

# Shalom 04|20

The Journal of the Reading Jewish Community published by the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks

## From the President's Desk

# Federation responds to coronavirus

By William D. Franklin  
President

These are uncertain times. We all know that the coronavirus is very contagious. As a precaution, the Jewish Federation is cancelling all non-essential meetings and programs through mid-April. Our situation will be continuously monitored to ensure appropriate and timely decisions of whether to hold or cancel future programs and meetings.



In addition, the Federation is establishing the following aid-oriented actions:

- Establish a central communications network with JFS, RCOS, KZ & Chabad to ensure up-to-date knowledge of community members' health status and needs to coordinate assistance. This will involve developing a list of those vulnerable to be monitored, those who are infected, and those who need assistance.
- The Jewish Federation will serve as a centralized, non-medical hotline for those in need of assistance (shopping, supplies, food drop-off while under quarantine etc. or any other help such as access to clergy or other support professionals. JFR's

entire network and phone system can be accessed from home and we will be able to provide the necessary services even if we are not able to come into the office. The JFR answering service will be set up to be remotely monitored.

- The Federation will coordinate volunteers who are willing and able to support those who might need assistance. If you are able and willing to be a volunteer, please let us know.

- Establish a fund to assist people who might need a bridge loan.

The Federation offices will continue to operate. Necessary governance meetings will be held remotely using Zoom. While keeping our community safe during the COVID-19 outbreak is our top priority, we are planning future events and programs that will build upon our welcoming, vibrant Jewish community and engage people of all ages in extraordinary Jewish experiences. We ask for your continued support and participation in maintaining the work of our organization.

We offer prayers of healing to those affected worldwide. Please keep yourselves and your families safe by following Centers for Disease Control precautions listed at cdc.gov to stay healthy during this outbreak.

## A note to our readers

As this issue goes to press, many Jewish community events and activities are being postponed in accordance with Pennsylvania Department of Health recommendations. Events listed in this issue are subject to cancellation, postponement or other changes. Please watch for word in the coming weeks and contact the Federation or sponsoring organization if you have questions.

Look for e-blasts, our Web site and other social media for timely updates. You can communicate with us by using the office answering service, e-mailing me [williamf@jfreading.org](mailto:williamf@jfreading.org) or calling on my cell phone (610-927-7136). Your thoughts and suggestions will be helpful and greatly appreciated.

If there is a positive to be achieved in the coming months, it will be that by coming together to focus on and minimize potential negative outcomes, we will strengthen our sense of Jewishness and community.

# A great morning with Jamie Bernstein



Jamie Bernstein, daughter of the great maestro Leonard Bernstein, drew a big crowd to her Literatour Berks brunch appearance at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Reading March 1, and she didn't disappoint.

Drawing on her memoir, "Famous Father Girl," she gave a talk that was by turns funny, fascinating and deeply moving. At the conclusion of the lecture, she signed copies of her book and spent plenty of time chatting with attendees.

Prior to the lecture, Molly Nemirow performed a set of Bernstein songs with accompanist Holly Altenderfer and flutist Sara Rose Gibney.



Clockwise from top, Jamie Bernstein during her lecture; Bernstein autographing books and greeting fans following her talk; vocalist Molly Nemirow and flutist Sara Rose Gibney perform Leonard Bernstein's "Simple Song" prior to Jamie Bernstein's appearance.

## Your Federation Supports:

Jewish Education

Food Pantry

Friendship Circle

Chevra

Community Shabbat

Reading Jewish Film Series

PJ Library

Jewish Family Service

Jewish Cultural Center

Lakin Holocaust Library

& Resource Center

Israel & Overseas

Camp Scholarships

Israel Trips

Jewish Community

High School

Emergency Support

Lakin Preschool

Richard J. Yashek Lecture

Transportation

Maimonides Society

Your Jewish Legacy

92ND ST Y Programs

Joint Distribution Committee

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Annual Campaign

Jewish Agency for Israel

Yemin Orde

School Education Programs

Interfaith Unity Council

Israel Advocacy

Youth Events

Great Decisions Series

Jewish Community

Relations Council

Community Holiday Programs

Women's Philanthropy

Jewish Federations

of North America

Counseling Services

Leo Camp Lecture

Shabbat B'Yachad

# Your campaign donation saves lives

By **Richard Nassau**  
Development Director

Your community campaign donation saves people. We don't usually stop and think about that fact. It is true. Consider how your gift to the Jewish Federation has made a difference for people just in the last 30 days. You enabled Federation to mobilize resources, along with our community partners, in response to the coronavirus.



Your donation also saves lives throughout the year. Our Jewish Family Service provides support for families. This need may be due to illness or mental health issues or the loss of a loved one. JFS provides food for the hungry here in Berks County and across the globe.

Your donation transforms lives. Through Federation programs, young adults

are strengthening their Jewish identity. Federation scholarships are building Jewish identity as children experience Jewish overnight summer camps. In Israel, new immigrants are being integrated into Israeli society.

Your donation is connecting lives. Federation sponsored programs bring our entire community together for Shabbat or shared cultural events. Events, like our Literatour Berks programs that celebrate authors and books. Our JCC builds connections through arts, learning and recreational programs.

Your donation inspires lives. Federation's work with the PJ Library program fosters Jewish family life and learning by delivering free Jewish books and music to young families.

Federation is providing college-bound seniors with the resources, understanding and tools to stand-up and confront anti-Semitism and BDS on-campus.

Your donation empowers lives. Federation's Jewish Community Relations Council works in the community on issues affecting all of us. Federation serves as an advocate for our Jewish community and Israel.

Your donation infuses our community with life. Federation has expanded its outreach through new programs. Programs that are diverse and promote opportunities for more community members to become involved and included.

To help our community, we need our community. Every single one of us. No matter how big or small, it is your donation that makes the difference.

To encourage people to make a new or increased community campaign gift, a group of generous donors with match every increase dollar for dollar.

Your increased donation strengthens our community. To make a gift, go to [ReadingJewishCommunity.org](http://ReadingJewishCommunity.org) and click on DonateNow.

# Development

[Annual Campaign](#)

[Women's Philanthropy](#)

[Maimonides Society](#)

[Your Jewish Legacy](#)

[Chai Circle](#)

[L'Chaim Society](#)

[Book of Life](#)

[Letter of Intent](#)



**Jewish Federation**  
OF READING/BERKS

## Life and Legacy

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT  
610.921.0624 [info@JFReading.org](mailto:info@JFReading.org)

### Perpetual Annual Campaign Endowment (PACE)

A Perpetual Annual Campaign Endowment (PACE) is a permanent fund dedicated to endowing your Annual Community Campaign gift. Usually established through a bequest, a PACE fund is not intended to take the place of a current annual gift. Instead, it is a lasting legacy you create that will continue to make an annual gift to the campaign in perpetuity on your behalf.

### The Lion of Judah Endowment (LOJE)

A Lion of Judah Endowment (LOJE) allows a woman to endow her Lion of Judah gift in perpetuity. A LOJE continues your philanthropy by providing an annual campaign gift to support our mission of social justice, human dignity, Jewish education and Jewish growth for all.

### Charitable Bequests

Leaving a bequest of a specific amount of cash, a percentage of your estate or the remainder of your estate, creates a permanent legacy. There's no limit on the amount you may set aside from your estate -- you decide how large or small your gift will be. You may choose to make a gift of cash, securities or other assets -- and your estate will receive a tax deduction in the amount of your charitable bequest.

### Charitable Gift Annuities

A Charitable Gift Annuity is an agreement between you and the Jewish community that benefits you now and creates your future legacy. In exchange for your gift to the Jewish community, you will receive a fixed income for life and can designate how the remaining funds are to be used.

### Donor-Advised Funds

A contribution of cash or securities allows you to establish a fund which is held in an account in your name with the Jewish Federation. You then recommend grants from your fund to recognized public charities.

### Named Endowment Funds

When you create a Named Endowment Fund, you are establishing a permanent fund in your name or in the name of someone you wish to honor or remember. You can specify how the spendable portion of the fund should be used -- for unrestricted use by the Jewish community, or to support a specific cause.

### Legacy Gift Assets

You can make a gift now or in the future. Contact Federation, we'll work with you and your financial advisor about ways you can best achieve both your family and charitable financial goals.

This material is provided for informational purposes only and is not intended to be used, nor should it be used, as legal or tax advice. For tax or legal advice, please consult with your professional advisors.

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Message from the Chair

# Look for new ways to engage with your Jewish community

By Robert M. Caster  
Federation Chair

I invite you to participate and engage in new ways with our Jewish community. Having raised my family in Berks County, I know that our community is constantly changing. As I complete my first six months as Chair of the Jewish Federation, I'm pleased to report that Federation has kept pace and changed with it.

Communities evolve and change for many reasons. Federation, perhaps because of our size, has been able to respond quickly and in new ways to these changes, often offering programs that are

ahead of the curve.

In the last few years, Federation has committed its resources into expanding outreach and increasing engagement. Our JCC programs are more diverse and inclusive. Many of these programs were started during the last five years. They were a direct response to community changes and a new Jewish generation.

Some things don't change as Federation continues to respond to everyday issues and concerns. Being open and welcoming to newcomers, ensuring Jewish continuity, caring for those in need and standing-up for social

justice.

Some changes bring new challenges, such as confronting a more subtle and less visible form of anti-Semitism. Federation has stepped up to lead new coalitions and community partnerships that are addressing these challenges.

There are also issues that were unforeseen just a few years ago. Issues, like the important work Federation is doing behind the scenes to keep our community secure and our members safe.

Our Jewish Federation's recently completed Strategic Plan is titled "All Working Together for One Jewish

Community." It focuses on ways that unite us, not as a single entity, but as a community. It is a blueprint of engagement that celebrates our diversity.

Federation is here to serve the entire community. We facilitate, we respond, we unite, and we lead.

I promise you that Federation will continue to change. We will continue to listen and respond to you and to our community's needs.

What I ask of you is to talk with us and engage with our Jewish community. I invite you to participate in our programs, connect to our services and enjoy being a member of our Jewish community.

# RCOS receives Pennsylvania 2020 nonprofit security grant

By Federation staff

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom was informed in early March that it was one of the two Berks County nonprofits to receive funding from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) to improve the safety and security of its Wyomissing facility.

The Jewish Federation contracted with a national security firm, Global Operations, to perform risk assessments and draft the state grant fund applications for the Federation, Keshet Zion Synagogue, Chabad of Berks County and RCOS.

PCCD received more than 800

applications requesting approximately \$27 million in funding but only had \$5 million to distribute.

The \$25,000 grant RCOS received will primarily be used for emergency communications equipment, safety and security training structural upgrades and other security related equipment.

RCOS shares space at 555 Warwick Drive with Keshet Zion, and communitywide events often are held in the building.

The Federation will continue to lead community wide security efforts and there will be continued efforts to apply for further state and federal grants.

# Continued support needed for Yemin Orde's work

From Federation staff

The Jewish Federation of Reading recently had a program in which Batya Shmueli, Yemin Orde's Youth Village Resource Development and Community Relations Manager, told us her life story and described the impact Yemin Orde had on her and her Ethiopian family's painful but successful assimilation into Israeli society.

It was also rewarding to hear how ImpactIsrael has expanded use of the Village Way, Yemin Orde's successful educational methodology, to thousands more at-risk and immigrant children in Israel. Today, it works with 36 youth villages, residential therapeutic communities and public high schools with high populations of at-risk youth, including schools in the

Israeli-Arab communities. In addition, collaboration with U.S. schools has begun.

Our Reading Jewish community's relationship with Yemin Orde goes back many years. Your contributions have helped make financial assistance to Yemin Orde possible for close to 20 years. But unfortunately, despite the tremendous economic and technological advances Israel has made, continued absorption of many immigrants results in the continued need for support.

There remain too many children and youth at risk:

- "At risk" children and youth are characterized by at least one of the following: live-in situations that endanger them within their families and environment, engage in risk

behaviors, have low educational achievements, emotional or social problems, are in danger of physical harm (from others or self-inflicted), or live in threatening, non-supportive family environments.

- The National Program for Children and Youth at Risk has identified more than 260,000 children and youth at risk in 184 communities across Israel.

- About 44,000 cases of child abuse or neglect were reported to the social services in 2015.

- As of January 2016, 367,000 children and youth at risk (up to age 17) were registered with the municipal social service departments.

- In 2014, 27% of boys in 10th grade reported that at least once in the previous month, they had drunk 5 or more alcohol servings within hours, compared with 14% of girls.

- In 2014, 10% of 12-16-year-olds were involved in frequent acts of violence in school (3+ times in the



Batya Shmueli

previous twelve months).

- 25,000 youth criminal files were opened in 2015, a decline of 21% since 2005.

Thus, our Jewish community's continued support remains important and serves well to actualize our philanthropic values and goals.



## Jewish Summer Camp Financial Assistance Program

This is a late reminder that information and applications for the Jewish Federation of Reading's summer camp financial assistance program are available on the JFR website, [www.readingjewishcommunity.org](http://www.readingjewishcommunity.org).

Please call Bill Franklin at 610-921-0624 if you have any questions. We will expedite request review and approval.

# Shalom

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The opinions expressed in Shalom are of the writers and not the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks



# My Yom Hazikaron

By **Adi Shalev**

It is Erev Yom Hazikaron. We are getting ready; wearing a white shirt, putting tissues and a bottle of water in a bag, and driving to the boarding school my uncle attended in high school.

It is a familiar ride. Yom Hazikaron songs are on the radio (if we even turn it on). Yom Hazikaron is different from all other days.

We arrive at the boarding school, enter through lines of candles in sandbags on the sides of the path. Entering the room, we receive a Yom Hazikaron sticker and see the pictures of all the fallen soldiers who were students at the boarding school. My uncle, my mother's brother, always has at least 3 three pictures.

We say hello to family members who have already arrived and other people we know. This we see only once a year... but every year.

It is time to go to the ceremony. In a few minutes the siren will sound. We come to the familiar square, with the students sitting ready on the stage, another two soldiers standing next to the flag, and the monument with the names of all the students who died as soldiers. We sit in the first or second row, as always.

The ceremony begins. One of the students asks everyone to stand before the siren starts, and after a few moments it comes, breaking the silence and entering my soul. Sometimes I just concentrate on the siren itself and sometimes my thoughts just run in my head.

After the siren ends, the ceremony begins. My Grandpa always says "Kaddish," and my Grandma shares her feelings. Students read various texts, sing Yom Hazikaron songs, read the names of the fallen and light candles in their memory.

After the ceremony, each is there with his/her own personal pain, and we say goodbye to the name engraved on the monument.

We say goodbye to everyone and drive home. Yom Hazikaron songs are still on the radio (if we turn it on). Sometimes it's a completely quiet ride, sometimes we talk a little.

Coming back home, only shows that relate to Yom Hazikaron are on television. All other channels are inactive. The days ends.

The next morning, I feel that something in the air is still different. Everyone here understands and feels it.

Wearing a white shirt again, I make

sure that I have my sunglasses (in case I cry), tissues and water bottle, and drive to the military cemetery with the family.

There's a traffic jam. So many people are coming it is unbelievable. Some of the streets are blocked, police and Soldiers are scattered to maintain order and security, and with them are masses of people who are coming to visit their friend, family, loved one.

Coming to my uncle's grave, we light a memorial candle, say hello to family and friends who come to support and comfort us. Around us are a lot of people we know because we see them every year, and unfortunately, sometimes we also see new faces.

There will always be two soldiers from my uncle's unit (paratroopers). This is how the army makes sure there is no grave, no soldier, without anyone to come and remember him or her.

The main ceremony begins. We stand around my uncle's grave and listen; crying, hugging and supporting. Every year.

When the ceremony is over, people go back home. We are usually the last people left at the cemetery. Over the past few years, while we were waiting, I have heard more stories and more experiences

of my mother with her brother, my uncle. I've always been afraid to ask to hear stories. I didn't want to make anyone sad, but I've learned not only is it okay but it is also helps.

After most people are gone, and just before we go, we visit my mother's sister's husband and light a memorial candle in his memory as well. Every time I leave the cemetery, I leave with different feelings and different thoughts.

In the evening we begin to celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel Independence Day). This is such an important day for the State of Israel. However, this fast transition is difficult for me. To celebrate in the evening after being in the cemetery in the morning feels uncomfortable. Some say that this the point. Because of those who have fallen we have a state.

Thinking of being here during Yom Hazikaron is not easy for me. I have celebrated different holidays here successfully, but Yom Hazikaron is something that is difficult to understand if you have not experienced it, or if you are not an Israeli. I hope that this article conveys to you, even a little bit, what Yom Hazikaron is for me and for the people of Israel.

## Community planning Israeli holiday observances

By **Amanda J. Hornberger**

After Passover we hope to be able to safely bring the community back together to commemorate Yom Hashoah, Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut. Below are the current plans for these holidays.

Monday, April 20, at 7 p.m. at the JCC we will commemorate Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day. Our speaker will be Ariel Burger,

author of "Witness: Lessons from Elie Wiesel's Classroom.

Burger is joining us as a part of Literatour Berks, but please note the location change. A memorial candle lighting and name reading will also occur at this event.

Wednesday, April 29, at 7 p.m. at the JCC we will commemorate Israel's Memorial Day and Independence Day. Our Community Shlichah from Israel, Adi Shalev,

has been working hard on creating a meaningful and special event.

We will continue to monitor the spread of coronavirus and will do everything to ensure the health and safety of our community. If these events need to be cancelled, we will notify the community as soon as we are able.

If you are unsure if an event is being held, please call the JCC at 610-921-0624 to confirm.

### It's Simcha Supplement time

If you had or are having a bar/bat mitzvah or graduation (high school or higher) in your family this Jewish year, share the good news with the community. Please submit a few sentences about the person and their accomplishment, along with a photo.

Text and photos can be sent to [Marknem@aol.com](mailto:Marknem@aol.com) or to the Federation office.

**DEADLINE IS APRIL 30.**

**WE CANNOT GUARANTEE PUBLICATION OF ITEMS SUBMITTED AFTER DEADLINE**

Sunday, April 19th, at  
7pm

JCC- 1100 Berkshire Blvd.,  
Wyomissing, PA, 19610

Questions? 610-951-0624  
or [AdiS@JFReading.org](mailto:AdiS@JFReading.org)

ISRAELI MOVIE NIGHTS PRESENTS:  
**WHEN HEROES FLY**

Episode and discussion about PTSD

# Israel at forefront of top tech trends

## Israel21c.com

The field of brain-machine interface is growing rapidly

“Top 10 Tech Trends for 2020, and Beyond” was one of the most packed plenary sessions at the OurCrowd Global Investor Summit, held Feb. 13 in Jerusalem.

The largest tech event in the Middle East and the biggest business event in Israel’s history, the summit attracted 23,000 registrants from 183 countries, including 22 Arab or Muslim nations.

Here are trends to expect in the coming years.

### 1. Lab steaks get tasty

Global demand for meat and seafood is at an all-time high. Negative environmental impact, overfishing and animal suffering has increased as meat production has grown.

Israeli startups leading this field: Aleph Farms is one of several Israeli startups working toward the commercialization of cultivated meat and seafood made in bioreactors using animal cells.

### 2. Our brains get wired

The human brain has been evolving for millions of years. Machines have been around for only about 200 years. The new field of brain-computer (or brain-machine) interface explores how the brain can communicate with an external device.

Israeli startups leading this field: CorrActions is developing a plug-and-play SaaS (software as a service) platform to prevent disastrous human-machine interface errors noninvasively. The software decodes the brain’s early error-detection signals and human touch. It translates these signals into actions that prevent error in real time, faster than the body receives those signals.

### 3. The race to autonomous vehicles becomes a marathon

Just two years ago, most analysts predicted widescale deployment of autonomous vehicles by the middle of the decade. Since then, the technical challenges involved have moved out the timeline considerably. Passenger and pedestrian safety is among the biggest hurdles to overcome.

Israeli startups leading this field: Companies such as Cartica and Brodmann17 are innovating AI technology that can bridge the safety gap until full vehicle autonomy is reached. Viziblezone is focused on protecting pedestrians by harnessing the power of smartphone location sensors.

### 4. AI beats Moore’s Law

Moore’s Law is a prediction from 1965 that processor speeds would double every two years. This prediction was

accurate for several decades and guided the semiconductor industry. However, artificial intelligence has accelerated faster than the development of traditional processors since 2012, doubling every three and a half months.

Israeli startups leading this field: Hailo is developing deep-learning processors for edge devices.

### 5. If you are not scared of the dark, you should be

The Dark Web is the part of the Internet that cannot be indexed by search engines such as Google. This hidden world is a hotspot for illegal activity including drugs, human trafficking and fake IDs. It has become the preferred location for hackers to orchestrate and plant cyberattacks.

Israeli startups leading this field: Sixgill (automatically searches the Dark Web for any sign of cyberthreat and provide real-time actionable intelligence to the customer.

### 6. Productivity leaps ahead to discovery

Everything that can be automated will be automated. Software developers are already starting to use low-code or no-code tools. The no-code market is expected to reach \$52 billion by 2024.”

Israeli startups leading this field: While the no-code revolution is led by multinationals such as Microsoft, Israeli startup Kaholo is automating the entire DevOps process, cutting development time from days to merely hours. Kryon Systems empowers enterprises with best-in-class robotic process automation and AI.

### 7. Looking good means feeling good

Recent advances in computer vision and AI have created a growing wave of health-tech companies aiming to improve our lives and protect us against illness.

Israeli startups leading this field: Sight Diagnostics is combining AI with breakthrough hardware to bring lab-quality blood count capability to the doctor’s office. Scopio Labs is redefining microscopy with high-resolution imaging systems enabling powerful analysis and collaboration through AI. Kemtai offers a beta version of a virtual interactive fitness trainer.

### 8. Robots play nicely together

Robots in the Fourth Industrial Revolution will have to work with one another and with people as a team. Collaborative robotics is therefore the new realm in the emerging robotics market.

Israeli startups leading this field: Brillianetor is a SaaS solution that provides robots with collective autonomous decision-making capabilities.

## Author Jenna Blum takes part in Literatour Berks



Sue Fararra with author Jenna Blum at the Sinking Spring Public Library on March 2 as part of Literatour Berks.

Jenna Blum’s “The Lost Family” centers around a restaurant owner. Here’s a recipe from one of the menus featured in the book.

### Masha Torte

(Dark German Chocolate Torte with Cherries Flambé)



### ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup organic brown sugar
- 1/4 cup cocoa powder (the darker the better)
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/3 cup fat-free Greek yogurt (I prefer Fage)
- 1 tablespoon agave syrup (optional)
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup (optional)
- 1/4 cup unsweetened vanilla soy milk (can also use coconut or almond milk)
- 1/4 cup coconut oil
- 1 1/2 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 medium zucchini, grated (about 1 cup)
- 1 cup dark chocolate chips or shaved baking chocolate

### preparations

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Oil 12-inch cake pan.
2. In large bowl, whisk flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda, salt. Using wooden spoon, create well in center of dry ingredients; add yogurt, milk, coconut oil, syrups (if using), vanilla.
3. Mix batter until just combined; stir in zucchini. Add chocolate chips/baking chocolate.
4. Pour into pan & bake 40 – 50 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool on rack 5 – 10 minutes; transfer to fire-proof serving platter.
5. In large sauté pan over medium high heat, combine butter & sugar; cook until sugar dissolves. Add cherries & syrup, Grand Marnier. Bring to simmer. Remove from heat.
6. Pour atop torte. With long kitchen match or long-handled lighter, ignite cherries. Once flames have burned down, serve.

### For flambé:

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 15 ounces of cherries (Bing or dark) in syrup (can be canned)
- 6 tablespoons Grand Marnier

Bon appétit!

### Reading’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Postcard & Ephemera Expo Back by Popular Demand Sunday, May 31, 2020

Free Admission from 9 A.M. to 4 P.M.

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## Why we invite the hungry to our Seder

By Rabbi Brian Michelson  
Reform Congregation Oheb Shalom

Each year, we gather around our tables, surrounded by friends and family, to recount the tale of our miraculous deliverance from slavery.

After the introductory blessings for the candles, Kiddush, and the Shehehyanu, we invite the hungry into our midst. Using the same Aramaic words that have been recited for thousands of years, Jewish families uncover the matzot and recite: "This is the poor bread which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat. Let all who are in need celebrate Pesach. Now we are here: next year in the land of Israel. Now



we are enslaved; next year may we be free."

Why do we start the Seder with this stirring but unrelated call to feed the hungry?

There are many traditional ways of interpreting the Ha Lachma Anya. One I happen to like notes that we refer to bodily needs first ("all who are hungry") and to spiritual needs second ("all who are in need"). Both are essential parts of liberation — one is not free unless there is enough to eat and a spirit of liberation. Yet the priority seems to be that one cannot be free unless freed from poverty, hunger, and illness. In the words of the Mishnah, "without bread, there is no Torah." Without material security, it is impossible to attain spiritual depth. Too many people go to bed hungry each night, too many die of illnesses for which there are cures, and too many suffer the deadening blows of

bigotry and prejudice from their fellow human beings.

In this world, a world of suffering, disappointment, and pain, the Ha Lachma Anya is a call summoning the Jewish people to our historic task le-takken olam, to repair the world.

All who are hungry may come and eat, but only if we live our lives and structure our society in such a way that the entire human family is cared for. Sadly, that is not the case. The Ha Lachma Anya reminds us that our role model should be Moses, the passionate spokesperson for the downtrodden and the outcast. Indeed, it suggests that our ultimate role model is God, the liberator of slaves and the untiring protector of widows and orphans. As we celebrate around our tables, may we always remember this.

Chag Samayach v'Kasher!

## Thoughts on the coronavirus pandemic

By Rabbi Yosef Lipsker  
Chabad Center of Berks County

Everything that surrounds us shares a message from G-d. What is G-d's message through the coronavirus? I don't know. I'm not a prophet.

Here are four thoughts though:

### 1. WE ARE ONE

**FAMILY** — When someone sneezes in China, it will affect you in Reading. When someone coughs in Berlin, the skies in Israel close. We are all interconnected, G-d shines His light through us all. We need each other and are influenced by each other. Your deeds and actions have a global impact, really.

**2. YOUR WORDS COUNT** — Face masks are worn not only because of those who are coughing and sneezing but also for those who are speaking! Hundreds of microdroplets are emitted from you each time you speak. They remain in the environment for a long time. Your words are impactful, they set the tone and affect your environment positively and negatively. Think before you emit those words.

**3. STAY HUMBLE** — We are all so vulnerable. A tiny virus can rock empires, economies and supply chains, almost overnight. Our travel plans, 401(k)s and very important meetings, all put on hold. That is humbling, we are not as powerful as we often think. When we feel humbled we learn to put ourselves and our blazing egos aside. Not to think less of ourselves but to think of ourselves less.

**4. SMALL DEEDS MATTER** — If I were to ask you, just a few weeks back, what would it take to literally alter the lives of almost everyone on this planet? What kind of cataclysmic, titanic event would have to transpire to shake the foundations of the world economy? You would probably suggest an incredibly large explosion or something of that sort — rather than a small open food market in China. Yet small deeds have huge effects — and how much more so our acts of holiness and kindness change the world!

As Jews, we have been the story of a

people in perennial suffering.

We have, thank G-d, moved away from that model.

Yet, we find ourselves once again in severe danger. This time it is unseen — a plague striking the globe at an alarming rate. There is fear and concern. From day to day, we watch as the world grinds to a halt, in total lockdown.

The government is calling this phase in its strategy 'Social Distancing'. To not interact physically with others. To keep our distance. If not for you, then for others. We do not know how this disease works, nor how it makes such rapid advances in infecting people. The only way is to avoid it as much as humanly possible.

Now, social distancing is anathema to Judaism. Our faith encourages social engagement via its many activities, from shul services to Friday night Shabbat dinners with our families. The upcoming festival of Pesach is another beautiful family moment. Social interaction is in our DNA.

But the same faith introduces different rules when lives are at stake. Then we do whatever it takes to preserve life — even at the expense of some of the things we hold dear and precious. We are entering a new phase, and we must pray that it doesn't last too long.

While we are socially distancing from each other, that is only physically. There is, however, so much where we can connect ever more strongly. It is a time to look out for each other via other, non physical means. While we cannot offer a direct hands-on religious experience, I would urge and encourage you to not completely disconnect from our faith and tradition. There are lots of resources available online. It is vital to remain connected to our faith. We need

tremendous Divine mercy at this time.

Please reach out to us if anyone needs help setting up their own Seder at home.

The following is an excellent synopsis of the situation and life in general by my colleague, Rabbi Aron Moss from Australia.

**Question:** This coronavirus thing has really thrown me. I feel like I've lost all sense of certainty. No one knows what will happen next. How do we stay sane when we don't know what's lurking around the corner?

**Answer:** It is not that we have lost our sense of certainty. We have lost our illusion of certainty. We never had it to begin with. This could be majorly unsettling, or amazingly liberating.

This tiny virus of 125 nanometres has sent the entire world into chaos. All of our plans are up in the air, markets are going crazy, entire countries shutting down, and we have no clue what the future holds.

But that is always the case. We never know what the future holds. We only think we do, and keep getting surprised when things don't pan out the way we expected. Now the mask is off. We have to admit our vulnerability.

What will happen next? We don't know. Our experts don't know. Our leaders don't know. Only G-d knows. And that is the point. Only G-d knows.

Close your eyes and feel the uncertainty, make peace with it, let yourself be taken by it. Embrace your cluelessness. Because in all the confusion there is one thing you know for sure. You are in G-d's hands.

Try to keep calm. Panic and fear are also contagious. Take every precaution as advised by health authorities. Wash your hands well. And every time you do, remember whose hands you are in.

## Obituary

**Jack A. Linton**, 83, of Reading. Jack attended Albright College and was a lawyer specializing in tax and estate law for more than 50 years. He was active in political and community affairs and served as a Board member for both the Exeter and Gov. Mifflin School Districts. He loved the music of the Beatles, walking for exercise and the artwork of Thomas Kinkade. Jack is survived by his three children; daughter Ann of Texas, sons James of Texas and John of California, and three grandchildren.

## All Around the Town

Mazel tov to **Cindy and Tim Schuchart** on the engagement of their daughter Lauren to Ben Fleishman from California.

\*\*\*

We love good news about members of our community! Please share it by emailing [Marknem@aol.com](mailto:Marknem@aol.com) or calling the JCC office at 610-921-0624.

Until next time: Shalom!

### April Nissan Iyar



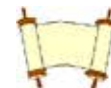
Shabbat Candle Lightings

April 3  
7:13 p.m.

April 10  
7:20 p.m.

April 17  
7:27 p.m.

April 24  
7:35 p.m.



Torah Portions

April 4/10 Nissan  
Vayikra (Leviticus 6:1-8:36)

April 11/17 Nissan  
Chol Hamo'ed Pesah (Exodus 33:12-34:26)

April 18/24 Nissan  
Sh'mini (Leviticus 9:1-11:47)

April 25/1 Iyyar  
Tazria/Metzora (Leviticus 12:1-15:33)

# How our Passover Seder traditions evolved

By Rabbi David Sislen  
Keshet Zion Synagogue

Of all the Jewish holidays, Pesach has doubtless earned the distinction of being the greatest mashup of rituals and traditions in the entire calendar. What began in the Torah as a commemoration of the Exodus with relatively few, but admittedly ambiguous commandments, has grown into a mammoth, complex, and varied undertaking. The modern mechanics of removing hametz from our possession, preparing for the Seder and the week, assembling and teaching our children about all of the symbols of the holiday, and then pulling everything off smoothly and on time, is hard enough.



have been adapted, re-ordered, added to, and subtracted from. Rituals have become symbols, and symbols have become rituals. In modernity, even more ritual and liturgy has come and gone from the basic text of Pesach eve. We have had the Matza of Hope, Miriam's Cup, an orange on the Seder plate, countless games and devices to engage our children, and the appropriation of a full Jewish world of customs to enrich and add meaning to our sederim. Not to mention all the "themed" Seders: feminist, freedom, interfaith, Israel-themed, secular (in commemoration of spring), Yiddish, and of course, the ubiquitous Chocolate Seder.

But the fact that the Haggadah has been a dynamic book and the Seder an ever-changing ritual for its entire existence is not indicative of Jewish schizophrenia. Much the opposite. It's a sign that, despite the onslaught of ritual and tradition, most Jews get the message that Pesach is a holiday which fundamentally recognizes and commemorates two important

interconnected values: freedom, and the difficult transition to it.

Against the backdrop of the deliverance from Egyptian slavery, the original text chronicles Israel's journey, physical and spiritual. Toward the end of the magid section, we thank G-d for taking us "from slavery to freedom, from sadness to joy, from mourning to festivity, from darkness to light, and from bondage to redemption." But just before that, the Haggadah tells us that "in every generation, one must see themselves as if they personally came out of Egypt." That's not so easy to accomplish if you don't have a context to provide personal relevance. So, beginning with the original Haggadah, we have developed a tradition of adding layers of meaning in ways which are constantly evolving. The classic text does so through quoting a wide variety of interpretations of the words and concepts of the Haggadah as a way of inspiring us to discuss, consider, reflect, and learn from each other as we relive the Exodus experience. Songs

and prayers have come and gone to help us textually and emotionally. That process continues to this day, since the imperative to re-live the transition from slavery to freedom must be observed "in every generation." It is therefore fitting that the Seder has become such a catch-all of these symbolic actions and creative texts.

So go for it! If something (appropriate to the holiday) will add to your Seder, by all means include it. Just be sure that it represents and teaches the value of freedom, and the fact that the journey out of slavery of any type represents a transition which is not always easy. As you re-live the Exodus, make it personal. How better to motivate yourself and that of your family and guests to look around and see who may be suffering under the hand of a modern Pharaoh; religious, spiritual, circumstantial, or physical. By understanding where they are, we can all help them split the sea as they take the difficult journey to their own Promised Land.

Chag sameach v'kasher!

# Rabbi to discuss Women of the Wall at RCOS

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom

Rabbi Linda Henry Goodman, representing Women of the Wall, will be the guest speaker at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom's Shabbat service on Friday, May 1, at 6 p.m.

In a lecture titled "On the Fringes," Rabbi Goodman will speak about the struggle of a group of Israeli women striving to achieve the right for Jewish women to wrap tallit and tefillin, pray out loud as a group and read from a Torah scroll at the Western Wall - Judaism's most sacred site. She will also discuss WOW's history, challenges and successes while sharing her own personal experience at the group's Rosh Hodesh prayer gatherings.

Rabbi Goodman served as Rabbi of Union Temple of Brooklyn for 26 years, becoming Rabbi Emerita in 2018. She has long been a champion of women's

rights, outspokenly fighting to protect reproductive choice and health care access for women in New York State and throughout the country.

She serves in New York state on the Clergy Advisory Board of PPESActs (Planned Parenthood Empire State Acts). In 2012, she was installed as the first woman to serve as president of the New York Board of Rabbis. For many years she has studied at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem, and in July of 2016 became a Senior Rabbinic Fellow of the Institute.

Prior to her Rabbinate at Union Temple, she served as Assistant Rabbi of Temple Emanu-El of New York, as Hillel Director and Jewish Chaplain at Adelphi University, and on the Jewish Studies faculties of Molloy College and the New York Theological Seminary.

Rabbi Goodman notes that she has



Rabbi Linda Henry Goodman

been a member of the Women of the Wall community virtually from the beginning in 1988 and has written numerous articles and delivered many sermons on the topic. She prays along with the group whenever she is in Jerusalem on Rosh Chodesh.

Women of the Wall is working to make the Western Wall a site where women can pray freely. Women of the Wall includes women from all denominations of Judaism - Orthodox, Reform, Conservative, Masorti, Renewal and Reconstructionist.

Women of the Wall not only seeks empowerment in group prayer and Torah reading at Judaism's most sacred site but also strives for recognition of its prayer service by the legal and religious Israeli authorities, for the sake of all Jewish women. The group, with a membership that is not only multi-denominational but spans the political spectrum, embodies a message of tolerance and pluralism.

## Chabad keeps learning going online



As everything worldwide was coming to a halt, Chabad Hebrew School continued as usual, only virtually! Thanks to CKids of Chabad Central, students at CHS joined hundreds of other students around the world, online, to learn about Passover with songs and stories encouraging interaction. They also got to do their Hebrew reading practice over the phone. Mah nishtana links were sent home too so our students can practice and be ready for the seder. It was great to see kids enjoying Hebrew school from the comfort of their homes.

## Religious School happenings at RCOS



Top, Rabbi Brian Michelson with RCOS Religious School students who made cards for Israel soldiers following a visit from Andi Franklin. Above, a bulletin board at the school reflects its focus on integrating STEM (science, technology, education and math) with its religious and Hebrew curriculum.

## Purim celebrations



Reform Congregation Oheb Shalom's fifth annual Purim Spiel featured a Frank Sinatra theme. The troupe featured writer/director Mike Pardo, Ellen and Marshall Azrael, Megan Elbaum, Laura Stewart, Molly Nemirow, Neil Hoffman and Marj Shearer.



This year's Chabad family Purim celebration featured a tour of Israel. There was Israeli food at the Shuk, caricature drawings in Tzfat artist quarters, squeezing our own orange juice in Jaffa, collecting stuff for our soldiers, and paying a visit to the Western Wall. Kids also had a great time at the Tel Aviv beach, hanging with a camel in the desert and running from place to place to get their passports stamped.



The Family Hamantash Bake at Chabad Hebrew School included a Purim puppet show and gragger and mask decorating.

# Waiting list open for Penns Crossing

By Sari Incedon, M.Ed.

Penns Crossing Senior Apartments has announced it is opening its waiting list for one-bedroom apartments until May 1. Located at 1400 West Wyomissing Court, Sinking Spring (across from the Weis Market on Route 724), Penns Crossing is operated under the Low Income Housing Credit Program. It was built in 2003, is three stories, has 52 units and is available to individuals 62 and older. Interested applicants may apply at Penns Crossing rental office Tuesday and Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. If you need assistance with the application process please call 610-775-9220.



This 2018 internationally co-produced comedy-drama was co-written by Sameh Zoabi, a Palestinian, and Dan Kleinman, an American Jewish screenwriter and college professor. It was directed by Zoabi. It premiered at the 75th Venice International Film Festival, where the lead won the Best Actor Award. At the Haifa International Film Festival the film won the Best Film and Best Screenplay awards.

Here is a quick synopsis. Salam, a charming 30-year-old Palestinian living in Jerusalem, works as a trainee on the Palestinian popular soap opera "Tel Aviv on Fire," produced in Ramallah. Every day, to reach the TV studios, Salam has to go through an Israeli checkpoint. There he meets the commander of the checkpoint, Assi, whose wife is a big fan of the soap opera. In order to please her, Assi puts pressure on Salam to change the end of the show. Salam quickly realizes that Assi's ideas could lead him to be promoted to a screenwriter. Salam's creative career is suddenly boiling, until Assi and the soap opera

producers and financiers disagree on how it should end. Stuck between an army colonel and Arab support, Salam solves his problems with a final master stroke.

The critical consensus of the website Rotten Tomatoes reads "Thoughtful and well-acted, Tel Aviv on Fire highlights the awful absurdity of war — and proves it is possible to find humor in the midst of cultural conflict." Join us for a fun-filled afternoon!

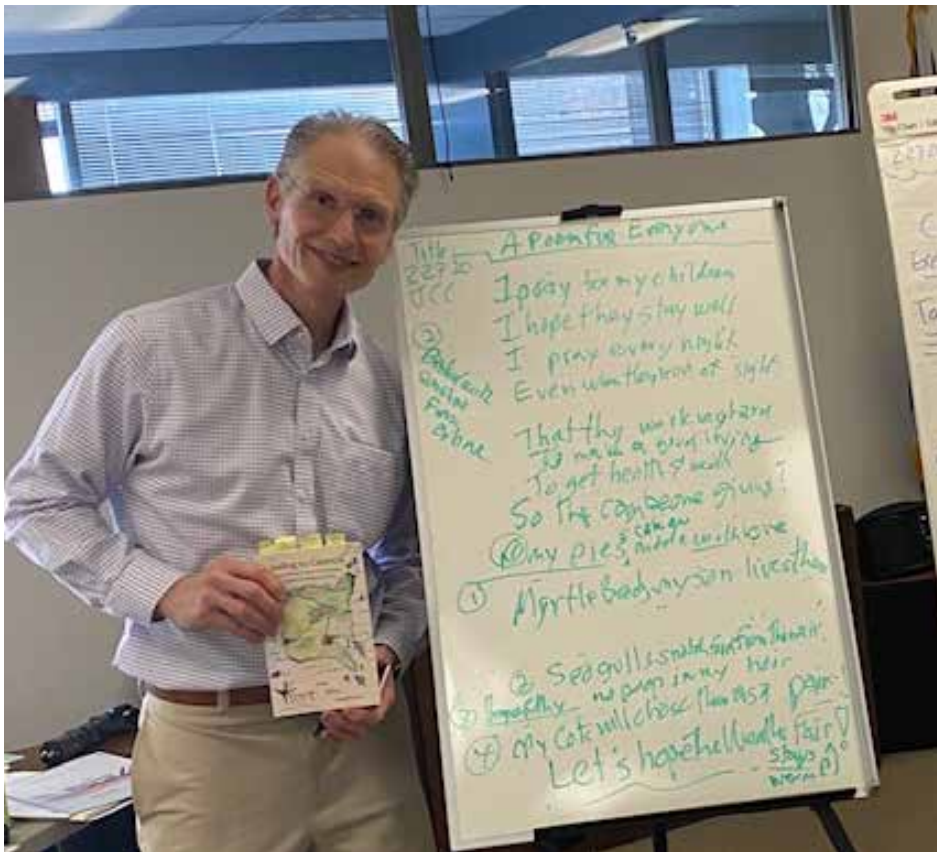
**Thank you:**

- to RCOS Social Action Committee for providing Shalach Manot bags of goodies to residents of long term care facilities throughout the county. The treats and visits from JFS social workers were greatly appreciated.
- B'nai Brith Apartments for donating its out-of-service bus to our program for auction. Your unwanted vehicle, boat, or motorcycle can be turned into cash to benefit Jewish Family Service. For more information go to DonatingIsEasy.org or call JFS at 610-921-0624.

**Movie Monday**

Join us Monday, April 27, at 2 p.m. in the JCC for "Tel Aviv on Fire." (check with Federation office to confirm movie is still on).

## Friendship Circle fun



**A Poem for Everyone**

I pray for my children.  
I hope they stay well.  
I pray every night,  
Even when they're out of sight.

That they work very hard,  
To make a good living,  
To get health and wealth,  
So they can become giving!

My pies and cakes are made with love,  
Baked with sunshine from above.

Myrtle Beach, my son lives there.  
Seagulls snatch food from thin air,  
Hopefully, no poop in my hair.  
My cats will chase them as a pair.

Let's hope the weather stays warm and fair!

Dr. Philip Tiebohl leads a group poetry exercise at Friendship Circle. The group's final product is above.



Charles J. Adams III, left, presents an entertaining lesson in folklore, legends and history at Jewish Family Service's Friendship Circle. Above, participants enjoy an afternoon to celebrate and learn about Purim with Rabbi/Hazzan David Sislen of Keshet Zion Synagogue.

Friendship Circle meets Thursdays at 1 p.m. at the JCC. The next scheduled event is scheduled for April 23. See Centerpiece for details. Check with Federation office regarding possible event cancellations or postponements..

# Jewish Family Service

- Food Pantry
- Friendship Circle
- Counseling Services
- Transportation
- Financial Assistance
- Hospital and Home Visitations
- Living with Loss
- Information and Referral
- Case Management
- Holiday Programs

# The American exodus

By Howard S. Blanck

This article is about the influence that a Jewish man had on the founding of America and the incredible events around it. We don't know his name, but George Washington himself confirmed that while at Valley Forge he met a Jewish Polish immigrant who had fled his homeland because he could not practice his faith under the Prussian government.

Here are the events as we understand them. During the winter of 1777-78 Gen. Washington and his army were on the ropes and close to losing the war for American independence. Even worse, losing the war would have meant certain execution for the leaders.

The American army was chased from New England through upstate New York and south through New Jersey and Pennsylvania with one defeat after another. The army was rapidly shrinking due to low morale and other causes, and enlistments were running out at year's end. The winter at Valley Forge was not overly severe, but it was still winter and still cold. The disease and hunger in the camp were all too real. To top it off, a plot known as the "Conway Cabal" was underway to remove Washington as commander.

Washington led what was left of his army to camp in Valley Forge (no it wasn't in the shopping mall!). The Jewish

soldier, lighting candles, explained to Washington that he was a Jew and lit to commemorate Chanukah. He detailed the miracle of the lamp burning for eight days and the miraculous victory of his people over an oppressive enemy. Just as the Jews were ultimately victorious, so too could Washington be. The general was greatly encouraged.

Washington took heart from the Hanukkah story, and things began to change. First food and supplies from friendly Native Americans arrived just in time. The army was drilled into an effective fighting force by Baron von Steuben, a Prussian military officer. Washington's army was saved by a fog at night and shifting winds at just the right time and place. He successfully captured Trenton largely because the enemy commander did not read the warning that the Americans were coming. Washington himself seemed to live a charmed life. He was shot at many times in battle but never hit. There was even an occasion when a British major could have shot him point blank in the back but stopped at the last minute.

In short, Washington and his army had one narrow escape after another,

but he evidently never forgot his Jewish acquaintances. Some years later he attended services in the Touro Synagogue in Rhode Island and wrote a famous "bigotry has no sanction" letter to them. The letter is pertinent today. To quote key points:

"It is now no more that toleration is spoken of as if it were the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights, for, happily, the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens in giving it on all occasions their effectual support ... May the children of the stock of Abraham who dwell in this land continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other inhabitants — while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree and there shall be none to make him afraid."

Since this is the Passover season (my favorite Jewish holiday since it's the story of human freedom) I like to think that in a very real sense the Red Sea had parted for America to walk through.

**April Tot Shabbat to be conducted virtually via Zoom. Contact RCOS for details**

Join us next time!  
April 25th at 10:00am

## Tot Shabbat

Members and non-members are invited. No registration is required. Tot Shabbat services are held Saturday mornings at 10:00 am at Reform Congregation Oheb Shalom, 555 Warwick Drive, Wyomissing unless noted. Please call the Temple office with any questions, 610.375.6034.

A musical, story-filled, interactive hour for children through grade 2. Bring your family & friends to celebrate with Rabbi Michelson and stay for a pint-sized oneg of juice, challah, fruit, & child-friendly treats!

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# Israeli ambassador on 'map of lies' presented by Abbas

By Danny Danon

Israel ambassador to U.N.

When Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas spoke before the U.N. Security Council to denounce U.S. President Donald Trump's Mideast peace plan, he brought with him a peculiar prop: a graphic with a series of maps titled "The Palestinians [sic] Historic Compromise," which purport to show how "Historic Palestine" has "disappeared" over the course of the 20th century.

Though the use of images at the United Nations is neither new nor unique, never has a graphic that so blatantly distorts history been displayed before the highest level of international diplomacy. This episode should raise alarm bells

outside of Turtle Bay as it represents a growing trend of rewriting the historical record of the Middle East.

Commonly called the "Map of Lies," Abbas's graphic misleadingly suggests how what was so-called "Historic Palestine" in 1917 has shrunk in size through a series of compromises in 1937, 1947 and 1967, until it is barely recognizable in "Trump's Plan" in 2020. Taken at face value, the map suggests that the sudden creation and growth of one state, Israel, came at the expense of another, Palestine.

The truth, however, is something altogether different. The notion that a sovereign state of "Palestine" existed in 1917—as depicted in Abbas's map—is

a fantastical reinterpretation of history. The ancestral homeland of the Jewish people and site of two temples and numerous kingdoms, the Romans renamed this land on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean "Palestine" after destroying the Jewish kingdoms of Judah and Israel in 70 C.E. in an attempt to expunge the Jewish connection to the land from the historical record.

For the next millennia-and-a-half, sovereignty would shift as empires competed for control of the Holy Land. By the 20th century, the Ottoman Empire had been the sovereign power for 400 years, but abdicated control of "Palestine" to include its Jewish and Arab populations to the League of Nations in 1917 following its dissolution.

To this day, a sovereign "Palestine" has never existed, contrary to the second deceit in Abbas's map: that Palestinians have made historic "compromises." In the 1930s, Chaim Weizmann (later the first president of Israel) suggested that the Jewish community would agree to a state even if it were "the size of a tablecloth." While the Jews of Palestine were prepared to accept even the minimum levels of sovereignty, the Arabs of Palestine were unwilling to entertain anything but the maximum. For them, Arab sovereignty was contingent on denying Jewish sovereignty.

Compromise is necessary when dividing a finite amount between multiple parties. But the Arabs' zero-sum calculus has bred a culture of rejectionism. As the Jews continually agreed to international offers for partition — the 1937 Peel Commission Plan, the 1947 U.N. Partition Plan, and offered territory for normalization in 1967 — the Arabs' and Palestinians' response each time was "no" to compromise. By presenting these maps has "compromises" on the part of the Palestinians, Abbas is trying to rewrite history.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, Abbas has inflicted untold damage on the truth by displaying a graphic before the international community that erroneously suggests the Palestinians have continuously compromised on a

historic homeland where they supposedly enjoyed political sovereignty. That Abbas brought his map to the highest level of international diplomacy suggests that he believes that the world is ready to entertain this revisionist history of the Middle East. Sadly, in this regard, he may not be mistaken.

Rewriting history has long been a tactic of overtly anti-Israel and anti-Semitic organizations. On college campuses, anti-Israel groups regularly use a version of this map during the notorious Israel Apartheid Week. The anti-Semitic BDS movement features this graphic in its campaign materials.

Al Jazeera, the propaganda arm of Qatar that has a growing audience among younger generations in America, has a "Vanishing Palestine" interactive video as part of its "Palestine Remix" channel.

What is most insidious, however, is the growing use of the map in mainstream venues. In October 2015, MSNBC displayed these maps during a live segment discussing a recent spate of Palestinian violence on the Temple Mount (for which it later apologized). In 2017, Columbia University published the maps on advertisements for a workshop on "Citizenship and Nationality in Israel/Palestine." Last September, a high school matriculation exam in Finland included the maps.

The use of the "Map of Lies" in mainstream media and academic circles in particular will have the effect of normalizing its content and message.

For Israel and the Jewish people, this presents a real danger. Efforts to delegitimize the Jewish State are growing louder, with the United Nations recently releasing a "blacklist" of Israeli companies that operate in Judea and Samaria being only the latest example of revisionist history having tangible consequences.

One's interpretation and understanding of the past forms their assumptions about the present and determines their vision for the future. Believing Abbas's "Map of Lies" will do more than dishonor the past; it will irrevocably damage the cause of peace.



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# Palestinian majority backs tactical compromises

In between the Trump peace plan's release on Jan. 28 and Israel's March 2 election, new survey data shows that most Palestinian respondents now say they prefer "regaining all of historical Palestine" over permanent peace with Israel. Yet majorities in the West Bank and Gaza voice much more pragmatic views about the impracticality of a one-state solution, the return of refugees, or armed struggle against Israel.

This tension and seeming contradiction between relatively moderate short-term popular attitudes and maximalist long-term attitudes should be a foundation for a more effective policy. Such a policy would emphasize current openings for compromise and practical cooperation, while guarding against — and perhaps gradually moderating—future temptations to violence or irredentism. Given these very mixed Palestinian views, it is reasonable to project that a hasty push for a "two-state solution" might not produce lasting peace. At the same time, preventing provocative Israeli moves toward annexation would reduce the risk of the popular backlash foreshadowed in these survey findings.

Few still support a two-state solution. Ironically, while some attribute Palestinian rejection of Trump's plan to its new limits on the traditional two-state paradigm, most Palestinian respondents now reject that model as well. Asked to choose "the top Palestinian national priority during the coming five years," two-thirds (66%) of West Bankers in this poll pick "regaining all of historical Palestine for the Palestinians"; a mere 14% choose "ending the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, to achieve a two-state solution." Gazan respondents, surprisingly, are a bit more moderate: 56% want all of Palestine, while 31% opt for the two-state solution.

These maximalist long-term aspirations are also reflected in responses to other survey questions. For example, when asked about next steps "if the Palestinian leadership is able to negotiate a two-state solution," just 26% of West Bank respondents say that it "should end the conflict with Israel." In Gaza, that figure climbs to 40%. Around 60% in both areas say "the conflict should not end, and resistance should continue until all of historic Palestine is liberated."

Yet no groundswell for one-state solution. At the same time, contrary to

common misconception, the idea of a binational state, or a civil struggle for equality, does not seem to be gaining much popular Palestinian support. Only around 10% of respondents in either the West Bank or Gaza say their priority is "achieving a one-state solution, in which Arabs and Jews would have equal rights in one state from the river to the sea." And only around 10% in either place would prefer to become "a citizen of Israel, with equal rights and responsibilities," rather than a citizen of a Palestinian state.

### Some popular realism

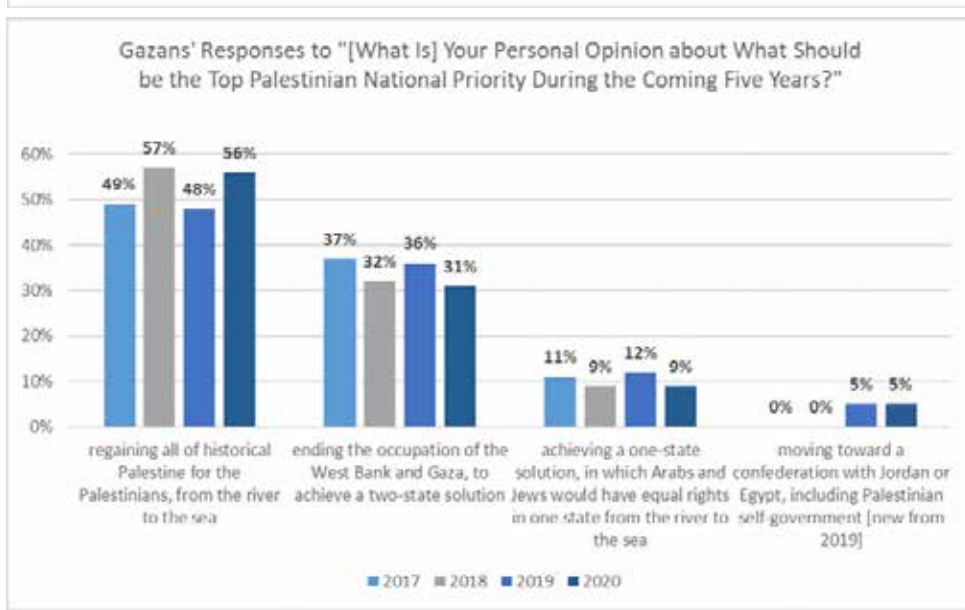
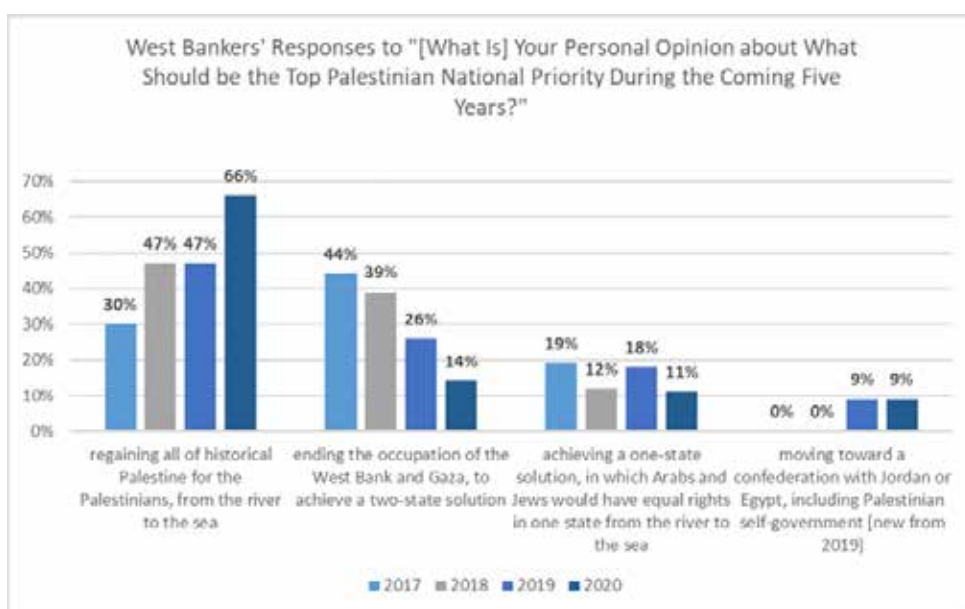
These views reflect an assessment of the real-world obstacles to any such grand political objectives. Two-thirds of respondents in both the West Bank and Gaza agree with this prognosis: "Israel will never accept a one-state solution that gives the Palestinians equal rights, even if they become a clear majority someday." Nevertheless, as a practical matter, one-third of West Bank respondents say "it would be better for us if we were part of Israel rather than in PA or Hamas ruled lands." Among Gazans, that proportion rises to a remarkable 40%.

### Resignation on both Palestinian refugees and Israeli settlers

On a related question, 71% of West Bank respondents agree at least somewhat with this prediction: "Regardless of what's right, the reality is that most Israeli settlers will probably stay where they are, and most Palestinian refugees will not return to the 1948 lands." In Gaza, that proportion is noticeably lower, but still a bare majority at 52%. And on a personal level, a mere 5% of respondents in either territory say they might actually go to Israel "if you had a choice to move to an equally nice home in Israel or stay in Palestine."

### Little local support for intifada, but annexation would spur anger.

Asked to choose among various responses to their current predicament, only 22% of West Bank respondents would opt to "escalate the resistance or intifada against Israel, even if that makes life harder right now." But a direct question about responses to possible Israeli annexation moves yields a tougher reaction. A narrow majority (56%) agree that "the Palestinians should focus on opposing any new Israeli attempts to annex any West Bank territory, even by force if necessary" — including 25% who feel "strongly" that way.



### Public more moderate than PA on some issues

Regarding Palestinian Authority bonuses to convicted terrorists in Israeli prisons, West Bank respondents are strikingly at odds with their political leaders. Two-thirds (68%) now agree at least "somewhat" with this proposition: "The PA should stop special payments to prisoners, and give their families normal social benefits like everybody else—not extra payments based on their sentences or armed operations." This figure represents a marked increase over the previous three years.

Similarly, West Bank respondents actually reject the official PA policy against "normalization" with Israelis. Again, two-thirds (67%) agree at least "somewhat" with the following statement:

"Palestinians should encourage direct personal contacts and dialogue with Israelis, in order to help the Israeli peace camp advocate a just solution." Among Gazans, that proportion is nearly as high, at 61%.  
\*\*\*

Methodological note. These findings are from a survey conducted by the Palestine Center for Public Opinion, comprising face-to-face interviews among a representative sample of 500 West Bankers and 500 Gazans. The margin of error for the separate West Bank and Gaza subsamples is approximately 4%.

David Pollock is the Bernstein Fellow at The Washington Institute, focusing on regional political dynamics and related issues.

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# Creative outreach boosts medical center's value to Israel

**Israel21c.com**

Serving more than 1 million Israeli citizens, the Kaplan Medical Center in Rehovot boasts a 60-acre campus and 700 medical beds, and is home to 1,000 nurses and 600 doctors.

According to Lou Balcher, national director of the American Friends of the Kaplan Medical Center (AFKMC), Kaplan's "strategic importance to the state must not be underestimated."

Because of its location in the center of Israel, Kaplan is able to serve more than 11 percent of the Israeli population, making it central to the people of Israel's safety and health.

"Israel has to be constantly prepared for the unthinkable — a war upon the homeland, a sustained missile barrage, or other means of

attack," said Balcher. "With Gaza a short 25 miles from Kaplan's Hertzfeld Geriatric Center in Gedera, and 30 miles from the main Kaplan campus, I have heard from top doctors at Kaplan that the center will need to be ready 24/7 in case of a national emergency and for immediate trauma response in mass casualty preparedness," he told JNS.

The medical center also plays an important role beyond the country's borders, said Balcher. "I recently met officers of the Israel Defense Forces [Airborne Combat Rescue And Evacuation] Unit 669," said Balcher, "who confirmed the role that Kaplan doctors play in Israeli international medical rescues." Balcher went on to say that an IDF officer has also shared with him "the gripping story of

one of her new recruits who, on day one of her induction, had a severe negative reaction to an inoculation and would have died if Kaplan weren't three miles and a few minutes away from the Tel Nof air-force base, where Kaplan doctors stabilized her."

Additionally, Kaplan's cardiac center has created one of the most advanced cardiac catheterization labs in the world, discovered cures for heart diseases and, several years back, introduced 3D-imaging to Israel. Despite its life-saving work, according to Balcher only 0.08 percent of non-Israeli American Jews know about the hospital. Further, "even the 99.99 percent of Israelis who know about Kaplan don't appreciate how critically important it is," he said. Getting the word out

about Kaplan has therefore become a project that will increase the strategic value of the hospital to the state and people of Israel.

For AFKMC, Balcher has not only raised awareness for Kaplan, but also enhanced the Jewish identity of young adults through creative strategies for engagement, including the "Heart and Sole" campaign, which places large shoe-collecting boxes in synagogues, supermarkets, churches and college campuses along with a poster promoting Kaplan's "largest high-tech cardiac center in the Middle East" and Israel's high-tech medicine saving lives. Shoe donations are sent to 50 countries around the world, with an additional donation going to the continued building of the world-renowned cardiac research center.



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# Some fun, enriching activities while staying home

Looking for some great activities for extended time spent at home. Look no further than pjlibrary.org, the website of the PJ Library program that provides free Jewish books in our community and many others.

The home page features a prominent link to activities idea for families that are staying at home. Some are designed for Shabbat-observant families but work just as well for children who can't travel for practical rather than spiritual reasons.

The PJ Library Facebook page also offers plenty of activities for children and advice for parents.

Here are some samples of PJ Library activities that are worth checking out:

<https://pjlibrary.org/beyond-books/pjblog/february-2019/make-your-own-question-catcher-for-passover>

<https://pjlibrary.org/beyond-books/pjblog/september-2019/unplugged-activities-for-quiet-weekends-shabbat>

<https://pjlibrary.org/beyond-books/pjblog/june-2018/9-fun-ideas-for-a-shabbat-family-game-night>

<https://pjlibrary.org/beyond-books/pjblog/september-2017/15-unplugged-ideas-for-shabbat>

Give these a try and add some fun and meaning at this challenging time. And be sure to keep an eye on the Jewish Federation of Reading Facebook page for more online activities, including PJ Library story time and kids' activities.

## Passover Multiplication Practice: Multiplying by Three



$$1 \text{ cup} \times 3 = \underline{\quad} \text{ cups}$$

$$2 \text{ haggadahs} \times 3 = \underline{\quad} \text{ haggadahs}$$

$$3 \text{ pillows} \times 3 = \underline{\quad} \text{ pillows}$$

$$4 \text{ eggs} \times 3 = \underline{\quad} \text{ eggs}$$

$$5 \text{ shank bones} \times 3 = \underline{\quad} \text{ shank bones}$$

$$6 \text{ seder plates} \times 3 = \underline{\quad} \text{ seder plates}$$

$$7 \text{ apples} \times 3 = \underline{\quad} \text{ apples}$$

$$8 \text{ afikomans} \times 3 = \underline{\quad} \text{ afikomans}$$

$$9 \text{ slaves} \times 3 = \underline{\quad} \text{ slaves}$$

$$10 \text{ matzos} \times 3 = \underline{\quad} \text{ matzos}$$

$$11 \text{ locusts} \times 3 = \underline{\quad} \text{ locusts}$$

$$12 \text{ pharaohs} \times 3 = \underline{\quad} \text{ pharaohs}$$



## CROSSING THE SEA

Color the sea below. Cut these instructions off along the solid line. Fold the paper along the dotted lines.

Draw a picture of the Jewish people on the other side of the paper.

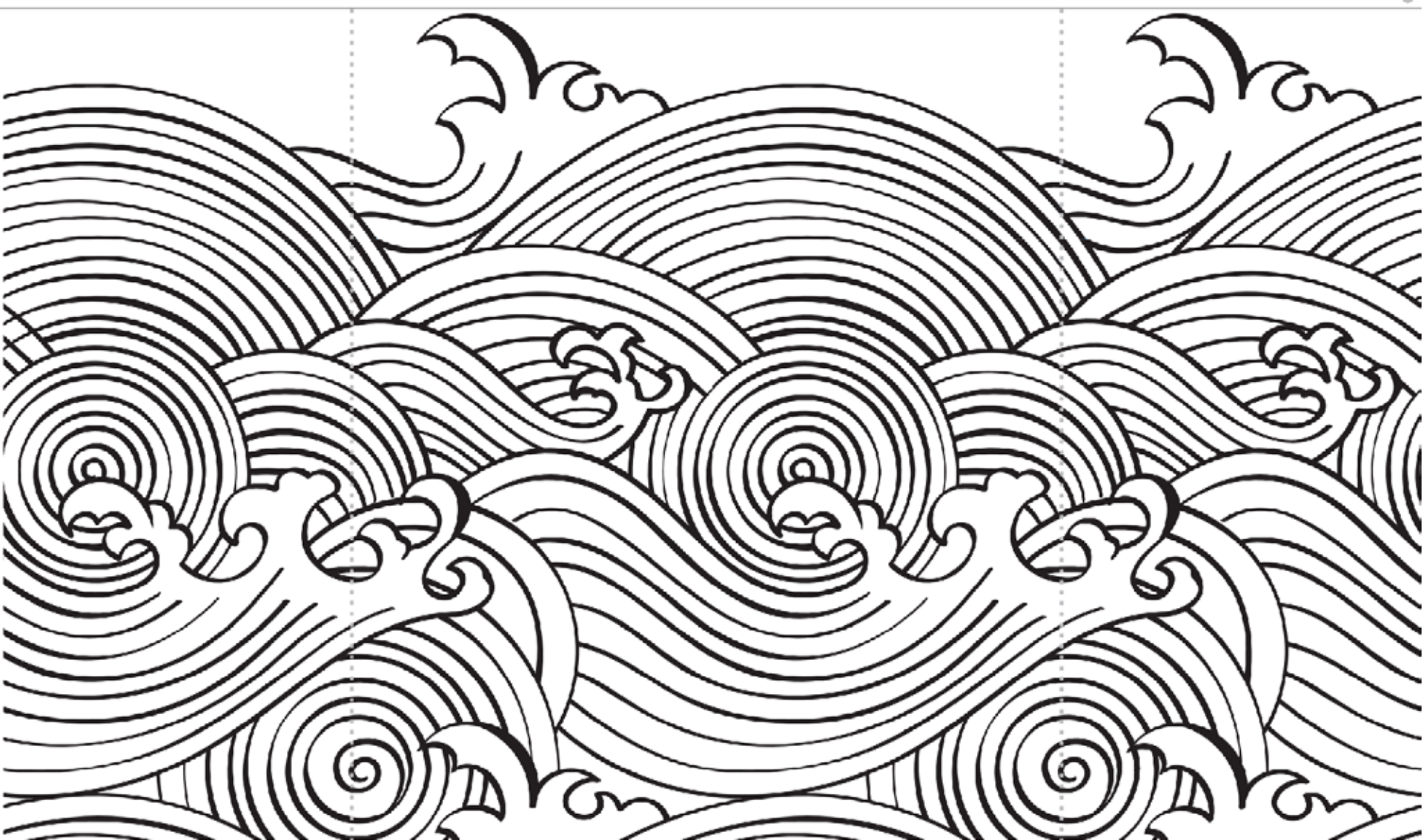
When you open the sides of the card, it will look like they're walking through the splitting sea!

Happy Passover from JewishBoston.com!



FOLD

FOLD



## Passover Word Search

See how many words related to Passover you can find in this word search from the list at the bottom. Words can be backward, forward, up, down, or diagonal. Circle each word you find, then cross it off the list.

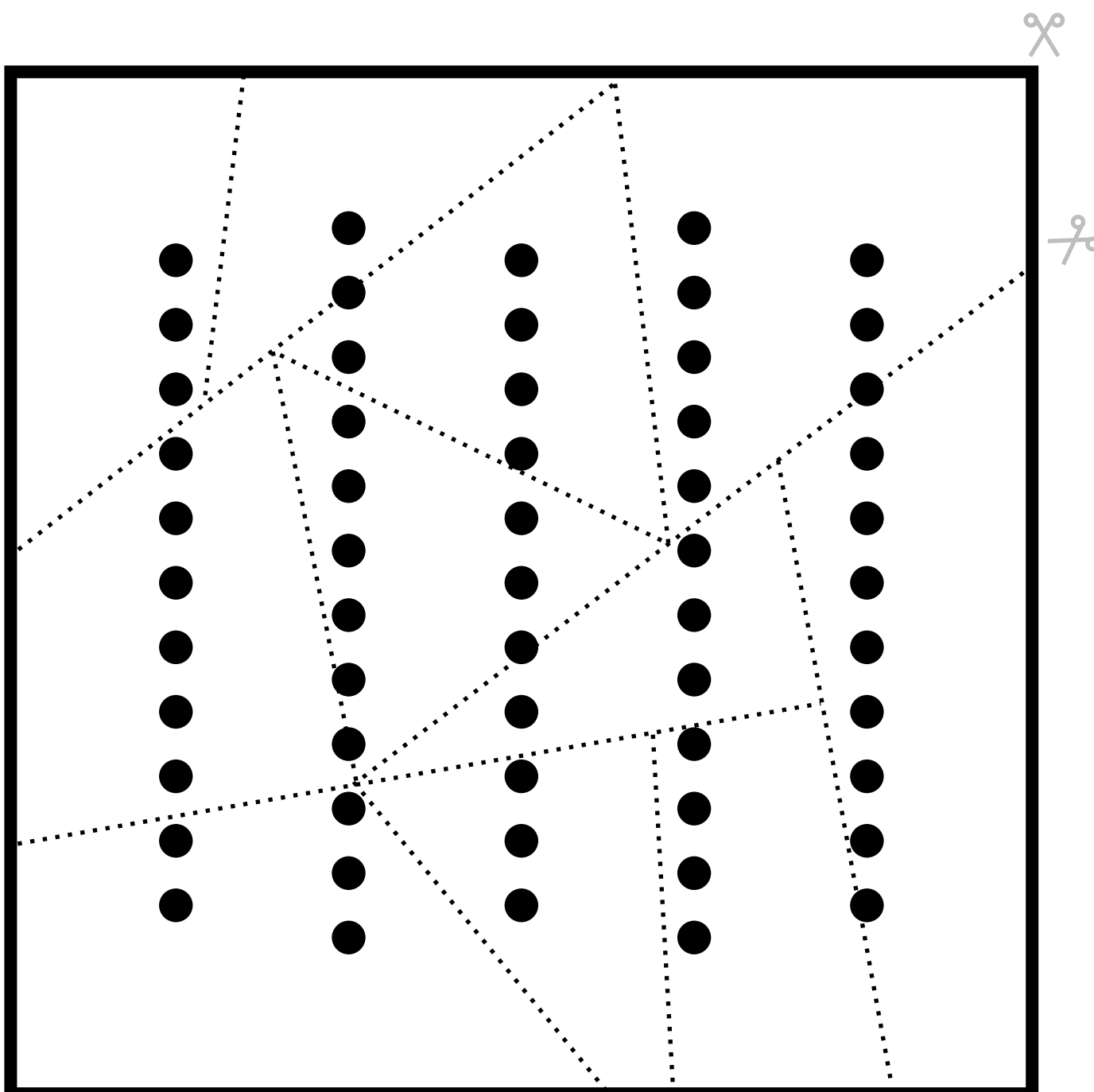
S	H	A	N	K	B	O	N	E	P	U	O
N	B	A	S	O	I	Q	B	A	X	A	F
O	N	R	S	U	T	A	E	N	R	T	H
I	F	K	E	A	S	Z	W	H	R	A	E
T	N	A	U	H	L	A	G	E	N	G	N
S	L	N	G	O	R	S	D	S	Y	N	Z
E	M	O	A	L	Z	E	U	P	H	A	R
U	T	G	L	M	S	D	T	G	Q	S	A
Q	I	H	P	K	O	T	E	T	A	R	E
R	E	R	N	X	B	K	A	M	I	Q	H
U	N	N	E	T	M	O	I	P	E	B	T
O	O	Z	T	A	M	Z	N	F	A	A	H
F	G	N	H	A	G	G	A	D	A	H	E

- AFIKOMAN
- BITTER HERBS
- EGYPT
- EXODUS
- FOUR QUESTIONS
- HAGGADAH
- MATZO
- SEDER
- SHANK BONE

## MATZAH PUZZLE

Color the matzah below. Then, cut out the matzah:  
 first cut out the big square shape, and then cut into pieces along the dotted lines.  
 See if you can put this matzah puzzle back together!

(No need to just use brown—make this matzah as colorful as you want!)



# 7 Israeli university programs named among top 100 in world

## From online news reports

Seven of Israel's university departments have been ranked among the world's top 100 in their respective disciplines, according to the latest QS World University Rankings by Subject.

The 10th annual edition of the QS ranking, which assessed the performance of 86 programs at eight Israeli higher education institutions, showed an overall regression for Israel's higher education system, compared to global competitors.

Four key metrics were used to compile the rankings, evaluating programs according to academic reputation, employer reputation, citations per paper and the h-index — a tool to measure the productivity of an institution's research facility.

The rankings compared more than 13,100 university programs taken by students at 1,368 universities in 83 locations worldwide.

Israel's leading university is the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the research showed, with four programs ranked among the top 100 in their field.

The Hebrew University's Theology, Divinity and Religious Studies Department was named 11th best in the world — Israel's only top-20 department. The university's Classics and Ancient History Department was ranked 34th worldwide.

A further five Israeli departments were ranked among the 51-100 bracket of global leaders: Hebrew University's Communication and Media Studies and its Philosophy programs; Tel Aviv University's Archaeology program; Weizmann Institute of Science's Biological Sciences program; and the Technion- Israel Institute of Technology's Mathematics program.

According to the research, 40 of Israel's 86 ranked programs declined in the rankings this year, while just eight



The Mount Scopus campus of Hebrew University

improved their positions. Since 2016, the proportion of top-ranked programs held by Israeli universities has halved from 0.2% to 0.1%. A total of 37 programs remained stable within their bracket, and six were new entrants into the table.

Israeli institutions were recognized for their level of knowledge-production, with 60 of 86 featured departments achieving at least a score of 80/100 for research impact. The average score for graduate employability, based on employer reputation, was only 47.4/100.

QS director of research Ben Sowter told *The Jerusalem Post* that the "major contributor" to Israel's decline in the

rankings in recent years is due to poor performance in citations per paper — the key indicator for research impact.

The share of top-scoring research programs in Israel has more than halved in the past five years from 1.2% in 2016 to 0.5% in 2020, Sowter said.

"Though Israel is a global leader in terms of research intensity — topping the world in 2019 when nations are ranked based on the proportion of GDP they spend on research and development — a disproportionate amount of that R & D spending is concentrated on the business sector, rather than on Israel's universities," Sowter explained.

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#### Jewish Family Service

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Gayle Kastenbaum – Jim and Jackye Barrer, Andy and Corinne Wernick  
Jay Gordon – Andy and Corinne Wernick  
Hedy Miller (Lynn Driben's mother) – Andy and Corinne Wernick, Al and Betsy Katz, Carol and Gordon Perlmutter

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#### Evelyn Thompson Nursery School Fund

In honor of:  
Bill and Andi Franklin's granddaughter's Bat Mitzvah – Beth and Bob Caster

In memory of:  
Gayle Kastenbaum – Beth and Bob Caster

Gladys Lewis & Mindy Coopersmith would like to thank everyone for their kind thoughts and prayers on the passing of Merv Lewis.

## 1,000-year-old Bible may pave way to future of Egypt's Jewish heritage

Israel21c.com

For two millennia, Cairo was home to a thriving Jewish community. For centuries, the city's Jewish neighborhood, or Harat al-Yahud, buzzed with thousands of people who belonged to one of the many synagogues in the area, including the famous Maimonides Synagogue, which was named after the renowned rabbi and physician when he moved to the city from Cordoba in the 12th century.

It was probably not far from there that a little over a century before Maimonides's arrival, in the year 4788, or 1028 according to the Gregorian calendar, the scribe Zechariah Ben 'Anan completed a masterpiece that had required him years of work: a copy of the Ketuvim, or Writings, the third part of the Tanach. Almost a thousand years later, the superb manuscript might embody an unprecedented opportunity for the future of the Jewish heritage in Egypt.

Ben-Gurion University Professor Yoram Meital came across the manuscript wrapped in inexpensive white paper in 2017 during a study visit at the Moshe Der'i Synagogue in Cairo. An expert on modern Egypt, the academic has paid Israel's neighboring country frequent visits and number of circumstances in the past few years have made him confident in the existence of a real opportunity for the future of Egyptian Jewish culture.

Meital explained: "Over the last seven years a significant shift has been taking place in the perception of

the Jewish community's past within the public discourse in Egypt and in the stand of the Egyptian government. Moreover, about five years ago there was a change in what remains of the Jewish community in Egypt. Magda Haroun took the presidency of the community in Cairo and she came to the position with a vision that I completely identify with: safeguarding the local Jewish sites and artifacts and making part of them open and available for various usage including visits, cultural activities and studies."

Since then, the BGU professor has been cooperating closely with Haroun and with the NGO Drop of Milk. Originally registered as a Jewish charitable organization in 1921, today Drop of Milk welcomes Egyptians of all religions supporting its mission of preserving the Jewish heritage and fostering interfaith dialogue and understanding.

It was during a trip to study and document Cairo's synagogues and their artifacts that Meital found Zechariah Ben 'Anan's manuscript. The professor explained that a short text documenting its existence was first published in 1905 by Richard Gottheil, a scholar in Semitic studies, who was conducting some research in Egypt.

"He did not have the time to properly examine the manuscript, but he did publish a brief description about it in the English-language academic journal The Jewish Quarterly Review.

The Moshe Der'i Synagogue, where

the manuscript was uncovered, was not its original location. For centuries, the artifact was housed in the more ancient Dar Simha Synagogue belonging to the same community: the Karaites. The Karaite sect rejects the Oral Law in its entirety and only upholds biblical statutes. The group was founded in the 8th century and was especially numerous in Egypt.

Until the beginning of the 20th century Harat al-Yahud featured two Karaite synagogues, along with 10 Sephardi and one Ashkenazi houses of worship. Around that time, a growing number of Jewish families from all backgrounds chose to abandon its narrow alleys and busy streets in favor of a more modern residential neighborhood. Among them, many selected the Abbasiya neighborhood where the new Karaite synagogue was inaugurated in 1933. In 1935, the Karaite chief rabbi wrote down some notes about the manuscript, which were found among the pages.

Three decades later, when most of the Jews had already fled Egypt after the growing antagonism of the population ignited by the establishment of the State of Israel and the 1956 Suez Crisis, a fire damaged the Dar Simha Synagogue. What was left of its valuable books, manuscripts and scrolls were transferred to the Moshe Der'i Synagogue.

In 1981, a team from Jerusalem's Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts was allowed to visit Cairo, and microfilmed the manuscript.

The rediscovery of the manuscript offers an important opportunity to shed light on the general project of restoring and bringing Jewish cultural heritage back to fruition, especially today when just a handful of Jews live in Cairo.

The professor acknowledged that not everyone in Egypt supports the project.

"We have two types of critics, Islamists who often hold antisemitic ideologies, and people who oppose our work in their struggle against the policy led by [Egyptian] President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi," he said. However, Meital added that Sisi himself has demonstrated his support for the vision Haroun and Drop of Milk are carrying out. "The Egyptian president mentioned protecting the cultural heritage of minorities, including the Jewish minority, on at least three occasions, which in my opinion is a very bold and unprecedented move. Moreover, nothing had ever been done in the past which has the scope of what has been going on in the past three years, with the renovation of synagogues, the cleaning of cemeteries and the opportunities for us to collect the Judaica," the expert pointed out.

The goal now is to create a functioning Jewish library in Cairo, with more than 10,000 volumes from the city's synagogues. More than 5,000 have already been collected, cleaned and cataloged, and the location has already been selected: a building in the Sha'ar Hashamayim Synagogue compound, in the heart of Cairo.

### EVERYTHING'S RELATIVE

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