turn over and brown for another 4 minutes. Remove the chicken to a plate.

Add the boiling water to the pot and use a wooden spoon to scrape the bottom of the pot clean. Place the steam rack into the pot and place the chicken on the rack, breast-side up. Secure the lid, ensuring that the steam release handle is in the Sealing position. Press the Pressure Cook button and set the cooking time for 25 minutes.

See "Cookbook" on page 13

## Passover Greetings from these Health Care Professionals

**Passover Greetings from**

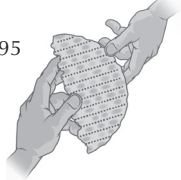
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## Prophet . . . . . Continued from page 4

While Fohrman focuses on the intricacies of the biblical text, Heschel takes a larger view. "Thunder in the Soul" features short selections from his writing rearranged and organized by the editor. The short work is part of the Plough Spiritual Guides series, which seeks to "briefly introduce the writings of great spiritual voices of the past to new readers." The publishing house is a Christian one, which helps explain the work's emphasis on prophecy, rather than law, but that doesn't detract from what's offered. Since the forward is written by Suzannah Heschel, his daughter, it seems to have to the approval of his family.

The book has two main focuses: Heschel's idea of radical amazement and the way that amazement should move us to action. Heschel asks readers to take leap of faith, rather than depend on reason because he believes the world contains a mystery we cannot answer, one that we cannot even speak about: "When we stand in awe, our lips do not demand speech; we know if we spoke, we would deprave ourselves...All we want is to pause, to be still, that the moment may last. It is like listening to great music: we are swept away without being able to appraise it. The meaning of the things we revere are overwhelming and beyond the grasp of our understanding."

Interest in Heschel might be limited to mystics, however, were not for the practical applications he offers for these experiences. He notes that experiencing this religious mystery is not an end in itself. Instead, we

are given a task: we must make the world a better place. Judaism for Heschel means that people have a duty to stop evil, even if they are not actively participating. He writes that "there is an evil which most of us condone and are even guilty of: *indifference to evil*. We remain neutral, impartial, and not easily moved by the wrongs done unto other people. Indifference to evil is more insidious than evil itself; it is more universal, more contagious, more dangerous. A silent justification, it makes possible an evil erupting as an exception becoming the rule and being accepted." This was the basis of Heschel's work with Dr. Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement.

I found it interesting to explore the two theological strands running through Heschel's writing. Rationalists may have difficulty accepting a theology that asks them to leave their reason behind. Yet, as much as a rationalist as I am, I have experienced Heschel's feeling of awe, although it felt strange not to be able to put into words exactly what was happening. His call for social action is unfortunately as relevant today as it was when his words were first published.

Fohrman and Heschel both speak words of Torah, words that will resonate with readers today and in the future. For me, the beauty of Judaism is that I can mine the biblical text and the words of great modern writers, both of whom offer different Jewish paths. Together "Exodus" and "Thunder in the Soul" show us the breadth and depth of our heritage.

# Cookbook.....Continued from page 12

When the cooking time is complete, let the pot sit for another 15 minutes to naturally release the pressure. Turn the steam release handle to the Venting position to release any remaining pressure. Press Cancel.

Remove the lid, take out the chicken and place onto a serving platter. Press Sauté and cook the drippings for 4 minutes or more to reduce the sauce.

To thicken the sauce further, you can scoop up about ¼ cup of the drippings into a small bowl, add the potato starch, mix and return to the pot and stir.

Cut the chicken into serving pieces. Pour some sauce over the chicken and serve the remaining sauce in a bowl alongside. If you make this the day before you are serving it, you can remove the fat from the reserved sauce before reheating.

## Spaghetti Squash with Fresh Cherry Tomato Sauce (vegan/pareve)

*Serves 6-8*  
I try very hard not to waste produce. This recipe was created when I had fading cherry tomatoes in my fridge that needed to be used up. Try to find ways to cook ingredients you already have before going out to buy more. I realize that this recipe has a step outside of the Instant Pot, but my goal was to have the sauce ready by the time the squash was cooked.

Hands-on time: 15 minutes  
Time to pressure: 6 minutes  
Cooking time: 9 minutes  
Button to use: Pressure Cook  
Release type: Quick Release  
Advance prep: May be made two days in advance

- 1 cup water
- 1 spaghetti squash, about 2½ lbs., cut in half horizontally and seeds scooped out
- 1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 large cloves garlic, finely minced
- 2 lbs. cherry tomatoes, different colors preferably, halved the long way
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt
- Generous pinch Aleppo pepper or freshly ground black pepper

Place the water into the inner pot and insert the steam rack. Place the squash halves on top of the rack.

Secure the lid, ensuring that the steam release handle is in the Sealing position. Press the Pressure Cook button and set the cooking time for 9 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a large frying pan, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the garlic and cook for one minute or until a few pieces start to color. Add the tomatoes and continue cooking for 7 to 9 minutes, or until most of the tomatoes break down and you have a sauce.

Stir occasionally. The mixture should bubble the entire time. Add the salt and pepper, and turn off the heat.

When the squash cooking time is complete, turn the steam release handle to the Venting position to quickly release the pressure. Press Cancel and remove the lid.

Use a large fork to lift up the squash halves into a colander and let cool for 2 minutes, or until you can handle them; I lift them with a dish towel. Use the fork to scrape the threads of the squash into the frying pan. Turn the sauce back on to medium heat. Use a fork to mix the squash into the sauce.

When it is all mixed in, cook for 2 minutes. Taste and add more salt, if needed.

## Mocha Lava Cakes (dairy or pareve)

*Serves 6*  
Lava cakes are probably one of the most popular desserts served at events I attend. Everyone loves the cake outside and gooey inside. Because most recipes are designed for the cakes to be eaten very soon after they come out of the oven, lava cakes aren't Shabbat-friendly. Purely by accident, I created these. I unmolded one and found it much too gooey, which meant I had to test it again. I left the others on my counter and unmolded them after dinner, many hours later, and found the texture perfect. You can make these before Shabbat and enjoy them for dessert or make them in advance of any dinner party or event.

Hands-on time: 12 minutes to cook in batches, plus 30 minutes to cool  
Time to pressure: 7 minutes  
Cooking time: 7 minutes  
Button to use: Pressure Cook  
Release type: Quick Release  
Advance prep: May be made 4 hours in advance

- 7 oz. bittersweet chocolate, chopped
- ½ cup coconut oil, margarine or butter
- 2 Tbsp., plus 1 tsp., instant coffee granules
- 2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 1 Tbsp. unsweetened cocoa
- 2 large eggs, plus 2 yolks
- ½ cup sugar
- ⅓ cup potato starch
- Spray oil
- 1 cup, plus 2 Tbsp. water, divided

You will need six 6-ounce ramekins. Place the chocolate and coconut oil into a heatproof bowl and microwave for 1 minute, stir and then melt for another 45 seconds, stir and then melt for 30 seconds, if needed. Add the instant coffee, vanilla and cocoa, and whisk in.

Place the eggs, egg yolks and sugar into a large mixing bowl. Use an electric mixer to mix at low speed to combine and then turn the speed up to high and beat for 3 minutes. Add the potato starch and beat at low speed to just combine. Add the melted chocolate mixture and whisk gently until combined.

Spray the ramekins with spray oil. Divide the batter among the prepared ramekins, a heaping half-cup for each mold.

Place the water into the inner pot and insert the steam rack. Place three of the ramekins in a circle around the rack.

Secure the lid, ensuring that the steam release handle is in the Sealing position. Press the Pressure Cook button and set the cooking time for seven minutes. When the cooking time is complete, press Cancel. Turn the steam release handle to the Venting position to quickly release the pressure.

Carefully remove the ramekins from the pot. Add another two tablespoons of water to the pot and cook the remaining three cakes as you did the first batch. It will take about 2 minutes for the Instant Pot to return to pressure.

Let the cakes cool for at least 30 minutes before unmolding. To unmold, run a thin

knife or small metal spatula around the edge of the cake, place a plate on top and turn the cake onto the plate. Dust with confectioners' sugar if desired and serve with fruit.


## Melting the chocolate:

Place chocolate chopped into half-inch pieces into a microwave-safe bowl, such as a large glass bowl. Make sure you have discarded every tiny piece of foil that wrapped the chocolate. Heat for 1 minute at high power for 45 seconds to start if you have less than 10 ounces of chocolate. Remove the bowl from the microwave and stir well, mixing the melted pieces into the unmelted ones for about 30 seconds. Heat for another 45 or 30 seconds and stir again for about 1 minute. If the chocolate is not fully melted, heat for another 30 seconds and stir. Repeat for 15 seconds, if necessary. Be sure to use oven mitts to hold the bowl when you stir it.

## Passover Greetings from these Health Care Professionals

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David Salomons, D.D.S.


Adam J. Underwood, Ph.D., D.D.S.

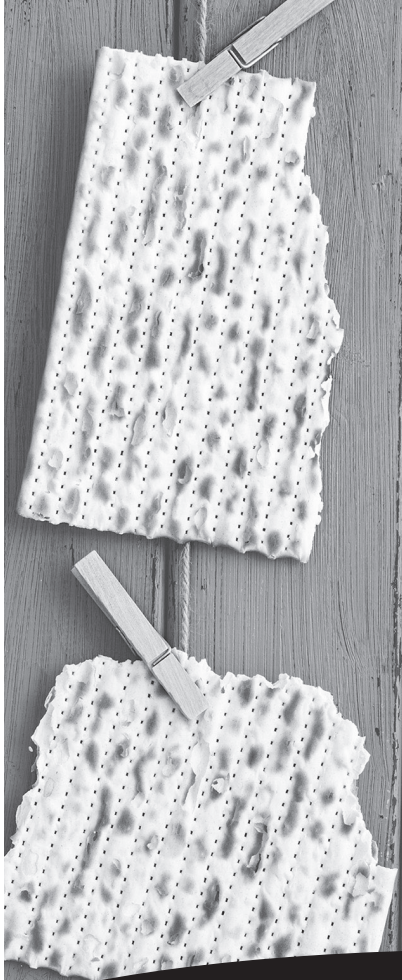
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## NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

### Kosovo delivers on promise to open embassy in Jerusalem

(Israel Hayom via JNS) – Kosovo opened its embassy to Israel in Jerusalem on March 14, joining the United States and Guatemala as the only countries with embassies in a city whose status is at the heart of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Muslim-majority Kosovo promised to locate its embassy in Jerusalem when it established diplomatic ties with Israel last year under U.S. sponsorship. Kosovo's Foreign Ministry said on Twitter that with the embassy's opening, "the pledge given in the Oval Office today is finally fulfilled." Israel sees its new ties with Kosovo as part of its broader normalization with Arab and Muslim countries under agreements sponsored by former U.S. President Donald Trump. Wasel Abu Youssef, a member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, said the opening of Kosovo's embassy in Jerusalem contradicted U.N. resolutions and aimed to "weaken the Palestinian cause." No date was immediately announced for a formal opening ceremony.

### Tour.....Continued from page 3

According to the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage, "Notorious RBG: The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsburg" is the first-ever retrospective about the trailblazing associate justice and cultural icon, based on the popular Tumblr and best-selling book of the same name by journalist Irin Carmon and attorney Shana Knizhnik. Exploring the American judicial system through the lens of one of its sharpest legal minds, the exhibition takes an entertaining, yet rigorous, look at Justice Ginsburg's life and work – in particular the efforts she joined to protect civil rights and expand equal opportunity for all Americans. Through archival photographs

and documents, historical artifacts, contemporary art, media stations, and gallery interactives, the exhibition spans RBG's varied roles as student, life partner, mother, lawyer, judge, women's rights pioneer, and Internet phenomenon.

"I sent a survey out to the community and the RBG exhibit was the number one pick!" said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "The Federation is pleased we can experience this virtual tour as a community and learn more about the life of this incredible Jewish woman. Join us for what should be an exciting and informative evening."

➔ Visit us on the web at [www.thereporter.org](http://www.thereporter.org)



## Weekly Parasha

Tsav, Leviticus 6:1-8:36

# Empowering others to succeed

RABBI PEG KERSHENBAUM, CONGREGATION B'NAI HARIM, POCONO PINES

For Rabbi Jose b. Honi said, "Of everyone a man is jealous, except his son and his disciple." (BT Sanhedrin 105b)

Would that Rabbi Jose were correct! How many times have you seen the lopsided competition between dad and son or mother and daughter? How many times have you worked with a teacher who seems threatened by an exceptionally bright student? These are sights that can break one's heart, for they are the antithesis of human behavior. In that, Rabbi Jose is correct. We need to convey our skills, insights and

knowledge to the next generation, whether we are parents, teachers, managers or leaders in our Jewish communities.

In this week's *parasha*, Tsav, God continues to tell Moses how to distinguish, raise up, clothe and train his brother, Aaron, and Aaron's sons as the priesthood of the newly formed nation of Israel. Since midway through the book of Exodus, preparations have been made to glorify the brother and nephews of Moses. Now, even after the devastating incident of the Golden Calf, God continues to treasure the Aaronic branch of the house of Levi.

The Tanach is not the place to find much evidence of "brotherly love." Genesis records fratricide, sibling rivalry, deceit, treachery and mistrust. The first time we see a solid relationship between brothers is in Exodus, when God announces to a most reluctant Moses that Aaron is eager to act as spokesman when they approach Pharaoh. After a long absence, the brothers embrace and set out as a team.

Moses does not seem fazed by the promotion of his brother to the priesthood. He doesn't even complain at the See "Succeed" on page 15

## Congregational Notes

### 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 7:30 pm in February. There are also new Zoom links for Torah study and "Havdalah with a Bonus."

Friday, March 26: 7:30 pm, Shabbat services with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell and Jason Flatt on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81957095574?pwd=SGR-TU21rZFMzZml2Mzk1dncYTlFuUT09,meetingID81957095574> and passcode 097653.

Saturday, March 27: 9 am, Shabbat school; 9:15 am, Torah study at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/342411102>; and 7 pm, "Havdalah with a Bonus" at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/526246866>.

Saturday, March 27, at 6 pm: First Night Community Passover Seder led by Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell on Zoom. (For more information, see the article on page 7.)

Tuesday, March 30, at 8 pm: "Excuse Me, I'm Speaking," a program to conclude Women's History Month, featuring a conversation about the contribution of women to "American Values Religious Voices," religion and politics. To sign up, visit [https://scontent-ort2-2.xx.fbcdn.net/v/t1.0-9/161360090\\_10159129272762277\\_2504537676190913059\\_n.jpg?\\_nc\\_cat=107&ccb=1-3&\\_nc\\_sid=825194&\\_nc\\_ohc=Wn8A8-O3ZmUAX\\_uors2&\\_nc\\_ht=scontent-ort2-2.xx&oh=fb44a79b318d0bcb18cc756256b2d556&oe=60787CFC](https://scontent-ort2-2.xx.fbcdn.net/v/t1.0-9/161360090_10159129272762277_2504537676190913059_n.jpg?_nc_cat=107&ccb=1-3&_nc_sid=825194&_nc_ohc=Wn8A8-O3ZmUAX_uors2&_nc_ht=scontent-ort2-2.xx&oh=fb44a79b318d0bcb18cc756256b2d556&oe=60787CFC).

The synagogue is participating in the Yellow Candle Project asking congregants to light a yellow candle in their home on erev Yom Hashoah, April 7. For information about receiving a candle, contact the synagogue office.

Thursday, April 8, at noon: First Thursday Author Series: "The Last Kings of Shanghai: The Rival Jewish Dynasties That Helped Create Modern China - A Conversation with Jonathan Kaufman." Contact the synagogue for details closer to the event.

Friday, April 2: Shabbat Passover services with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81957095574?pwd=SGRTU21rZFMzZml2Mzk1dncYTlFuUT09,meetingID81957095574andpasscode097653>.

Saturday, April 3: Torah Study at 9:15 am, at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/342411102>; and a Passover Yizkor service led by Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell at 10:45 am at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82363068079?pwd=N-VhuNnNkUFBJSWpwTTV4cER3aHF0QT09,meetingID:82363068079andpasscode614518>.

### Rohr Chabad Center

Affiliation: Chabad-Lubavitch  
 Rabbi Aaron and Rivkah Slonim, Directors  
 E-mail: [aslonim@binghamton.edu](mailto:aslonim@binghamton.edu)  
[rslonim@chabadofbinghamton.com](mailto:rslonim@chabadofbinghamton.com)  
 Address: 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal, NY 13850  
 Phone: 797-0015, Fax: 797-0095  
 Website: [www.Chabadofbinghamton.com](http://www.Chabadofbinghamton.com)  
 Rabbi Zalman and Rochel Chein, Education  
 E-mail: [zchein@Jewishbu.com](mailto:zchein@Jewishbu.com), [rchein@Jewishbu.com](mailto:rchein@Jewishbu.com)  
 Rabbi Levi and Hadasa Slonim, Downtown and Development  
 Chabad Downtown Center: 60 Henry St., Binghamton  
 E-mail: [lslonim@Jewishbu.com](mailto:lslonim@Jewishbu.com), [hslonim@Jewishbu.com](mailto:hslonim@Jewishbu.com)  
 Rabbi Yisroel and Goldie Ohana, Programming  
 E-mail: [yohana@Jewishbu.com](mailto:yohana@Jewishbu.com), [gohana@Jewishbu.com](mailto: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](http://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.

### 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](mailto:bethdavid@stny.rr.com)  
 Rabbi's e-mail: [rabbisilber@stny.rr.com](mailto:rabbisilber@stny.rr.com)  
 Website: [www.bethdavid.org](http://www.bethdavid.org)  
 Facebook: [www.facebook.com/bethdavidbinghamton](http://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](http://www.templebetheloneonta.org)  
 E-mail: [TBEOneonta@gmail.com](mailto: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.

### Penn-York Jewish Community

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

### Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated  
 Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045  
 Phone: 607-756-7181  
 President: 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 egalitarian 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 Tikkun v'Or

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism  
 Address: PO Box 3981, Ithaca, NY 14852; 2550 Triphammer Rd. (corner of Triphammer and Burdick Hill), Lansing, NY  
 Phone: 607-256-1471  
 Website: [www.tikkunvor.org](http://www.tikkunvor.org)  
 E-mail: [info@tikkunvor.org](mailto: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.

Friday, March 26, light candles before..... 7:04 pm  
 Saturday, March 27, light candles after..... 8:06 pm  
 Sunday, March 28, light candles after..... 8:07 pm  
 Monday, March 29, yom tov ends..... 8:08 pm  
 Friday, April 2, light candles before..... 7:12 pm  
 Saturday, April 3, light candles after..... 8:13 pm  
 Sunday, April 4, yom tov ends..... 8:15 pm

### 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](mailto:titammy@stny.twcbc.com)  
 Website: [www.templeisraelvestal.org](http://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, March 27, Shacharit services will be held at 10:30 am via Zoom. The Torah portion is Leviticus 6:1-8:36 and the haftarah is Malachi 3:4-24. At 8 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom. Both will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown.

On Sunday, March 28, there will be Torah study at 10:30 am on Zoom led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown.

The temple office will be closed Friday-Wednesday, March 26-31.

On Saturday, April 3, Shacharit services will be held at 10:30 am via Zoom. The Torah portion is Exodus 13:17-15:26 and the haftarah is II Samuel 22:1-51. At 8:15 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom. Both will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown.

On Sunday, April 4, there will be Torah study at 10:30 am on Zoom led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown.

There will be an Executive Board meeting on Tuesday, April 6, at 7 pm, on Zoom.

### 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 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: [rabi@tbeithaca.org](mailto:rabi@tbeithaca.org) and [secretary@tbeithaca.org](mailto:secretary@tbeithaca.org)  
 Website: [www.tbeithaca.org](http://www.tbeithaca.org)  
 Presidents: David Weiner and Linda Aigen  
 Sisterhood President: Julie Paige  
 Director of Education: Rabbi Suzanne Brody  
 Administrative Assistant: Jane Griffith  
 Services: Fri. 8 pm; Sat. 10 am, unless otherwise announced.  
 Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sun. 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](http://www.tinyurl.com/HappeningAtTBE).

### 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](mailto:info@kolhaverim.net)  
 Website: [www.kolhaverim.net](http://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.

**Resources.....Continued from page 11**

Poets Series: Leah Goldberg and Uri Zvi Greenberg.” For more information or to register, visit [www.pardes.org.il/program/community/pardes-community-education/](http://www.pardes.org.il/program/community/pardes-community-education/).

◆ JScreen, a national public health initiative based out of Emory University School of Medicine’s Department of Human Genetics, announced a new program that will offer at-home testing for more than 60 cancer susceptibility genes associated with hereditary risks for breast, ovarian, prostate, colorectal, skin and many other cancers. To learn more about testing options, visit <https://jscreen.org/>.

◆ The Congress for Jewish Culture will offer a four-meeting course led by Shane Baker exploring the prose works of Avrom Sutzkever, drawn primarily from his collection “Di Nevue fun Shvartsapl” (“Prophecy of the Inner Eye”). The texts will be read aloud in Yiddish and students will be able to follow along in either Yiddish or English translation. The classes will take place on Sundays April 11, 18 and 25, and May 2. The class is for intermediate to advanced or intrepid beginners, and the cost to attend is \$100. To register or for more information, e-mail [kongres@earthlink.net](mailto:kongres@earthlink.net).

◆ The Center for Brooklyn History will hold a virtual talk “Jewish Brooklyn: Identity” that will explore how the new and the old Brooklyn Jewish identity spirals back to the Diaspora and forward to the digital. Speaking will be Bruce Feiler, *New York Times* reporter Joseph Berger, Yiddish performer Eleanor Reissa and Rabbi Matt Green of Congregation Beth Elohim. For more information or to register, visit [https://bklynlibrary.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_IU7-tTIWTm-5SZgtevJfKQ?ct=\(January+Programs+Week+2+\(01092018\)\\_COPY\\_01\)&goal=0\\_556fa60cc0-7cc739583b-](https://bklynlibrary.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_IU7-tTIWTm-5SZgtevJfKQ?ct=(January+Programs+Week+2+(01092018)_COPY_01)&goal=0_556fa60cc0-7cc739583b-)

◆ Zivug will hold the virtual class “Western Ethics and Jewish Law on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century’s Hardest Questions” on Tuesdays, April 6, 13, 20 and 27, May 4, 11 and 25, and June 1, from 8-9:30 pm. The cost is \$120/person. The class is being offered through Open Circle at Hebrew College. For more information or to register, [www.zivugtogether.org/events/conundrums](http://www.zivugtogether.org/events/conundrums).

◆ The Collecting These Times website is connects American Jews to Jewish institutions and other collecting projects that can gather and preserve their experiences of the pandemic. Individuals can find relevant collecting projects through the portal and easily contribute materials such as images, videos, audio recordings, documents, and oral histories to collecting institutions in different parts of the U.S. For more information, visit <https://collectingthesetimes.org/s/collecting-these-times/page/home>.

◆ The National Museum of Jewish American History will hold “The Ninth Annual Freedom Seder Revisited: Stories Through the Years” on Wednesday, March 31, at 8 pm. The event is free with a suggested \$10 donation. The communal event will feature commemoration, stories, performances and a community exploration of freedom in America today.

**Succeed...Continued from page 14**

elevation of his nephews and the total eclipse of his own two sons. It seems that the lesson taught by his father-in-law, Yitro, to appoint fitting judges and to delegate authority to worthy leaders, is entirely in keeping with his nature. He is, in his selflessness, unique.

Moses is called “*rabbeinu*,” our master-teacher. Some of his lessons are underscored by powerful words transmitted from God’s mouth to our ears. But the ones that can truly cause us to emulate him are his quiet, modest and wholehearted actions. Can we apply those lessons in our own lives? Can we set aside feelings of disappointment (or jealousy) in the workplace? Can we learn to teach and to train up the next generation in order to prepare them for their inheritance? Can we willingly share our secrets of success to empower others to succeed?

May it be God’s will that we can and that we do.

The event will be available on the museum’s Facebook page, its NMAJH and, for a limited number on Zoom. (Registration is required to receive the Zoom link, but not for the other viewing options.) For more information, visit [www.nmajh.org/events/9th-annual-freedom-seder-revisited/](http://www.nmajh.org/events/9th-annual-freedom-seder-revisited/).

◆ The Shalom Hartman Institute will offer “Spring Days of Learning.” “Gathering, Meaning, and Memory: New Rituals for Remembrance” will begin on Wednesday, April 7, with a global Hitkansut ceremony and continues throughout the day on Thursday, April 8, with opportunities for text study, conversation and reflection. “Home/Land: Celebrating Israel@73” will explore historic and modern perspectives on the state of Israel on April 14-15. For more information, visit [https://spring.hartman.org.il/?mc\\_cid=91dd4cf099&mc\\_eid=96085fa8a5](https://spring.hartman.org.il/?mc_cid=91dd4cf099&mc_eid=96085fa8a5).

◆ Shores Jewish Environmental Programs will hold “Shmitah Text Study,” a six-week text study group on Thursdays, April 8-June 17, from 7-8:30 pm. For more information or to register, visit <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/shmitah-text-study-tickets-141979846543>.

◆ The Jewish National Fund-USA Breakfast for Israel: “You, me, and Israel at 73!” will be held on Sunday, April 18, from 10:30-11:30 am. Guest speakers will include Tsahi Halevi, who plays Naor on the Netflix series “Fauda,” and Rona-Lee Shimon, who plays Nurit on “Fauda.” For more information or to register, visit [www.jnf.org/events-landing-pages/jewish-national-fund-breakfast-for-israel-tri-state-2021?](http://www.jnf.org/events-landing-pages/jewish-national-fund-breakfast-for-israel-tri-state-2021?)

◆ Professor Ruth Wisse is teaching a class for The Tikvah Fund called “Sholem Aliechem’s Tevye the Dairyman.” There is no charge to watch the eight episodes. For more information or to register, visit <https://tikvahfund.org/course/sholem-aleichems-tevye-the-dairyman/?>

◆ IAC36 will hold two free programs: Zikaron BaSalon, a Yom Hashoah program, on Wednesday, April 7, at 9 pm (<https://iac360.org/event/zikaron/>), and an Israel Independence Day celebration on Sunday, April 18, at 10 pm (<https://iac360.org/event/celebrate-israels-independence-day-west/>).

◆ K, The Jews, Europe, the XXI<sup>st</sup> Century – an online magazine founded by journalists and academics from all over Europe – was scheduled to launch on March 22. It will offer articles, essays and interviews about the current situation of European Jews. It will also publish reactions and essays about current events, as well fiction about the concerns of European Jews. The English version of the text can be found at <https://k-larevue.com/en/>.

◆ Hillel International will hold the Hillel College Fair from April 5-7. The fair will explore Jewish life on more than 200 campuses in the U.S. and Canada. Students, their parents/guardians and anyone who wants to learn about Jewish college life are welcome to attend. For more information or to register, visit <https://welcome.hillel.org/virtual-college-fair/?>

◆ The Vilna Shul and the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute will offer the virtual program “Taking Over the Crown: Camille Eskell’s ‘The Fez as Storyteller’” on Thursday, April 1, at 2 pm. The program will offer a discussion and behind-the-scenes look at artist Camille Eskell’s new exhibition “The Fez as Storyteller.” The exhibit will be available online. For information about the exhibit, visit <https://www.brandeis.edu/hbi/artist-program/exhibition.html>. To register for the event, visit <https://vlnashul.org/events/event/taking-over-the-crown-camille-eskells-the-fez-as-storyteller>.

◆ Ritualwell will hold a virtual program “Journeying to Sinai: Seven Workshops for the Omer” on Tuesdays,

March 30-May 11, at noon. The weekly workshops will be taught by rabbis, poets and spiritual leaders. Workshops include meditation, poetry writing and spiritual practices connected to the kabbalistic theme of each Omer week. A minimum donation of \$36 is suggested to attend the workshop series and gain access to all the recordings. For more information or to register, visit [www.tickettailor.com/events/ritualwell/482037?](http://www.tickettailor.com/events/ritualwell/482037?)

◆ The Association for Jewish Studies will offer two virtual spring courses, beginning in April: “Jews, Race, and the U.S. Civil Rights Movement” and “Antisemitism and the American Past.” There is a charge for the courses, but Friends of the AJS Benefactors can attend free. For more information or to register, visit <https://associationforjewishstudies.org/academy>.

For additional resources, see previous issues of The Reporter on its website, [www.thereporter.org](http://www.thereporter.org).

**NEWS IN BRIEF**



From JNS.org

**France returning Klimt art, sold under duress in 1938, to heirs of Jewish owner**

France’s culture minister Roselyne Bachelot announced on March 15 that the French government will return a painting by famed artist Gustav Klimt to the heirs of its Austrian Jewish owner, who was forced to sell the painting to a Nazi sympathizer in 1938. Nora Stiasny inherited Klimt’s “Rosiers sous les arbres” (“Roses Under the Trees”) from her aunt and uncle, Austrian industrialists and art collectors Viktor and Paula Zuckerkandl, reported ARTnews. The couple purchased the artwork in 1911 and were supporters of Klimt. Shortly after the Nazi regime’s annexation of Austria in 1938, Stiasny was forced to sell the painting for a bargain price to Philipp Häusler, a member of the Nazi Party. Stiasny was killed in Poland in 1942. The painting has been hanging in the Musée d’Orsay in Paris as part of the national collection since 1980, when it was acquired by the state via auction from a gallery in Zurich. The initial request for its return was made in September 2019 by an attorney representing Stiasny’s heirs. Bachelot said the government will present a bill that would authorize the painting’s release from France’s national collection. She added that the Klimt is the first artwork from the national collection to be restituted.

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# Memo: Biden administration aims to “reset” relations with Palestinians

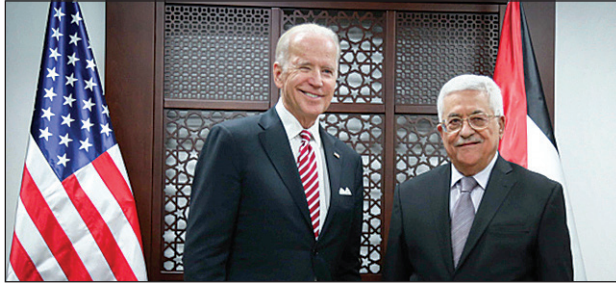
By JNS staff

(JNS) – The Biden administration is looking to hit the reset button with the Palestinians, including the return to a more traditional position on a two-state solution and rolling back several Trump administration positions on Israel.

The four-page memo, titled “The U.S. Palestinian Reset and the Path Forward,” was obtained by The National, an English-language news outlet based in the United Arab Emirates. It was reportedly presented to U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on March 1 by the acting assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs, Joey Hood, and drafted by Hady Amr, deputy assistant secretary of state for Israeli-Palestinian affairs, and his team.

According to the memo, the Biden administration will seek to achieve Israeli-Palestinian peace under a two-state solution framework “based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed land swaps and agreements on security and refugees.”

While the Trump administration endorsed the concept of a two-state solution, critics considered Trump’s plan for Mideast peace, unveiled in January 2020, as ignoring long-held Palestinian demands and being more favorable toward Israel. The Trump plan was endorsed by Israel as a starting point for negotiations, but rejected outright by the Palestinians.



Then U.S. Vice President Joe Biden with Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah on March 9, 2016. (Photo by Flash90)

The memo added that America will “take a two-fold approach of maintaining and ideally improving the U.S. relationship with Israel by deepening its integration into the region while resetting the U.S. relationship with the Palestinian people and leadership.”

The memo also outlines re-establishing diplomatic contact with the Palestinian Authority, which was largely severed by the Palestinians during the Trump administration after the former president recognized Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. Later, Trump shuttered the PLO office in Washington, DC,

and cut off most U.S. assistance to the Palestinians under the Taylor Force Act, which prohibited U.S. support over the Palestinians payments to terrorists or their families.

The memo lays out the goal of re-establishing ties – to start, with assistance and aid to help fight the coronavirus pandemic.

“We are planning a full range of economic, security and humanitarian assistance programs, including through U.N. Relief and World Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Prior to the fuller launch, we plan to announce \$15 million in COVID-related humanitarian assistance,” the memo reportedly says.

Additionally, the memo discusses other topics, including developing a U.S. policy toward Palestinian Authority elections, further endorsing Arab-Israeli relations and reducing Palestinian incitement to violence.

It also suggests rolling back some Trump administration policies favorable toward Israel, such as country of origin labels on products manufactured in Israeli-controlled areas in Judea and Samaria. The Trump administration permitted them to be labeled “Israel,” “Product of Israel” or “Made in Israel” when exported to the United States.

Finally, it also outlines strategies to reform Palestinian society and “to obtain a Palestinian commitment to end payments to individuals imprisoned for acts of terrorism.”

## NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

### Google taps Israeli to lead chip-design team

Google announced on March 22 that it’s appointing Uri Frank as vice president of engineering to lead a team developing server chips in Israel. Google stated that it seeks to develop systems on chip (or SoC), where “multiple functions sit on the same chip or on multiple chips inside one package, instead of motherboards,” the Israeli business daily *Globes* reported. Frank had just been promoted to corporate vice president of the design and engineering group at Intel. “Uri brings nearly 25 years of custom CPU design and delivery experience, and will help us build a world-class team in Israel,” said Google, according to the report. “We’ve long looked to Israel for novel technologies, including Waze, call screen, flood forecasting, high-impact features in search and Velostrata’s cloud migration tools, and we look forward to growing our presence in this global innovation hub,” it continued. This comes after Google granted Israeli nonprofit lender the Ogen Group a \$1 million “impact loan” to boost the group’s low-interest loans to small businesses, Ogen announced in February.

### Skidmore College grants trial period to pro-Israel student club after initial rejection

New York’s Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, NY, has granted a proposed pro-Israel student club a trial period a week after initially rejecting the club’s request. A spokesperson for the private college said in a statement to the Jewish Journal that on March 19, the school’s Club Affairs Committee had a follow-up discussion with leaders of the Progressive Zionists for Peace “to clarify technical matters of definition and scope.” After the meeting, the committee voted to approve the club for a trial period, which is required before it can officially recognize the student organization. “This was never an issue of religion or ideology,” said the spokesperson. “Skidmore does not and will not tolerate antisemitism or religious discrimination of any kind. Skidmore seeks to create a welcoming, safe and inclusive environment for all, and there is no place for discrimination at Skidmore.” The committee initially denied PZP a trial period on March 12 over concerns “that a dialogue-focused club with one perspective being conveyed could be troublesome.” The committee, which previously granted a trial period to the anti-Israel group Students for Justice in Palestine, received backlash for the decision against PZP. The club’s leaders appealed the decision in front of the student government on March 19. The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education said it applauds Skidmore’s student government “for ultimately reversing course and recognizing PZP in a viewpoint-neutral manner,” adding that it hopes “Skidmore’s student government continues to comply with the college’s commendable promises of freedom of expression as it considers other prospective organizations in the future.”

### Jordan reveals new defense pact with U.S., allowing more open military access

Jordan released a new defense agreement on March 21 with the United States that

allows free entry for U.S. forces, aircraft and vehicles. Minister of Foreign Affairs Ayman Safadi told parliament that the pact was “the fruit of long negotiations,” according to an AFP report. “The agreement does not authorize American forces to carry out combat actions within the kingdom,” he told lawmakers, adding that the United States grants Jordan \$425 million per year in military aid. Signed in January, the deal was approved by the Jordanian government last month after skipping parliament. The report quoted local media website Ammon that the deal will allow U.S. forces to carry and transport weapons in Jordan. Islamist lawmaker Saleh al-Armuti criticized the process, according to the report, in that it bypassed parliament and called on the government to cancel the agreement, saying it “violates the constitution and affects Jordan’s sovereignty.”

### Iran said to have threatened *USS Cole*-style attack against Washington’s Fort McNair

Iran has threatened to attack an army base in Washington, DC, as well as the vice chief of staff of the U.S. Army, the AP reported on March 21. Citing “two senior U.S. intelligence officials” speaking on condition of anonymity, the report stated that the threat was first uncovered in communications intercepted by the National Security Agency in January. In those communications, members of Iran’s Quds Force discussed launching “*USS Cole*-style attacks” against Fort McNair, referring to a suicide boat attack in the port of Aden in 2000 that killed 17 U.S. service members. The communication also revealed threats against Gen. Joseph M. Martin, whose official residence is on the base. The fort, which is among the oldest in the United States, lies at the confluence of the Potomac and Anacostia rivers. The intercepted Quds Force communication was focused on ways to avenge the death of former Quds Force Gen. Qassem Soleimani, who was killed on Jan. 3, 2020, in a U.S. strike in Iraq, according to the report. The report comes amid an ongoing effort by the Army to create a buffer zone of 250 feet to 500 feet from the shore of the Washington Channel. The plan has encountered resistance from city leaders as it would limit access to the busy waterway.

### Gallup poll: increase in Americans’ desire to pressure Israel

Americans continue to favor Israel over the Palestinians, yet their support for the Palestinian Authority has increased to 30 percent, according to a Gallup annual World Affairs poll published on March 19. Favorability of Israel remains high, at 75 percent, the poll revealed. The poll also indicated that since 2018, the percentage of Americans wanting more pressure placed on the Palestinians to resolve their conflict with Israel has dropped from 50 percent to 44 percent, while that of Americans wanting more pressure exerted on Israel has increased from 27 percent to 34 percent. Gallup says that this is the highest level of demand for pressuring Israel since 2007. Over the same period, the percentage in favor of the United States putting more pressure on both parties, or on neither, has declined from 21 percent to 14 percent. The majority of those favoring pressure on Israel are Democrats, while 17 percent of Republicans and 31 percent of independents favor doing so. The poll was conducted from Feb. 3-18.

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