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EDITORIAL
Happy Chanukah



It is with great pleasure that I present the *Shalom Magazine* Chanukah/Winter edition. As we reach the end of the year, I can't help but be glad that the elections are over. But the debate about the results is not. Here at *Shalom Magazine*, like everywhere else, we are still talking about it. As a journalist, I want to make sure that, unlike what we have seen in other media, *Shalom Magazine* remains impartial, and showcases both sides of the debate, so that readers can form their own opinions. In various articles in this

issue, our contributors ask for civility, *derech erez* (manners), and patience, rather than crying, offending and complaining. I am proud to be able to gather in the same magazine writers with differing opinions who can express themselves in a civilized manner.

Certainly, our America is split in two - but we are *one* Jewish community, and we must respect the fact that people with different views are part of our faith. Let's find what we have in common, and fight for our democracy. Although the country is divided, this is an important time for the Jewish community to stand together and exemplify that the strength of our unity is what protects us from antagonistic forces that persecute us, namely anti-Semitism.

In this edition, you will find coverage of varied events throughout the state. An observable and constant problem within the Jewish community is that most of those present at lectures and synagogues are people of age. We fail to engage the young.

Apparently, this has been a problem throughout Jewish history. I find it interesting that the 19th Century Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsh wrote that schools are more important than synagogues. "What would be the use of a magnificent house of prayer if we had no young men and women to worship in it?" he wrote. We learn from our sages that it is important to invest in the education of our children, but the Jewish community in America still fails to provide Jewish education to all of our children. When they became adults, we wonder why they do not feel any connection with services, the Torah or Israel. Rabbi Hirsh founded a magazine in order to share his teachings to a wider audience. Like me, he believed in the power of the media as a way to spread Judaism.

I would like to thank my contributors who provide interesting material to this magazine, and our advertisers, who make it possible to distribute *Shalom* all over the state, free of charge to the public.

Happy Chanukah,
Shirley Farber - Publisher

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Thursday, Dec. 29, 4:30 p.m.

Chanukah Celebration in an Interfaith Setting

Potluck Dinner, Candle Lighting and more, for young and old alike at the Common Street Spiritual Center, 13 Common St., Natick.

Enjoy Chanukah with an informal celebration including storytelling, music, activities, discussion, candle-lighting and dinner. Bring potato latkes or something to go with them. Please RSVP to rabbi@mayantikvah.org and include what you will bring and how many are coming. Children and adults are welcome. Co-sponsored by the Common Street Spiritual Center.

Saturday, January 7, 10:30 a.m.

Shabbat Morning Walk or Snowshoe

Hop Brook Marsh Conservation Area, 320 Dutton Rd., Sudbury. Enjoy a brisk walk interspersed with prayers, singing, and meditation and a discussion of the weekly Torah portion. Dress for the weather. If there is snow, bring your snowshoes. Co-sponsored by Mosaic Jewish Outdoor Club of Massachusetts.



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Rabbi Abramson teaching members of the Muslim community about the Torah

Rabbi Susan Abramson of Temple Shalom Emeth in Burlington is the longest serving female rabbi in Massachusetts, but that's not all.

This September, the author of the Rabbi Rocketpower children's book series began to produce a community talk show at Burlington Community Cable TV.

The program, "Spiritually Speaking," highlights different local religious congregations. To date, programs about Temple Shalom Emeth, St. Margaret's Catholic Church, and the Islamic Center of Burlington have aired. Upcoming segments will feature the UCC Congregational Church and the Mormon Church congregation.

Abramson said she created the television program because she wanted to counteract "the rising number of acts of intolerance in our town and in society."

"I saw this as my own personal way to help us all understand each other better, dispel myths and stereotypes, regard each other as human beings, appreciate our uniqueness, and see how much we all have in common," she added.


"Spiritually Speaking" features basic information about each religion, its traditions and customs, and its food. Members of all ages in each congregation are encouraged to participate. The show airs weekly on Burlington, Bedford, Billerica, Reading, Woburn and Stoneham cable access TV. The program can also be seen on Youtube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-5B-8hIn6w&t=950s>

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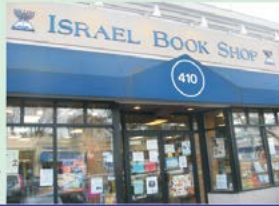
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AJC New England Co-Existence Award



Former Governor Deval Patrick



Matthew Meyerson, Newton Mayor Setti Warren, Robert Leikind, Mel Shuman, Eleanor White, Governor Deval Patrick, Jonathan Dorfman, and Jeff Robbins

We are facing one of the defining challenges of our time - the struggle to advance co-existence globally, nationally and locally. To shine a spotlight on this critical challenge, American Jewish Committee New England established an award to recognize leaders who have championed co-existence so that others can be inspired by their example and further their work. On November 14, hundreds of people came to see former Governor Deval Patrick become AJC New England's inaugural Co-Existence Award recipient. A life-long champion of ethnic, religious and gender diversity, Deval Patrick is a leader who has dedicated his life to healing the divides in our community. For 110 years, AJC has worked to promote understanding, secure civil and human rights and build a world rooted in democratic values. It is AJC New England's privilege to recognize former Governor Deval Patrick at the first recipient of the Co-Existence Award.



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LimmudBoston Generates Enthusiasm



Sheila Cline joins musicians for Tefillat HaDerech

photos: Meri Bond



Nancy Kaufman of NCJW



Joke tellers and storytellers Hal Miller-Jacobs and Allen Spivack



Educator Sandra Lilienthal came from Florida to participate in Limmud thanks to a grant from The Covenant Foundation

The 7th LimmudBoston un-conference was held at Temple Reyim in Newton on December 4. The event offered over 90 sessions covering popular concepts like "Bob Dylan's Jewish Blues," which was followed by a talk on "Jewish Journeys and the Grateful Dead." Laughter filled the air when William Novak, co-author of the Big Book of Jewish Humor, spoke on his favorite Jewish jokes. Thanks to more than 200 volunticipants (volunteers who are also participants), LimmudBoston inspired nearly 600 participants who seeks opportunities for lifelong Jewish learning.

A Grand Finale concert, led by musicians Arnie Davidson and Shelley Aronson, gave everyone a rousing sendoff, which also included thoughts from organizers on how they could participate in the planning for, or offer a session at the next LimmudBoston experience, to be held in the same building, on Sunday, December 3, 2017. For information, please visit www.LimmudBoston.org.



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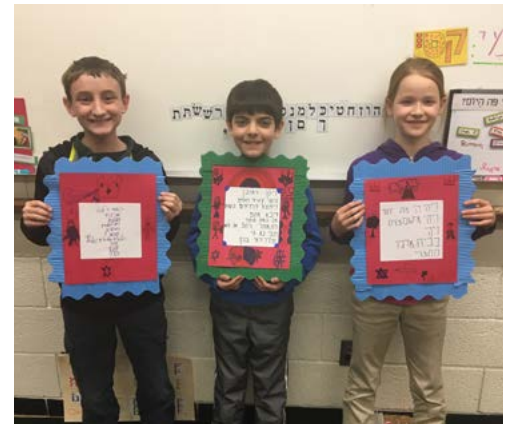


Larry Lencz and Paul Davidson at a recent AJC New England event



Photo by Jovan Tanasjevic

Mika Mizrahi, 5, of Brookline, a Kindergartner at Shaloh House Jewish Day School, was thrilled to pet the assortment of lizards on display at the Sukkot Extravaganza staged by Shaloh House at Brighton Commons



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IAC Boston Fundraiser

By Paula Sinclair

On November 10, the Israeli American Council (IAC) Boston held its first fundraiser since opening its doors in 2014. The event, which took place at the Innovation and Design Building in Boston, drew a packed house of over 320 supporters. In addition to IAC National Board Chair Adam Milstein and IAC CEO Shoham Nicolet, several dignitaries, including Gov. Deval Patrick, Sen. Mo Cowan, Consul General Yehuda Yaakov, and Deputy Chief of Staff to Gov. Charlie Baker Mike Vallarelli were also on hand to celebrate.

IAC Boston, which is co-chaired by Ilan Segev and Rachel Chafetz, is part of a rapidly growing organization that is based in Los Angeles. When Na'ama Ore, IAC Boston's Regional Director, opened the Boston office, she quickly identified that in order for the Israeli-American community to be an integral and a vital part of the Jewish community, it needed to mobilize Israelis living in Boston. And the Israeli-American community responded with their characteristic spark: hundreds of volunteers and thousands of participants in IAC programs and initiatives later, IAC Boston is now a vibrant part of the landscape of Jewish Boston.

Speakers throughout the dinner emphasized that strengthening the Jewish community together can result in a stronger future in both Boston and Israel for generations to come. In her remarks at the dinner, Ore said, "I know today, more than ever before, that for a stronger future of the Jewish people, a stronger state of Israel and a stronger next generation, we need to combine these two worlds, Israeli-American and Jewish-American, and become one with the people of Israel. We need each other."



Photos by Sivan Lohav



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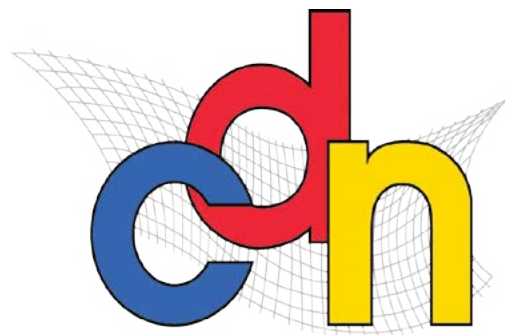
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A Taste of Israeli Wine

More than 75 young adults from Greater Boston sipped and learned as they tasted four great Kosher Israeli wines rarely found in the United States. The event, sponsored by CJP's israel360 program, highlighted Israel's up-and-coming wine industry, one that is beginning to gain international recognition. It was hosted by Stephanie Saunders Art Gallery in Boston's Back Bay on November 17. Sandy Block, vice president of beverages for Legal Sea Foods and one of only 279 people in the world certified as a "Master of Wine," led the tasting and discussed his trip last spring to some of Israel's finest vineyards. Sandy's Israel visit was organized by the Consulate General of Israel to New England. All four previously hard-to-find wines tasted at the event can now be found on Legal Sea Foods' menus.



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A Celebration of Israel With Film & Music

It was an “epic” night at Boston University this November 7. More than 200 enthusiastic students from over 20 high schools and colleges across New England came together to celebrate Israel through film and music. On screen was the new “Jerusalem U” film *Mekonen: Journey of an African Jew*.



Mekonen follows the personal journey of Mekonen Abebe, an African-Israeli Jewish shepherd in an Ethiopian village, who becomes a decorated officer in the Israeli Defense Force.

“*Mekonen* is the cinematic expression of the beautiful complexity of the Jewish nation and personifies what Israel is about: Peoplehood, the dignity of difference, and the cultural revival that comes with self-rule,” said Jerusalem U spokesperson Chloe Valdary. “Through grappling with the imperfections and aspirations of a community, *Mekonen* represents the ultimate triumph of the human spirit.”

After the film, audience members were treated to a live performance by Café Shohor Hazak (“Strong Black Coffee”), an Ethiopian-Israeli band that has performed with Chris Brown and Chadag Nachash. Café Shohor Hazak is *Mekonen*’s favorite band, and his favorite song, “Ihiye Beseder,” (“Everything Will Be Okay”) plays throughout the documentary. The band quickly became a hit for the young students at Jerusalem U’s film screening party.

Students joyously basked in a strong sense of communal solidarity at a time of growing anti-Israel and anti-Jewish activities. The power of film, and a live concert with *Café Shohor Hazak*, made them feel that no one is alone in their love and connection to Israel and the Jewish people.

Jerusalem U is a nonprofit organization committed to strengthening the emotional and intellectual connection of young Jews to Judaism and Israel, through the power of film and storytelling. For more information, please contact sovadia@jerusalemu.org.

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Civility in a Time of Turmoil



By Robert Leikind

The 2016 election season exposed deep and painful rifts between the haves and the have nots, red and blue states, liberals and conservatives, some whites and some people of color, rural and urban populations, and many other opinion blocs across the country. One might view this as a sign of a vigorous and healthy democracy.

However, the tone and content of the pre-election day discourse left many Americans, especially many minorities, shaken and skeptical about the health of our democracy and its capacity to keep them safe and free.

Tensions arising from ethnic, religious, racial, gender, and/or differences of sexual orientation are not new to our nation. In recent months, however, we have witnessed a sharp uptick in hate crimes and acts of bigotry, as some national leaders have abandoned a commitment to ordinary civility, and signaled that open expression of contempt for others is, again, a legitimate form of political speech. Put differently, some feel it is more advantageous to demonize and delegitimize those who do not share your views than to find ways to engage with them.

This erosion of civility is not only a threat to those who now find themselves in the crosshairs of some of their neighbors. It is a threat to our democratic way of life. We need to act to restore civility before grievous harm endangers the ideals that bind the diverse peoples of our nation. Here are three understandings that may help us get there.

1. Democracy is built on discourse and debate. Our constitution guarantees freedom of speech.

Everyone gets to have an opinion, no matter how ill-informed or unpopular. Therefore, debate and disagreement are inevitable. The problem arises when political discourse becomes so degraded that leaders and their public lose tolerance for a diversity of opinion, and attempt to suppress and overwhelm other voices. As is now happening, people begin to doubt the capacity of government to represent their

views, and lose confidence in their government leaders.

2. Democracy requires compromise. Totalitarian societies do not depend upon the consent of the governed. Instead, rulers are able to impose their will, and those who disagree generally have limited or no recourse. Democracies are different. They have to find ways to reconcile diverse opinions, and we look to legislative bodies to help us do this. In recent years, however, the capacity for compromise has been degraded. In fact, some members of the United States Congress shun civil discourse on controversial issues, and condemn colleagues who entertain compromise.

3. Compromise is not consent. It is recognition that in a democracy, we cannot always have things exactly as we would choose them to be. Today, many of our nation's elected leaders think differently. They insist that "compromise" is a dirty word and are ready to fight for their ideals, even if it means paralyzing our government. One can respect that a person has a deep commitment to his or her values. Yet, if everyone places adherence to principle over discourse and compromise, then our democratic institutions will fail. The toxic political environment in which we now live provides ample evidence of this.

For 110 years, the American Jewish Committee (AJC) has worked to foster an America that is guided by democratic values, an America which is committed to securing the freedom of all its citizens without regard to characteristics, such as race or religion, that have traditionally inspired invidious discrimination.

Our nation has struggled to be a more just society, and we have made important gains. Today, however, a climate of incivility and intolerance challenges the vitality of our democratic institutions and the ideals on which they depend. It is time to take seriously the need to restore civil discourse and rebuild a living, breathing center in American political life where people meet, debate, and work out problems together. It can and must be done.

Robert Leikind is the Director of AJC New England.



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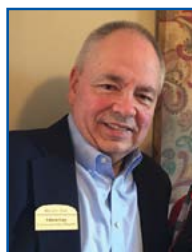


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Making peace with her past

By Shirley Nigri Farber

Libby Vilner was born in Israel and moved to Massachusetts with her family when she was 10 years old. She was featured on the cover of the September issue of *LaIsha*, Israel's most popular women's magazine. If you have never heard about her, it could be because she changed her name at the age of 16.

Libby is the daughter of the renowned Israeli television producer Hanan Goldblatt. Goldblatt is widely known by Israelis who grew up watching his educational children's show *Bli Sodot* ("No Secrets"), among other of his programs. But in



2008, he was convicted of rape and of committing sexual offenses against women in his acting class. When I spoke with Libby, my first matter of curiosity was to know why she decided to expose herself and face the sharks in the Israeli media, if the whole point of changing her name was to hide the relationship with her father.

Libby explained that she felt that now was the right time to forgive and reconnect. She said that in order to move on, she had to forgive her father. She hopes that she can inspire others in the same situation to forgive. She concluded, "I realize now that things are not my fault."

Today, the 25-year-old model and brand ambassador of organic products runs a blog, www.lifewithlibby.com, and has 26,000 followers on her Instagram account.

I asked her about her connection with the local Jewish community. She responded that she attends events with her mother, who is a volunteer at the Israeli American Council, but she also remembers the time when local Israelis began to call her house upon hearing the news of her celebrity father's arrest. That was just one of the dark moments in Libby's life.

Her parents got divorced when she was only 5, but even though she wasn't living with her father, she had a very good connection with him.

She called herself a daddy's girl. She knew that he was very famous, as he appeared in films and TV programs, and she was very proud of

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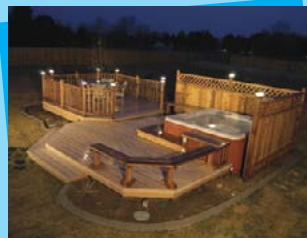


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Making peace with her past

her dad. When her mother remarried, she moved at the age of 10 to the Boston area with her older brother.

As a new immigrant and a daughter of divorced parents, she felt that the transition was very difficult. Besides the trauma of not seeing her father, she had to adapt to a new language and a new country. She was only able to see her father once or twice per year, as well as her grandmother and the rest of the family that she visited during her vacations in Israel.

That went on until her father was arrested in 2008. At the age of 14, she was unable to go to Israel because of the fear of being harassed by reporters. She recalled, "I did not understand what was happening to my father, so I searched online and found out that my idol was accused of rape." She described that the worst part was losing him and becoming disconnected from having a dad.

At that time she was called Libat Goldblatt, but for most Israelis, she became only the daughter of a rapist. She decided to change her name after getting calls from reporters asking about her father.

Libby reflected on the fact that the emptiness and the disconnection from her father led her into a toxic relationship that lasted from age 14 to 17. "While my father was in jail, I was looking to fill the hole with a boyfriend, and I lost my identity," she recalled. She explained that this occurred even though she has a very good relationship with her stepfather, her mother, and step-siblings.

During the relationship, she felt she was unworthy, and experienced emotional and physical abuse. The boyfriend would control all of her activities, and isolate her from her friends. Only when she was held hostage at knifepoint was she ready to break it off. She had to file both a domestic violence report and a restraining order with the police.

At the age of 17, following her passion for being in front of the camera, she began to model for Model Club Inc., an agency in Boston. She participated in Boston Fashion Week and described modeling as a way to escape reality.

After four years of not seeing her father, she went to Israel, and her grandmother convinced her to visit him in prison. She described it as traumatic and heart-wrenching to see her father in an orange jumpsuit.

At present, Libby has a modeling career, and just celebrated six

years of a happy relationship with her Brazilian boyfriend, with whom she lives. He is currently working in Japan, and she plans to join him. Check her Instagram to see the beautiful places they have traveled.

She is finishing her studies at Boston College School of Social Work, where she chose to study Clinical Psychology and Mental Health Counseling, "in order to try and provide answers to my questions and to try to understand why my father and my ex-boyfriend chose to do what they did."

Goldblatt was released in November, 2012 after serving four years in prison. He confessed that he was guilty, and apologized for his actions. Libby now speaks very little to her father, but considers the relationship to be "OK."

She hopes that by telling her story, she can help other victims of abuse. Returning from Israel, where she gave emotional interviews on Channel 10 and for *LaIsha Magazine*, she posted her entire story - about the father in jail, and her abusive boyfriend - in her blog for her followers to read. By opening up, she hopes to convince other victims of abuse to search for help. By forgiving her father, she also desires to be at peace with her past.



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Boston Challah bake



Boston's Mega Challah Bake brought together over 1,000 women on November 10 at Mosley's on the Charles in Dedham. The event was coordinated by close to 25 Boston area Chabad Houses. Guest speaker Chaya Lieberman, co-director of the West Hempstead Chabad in New York, spoke about the significance of the mitzvah of challah. "It teaches us that our mother Sarah understood that bread gives us life, but it's up to us to make that life meaningful," she said.

"We must have had over a hundred volunteers coming and going just on the day of the event itself," said Geni Bleich, co-director of the Wellesley Weston Chabad and one of the organizers of the event. "Even before the event, we saw what unity can accomplish!,"



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Helping Israel Rebuild

In early December, CJP established the Israel Fire Relief Fund to meet the urgent needs of individuals and families affected by the wildfires that tore through northern and central Israel. Barry Shrage, president of Combined Jewish Philanthropies, was in Israel for three days beginning on November 28, bringing with him Boston's support and love for the people of Israel and for Boston's sister city, Haifa. While there, he surveyed the extensive damage to homes, businesses, and houses of worship.

Haifa was the worst-hit Israeli city. While the damage is still being assessed, authorities say that around 2,000 dwellings were damaged, including 527 apartments that are uninhabitable and 37 that were destroyed. More than 1,600 Haifa residents have been made homeless.

CJP has had a sister city relationship with Haifa spanning nearly



Barry Shrage and the chairman of the Jewish Agency Natan Sharansky

Haifa

30 years, as part of the Boston-Haifa Connection. Through school exchanges, teen ambassador programs, missions to Israel, and numerous CJP-funded programs in Haifa, the ties between the people of Greater Boston and Haifayim have never been closer.

"I met with friends who have lost everything. I walked with families through the charred remains of their homes, searching for photo albums, china sets, and other cherished possessions," said Shrage. "I had the heartbreaking experience of accompanying rabbis as they gathered up pages of sacred texts in synagogue libraries," he continued, adding that he also met with and offered CJP's gratitude to the emergency response teams that ensured that there were no casualties from the blazes.

"Touring Haifa, seeing the devastation firsthand, was difficult and moving, yet the people of Haifa are always positive, always upbeat, always inspiring," Shrage recalled. "I know Haifa will come back, stronger and more beautiful than ever."

If you would like to help, please visit cjp.org/IsraelFireReliefFund. One hundred percent of donations go directly to fire recovery efforts.



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Survey of Teen Participants in Past Poland-Israel Trips Shows Lifelong Boost in Jewish Affiliation, Pro-Israel Identity

Recruitment Underway for 2017 March of the Living Teen Trip

By Stanley Hurwitz

95% of participants in past March of the Living (MOTL) 'heritage' educational trips - which annually bring thousands of Jewish teens from around the world to Poland and Israel - say their participation strengthened their Jewish identity and their bond with Israel.

The findings came in a study of 250 past MOTL participants by William Heimreich, Ph.D., Sociology Professor at CUNY.

"This is why we support MOTL," said Sharon's Irv Kempner, the Mass. MOTL Chair, son of Holocaust survivors. "This 12-day experience inspires participants to lead the Jewish community into the future vowing 'Never again,' and to fight anti-Semitism and all forms of prejudice. This experience insures a lifetime of community engagement. Enabling teens to participate is a proven investment in our future."

The 2017 MOTL teen trip, April 19 - May 3, coincides with Holocaust Remembrance Day - with visits to Nazi concentration camps and former shtetls in Poland, followed the next week in Israel to mark Israel Memorial Day and Israel Independence Day. It's a rare opportunity for 17 and 18 year-olds to study the Holocaust and examine roots of prejudice, intolerance and hate. Kempner and Mass. Group Leader Aaron Kischel plan to recruit at least 20 teens and to raise significant scholarship funds. (Visit <http://motlnewengland.org/>)

The CUNY survey found:

- 90% of respondents said MOTL made it more likely they would financially support Jewish causes.
- 90% said they're more inclined to get involved when confronted with anti-Semitism.
- 95% said MOTL had strengthened their Jewish identity.
 - 50% have visited Israel again since their MOTL trip.
 - 50% said they would consider moving to Israel, in part influenced by their MOTL experience.



Jewish education veteran Aaron Kischel said, "I haven't seen a program better designed to solidify teen attachment to their history and heritage." Kempner added, "This past year, the world mourned the passing of Elie Wiesel and Shimon Peres, both participants in the International March of the Living. May we remember their legacy, working towards peaceful coexistence."

"Since 1988, over 250,000 Jewish teens have participated in the unique journey," said Kempner. "We want Massachusetts well represented in 2017."

For information about MOTL 2017 applications and scholarships, contact Aaron Kischel: kischel7241@gmail.com / (781) 799-4765. For tax-deductible donations, contact Irv Kempner: IrvKempner@gmail.com

/ (617) 285-8620. Donations of \$1,000 will be matched by the Kempner Foundation. For online donations: <http://motlnewengland.org/>

Don't Miss This Moving Story of Courage and Hope...

'Always Good With a Needle: My Journey from Radom to Redemption'

By Marlene Freidenreich Kempner

Although the numbers tattooed on Marlene's arm fade with age – they never truly disappear.

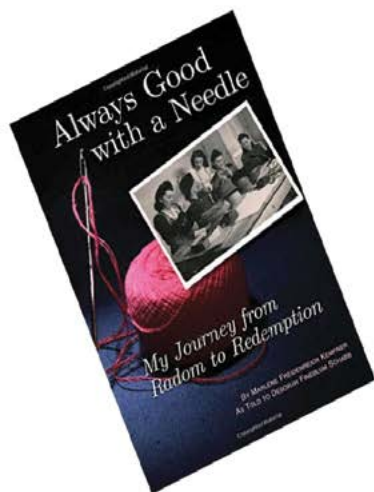
In her teens and 20's, Marlene Freidenreich Kempner of Radom, Poland, struggled to survive and safeguard her family from the Nazis. Ultimately, after narrowly escaping death in labor and death camps, only she and her younger sister survived, blessed with the opportunity to begin life again in a new land.

In her 94th year, the author summoned the courage to share her story - a cautionary tale of terror that also testifies to the power of courage and hope.

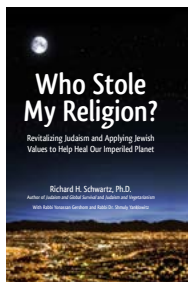
Proceeds from book sales will help fund scholarships to send teens on the N. E. March of the Living heritage trips to Poland and Israel in 2017 and 2018.

Donations of \$500 or more to March of the Living will receive a free book. Donations of \$1,000 will be matched dollar for dollar. Tax-deductible donations may be made online: <http://motlnewengland.org/>

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An Existential Threat to Israel, the U.S., and the World



By Richard H. Schwartz, Ph.D.

While climate change is an existential threat to Israel, the United States, and, indeed, the entire world, there has not been sufficient attention to it by most people. It was not discussed at all during the recent presidential debates, and was not a major campaign issue. When I hear of friends' children or grandchildren getting married or of them having new grandchildren, I wonder how all of their lives will be affected by our rapidly warming world,

with its rising oceans and increasingly severe storms. This is especially relevant to me; as I write this, I have a granddaughter and a niece who are arranging December 2016 weddings.

Here are ten important reasons we all should be very concerned about climate change:

1. Science academies worldwide, 97 percent of climate scientists, and 99.9 percent of peer-reviewed papers in respected scientific journals argue that climate change is real, is largely caused by human activities, and poses great threats to humanity.

All 195 nations at the December 2015 Paris climate change conference agreed that immediate steps must be taken to combat climate change.

2. Since temperature recordkeeping began in 1880, each decade since the 1970s has been warmer than the previous decade. Further, all of the 17 warmest years on record have occurred after 1998. 2016 is the warmest global year ever, breaking the record held before by 2015 and previously by 2014. This means that we now have had three consecutive years of record temperatures.

3. Polar icecaps and glaciers worldwide have been melting rapidly, faster than scientific projections. This has caused an increase in ocean tides worldwide with the potential for major flooding.

4. There has been an increase in the number and severity of droughts, wildfires, storms, and floods, which is covered in daily news stories.

5. California has been subjected to so many severe climate events (heat waves, droughts, wildfires, and mudslides from heavy rains) recently that its governor, Jerry Brown, stated that, "Humanity is on a collision course with nature."

6. Many climate experts believe that we are close to a tipping point when climate change will spiral out of control, with disastrous consequences, unless major positive changes soon occur.

7. While climate scientists believe that 350 parts per million (ppm) of atmospheric CO₂ is a threshold value for climate stability, the world reached 400 ppm in 2014, and the amount is increasing by 2 to 3 ppm per year.

8. While climate scientists hope that temperature increases can be limited to two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit), largely because that is the best that can be hoped for with current trends and momentum, the world is now on track for an average increase of 4 to 6 degrees Celsius, which would produce a world with almost unimaginably negative climate events.

9. The Pentagon and other military groups believe that climate change will increase the potential for instability, terrorism, and war by reducing access to food and clean water, thereby causing tens of millions of desperate refugees to flee from droughts, wildfire, floods, storms, and other effects of climate change.

10. The conservative group ConservAmerica (www.ConservAmerica.org), formerly known as "Republicans for Environmental Protection," is very concerned about climate change. Its members are working to end denial about climate threats among Republicans and to stress the urgency of taking action. But so far, they have met with very limited success.

Averting a potential climate catastrophe should be a central focus of civilization today, in order to leave a lovable world for future generations. We have to shift to renewable forms of energy, improve our transportation systems, produce more efficient cars and other means of transportation, and do everything else possible to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

As president emeritus of Jewish Veg, formerly Jewish Vegetarians of North America, I want to stress the importance of shifts toward vegan diets. Animal-based agriculture is a major contributor to climate change, largely due to the emission of methane from cows and other farmed animals. Methane is from 72 to 105 times as potent as CO₂ in warming the atmosphere.

Two studies demonstrate this conclusion:

1. A 2006 UN Food and Agriculture Organisation study, "Livestock's Long Shadow," found that livestock agriculture emitted more GHGs, in CO₂ equivalents, than all the cars, planes, ships, and other means of transportation combined.

2. A 2009 front page story in World Watch magazine, "Livestock and Climate Change," by two environmentalists associated with the World Bank, found that the livestock sector was responsible for at least 51 percent of all human-induced GHGs.

Because the threats are so great, it is essential that everyone make this issue a major priority, and make every effort to make dietary and other lifestyle changes, in order to help shift our imperiled planet onto a sustainable path.

Richard H. Schwartz, Ph.D., is president emeritus of Jewish Vegetarians of North America and the author of Judaism and Vegetarianism, Judaism and Global Survival, and Who Stole My Religion?



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Kosher Year-Round Hotel Opens in New Hampshire



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Text and photos by Shirley Nigri Farber

When I read about a kosher hotel opening in New Hampshire, I knew I had to go see it for myself. The newly built **Arlington Hotel** opened its door in Bethlehem, New Hampshire in September, offering Glatt Kosher meals and welcoming everyone. I spent the Thanksgiving weekend with my family in one of their modern and spacious 65 suites. Impressed with the elegant lobby of the three-story hotel, I quickly got a warm and homey feeling as I saw *mezuzot* on every room's door. On our first day, we had a festive Thanksgiving meal with various courses, all served in the beautiful hall surrounded by glass windows overlooking the woods. Situated in the touristy White Mountains area, I was still curious to know more about this location for a kosher hotel, and who owned it. I soon learned that the area has been a destination for Orthodox Jews for many years - most of them coming from New York to spend the summer months in the Granite State. It is said that once a *Chassid* asked his Rebbe for a cure for asthma, and the Rebbe said to go to New Hampshire. For many years, Jews have been renting properties in the town of Bethlehem in order to enjoy the nature and pure air of New Hampshire.

Bethlehem means "House of Bread" in Hebrew, but the city's name has nothing to do with Judaism - it received its name because it was incorporated on the day after Christmas in 1799.

I sat down to speak with Joel Strulovic, the Arlington Hotel owner, and he mentioned that for more than 10 years he had owned a kosher hotel in the area. But now he decided that, with the help of a few investors, he would build a modern place that is at the same time Glatt Kosher and open to the general non-Jewish public all year around.

My family and I love the White Mountains in the summer and in the winter, but most of the hotels in the area were built at least 50 years ago. So sleeping in brand-new sheets and bathing in a bathtub that was hardly used was a *mechaya*, very comforting.

The White Mountains area is of course the main destination for winter sports. While at the Arlington Hotel, we visited two nearby ski resorts: the Cannon Mountain and Loon Mountain. Within 30 minutes from the hotel are plenty of state parks that are great for walking and hiking. If you love nature, this is the place to be.

During Shabbat meals each family had their own table, with a bottle of wine or grape juice, and was served a *heimische* and at the same time gourmet dishes in beautifully arranged plates. Next to the hotel, there is a building that houses a synagogue and a *mikvah*. An indoor pool, an activity room and a spa are under construction inside the hotel. Each morning we were served a delicious and plentiful breakfast buffet that included a variety of baked goods, eggs, pancakes, cheeses and smoked salmon, all freshly made and beautifully displayed. There were a few activities happening during our stay such as kids' entertainment, a bonfire with s'mores in the heated courtyard, and a magic show. The hotel staff really takes care of each detail, keeping the place clean and attending to guests' requests. Observant Jews can relax knowing that there is a place to light candles, a key to open the door on Shabbat, and even a vessel to wash hands in the morning in each room. The tea room, serving kosher snacks, *chalav Israel* and fruits, is open 24/7.

Things to do within one hour from the hotel (winter or summer):

Whale's Tale waterpark, the Conway Scenic Railroad, Lost River Gorge, Echo Lake State Park, the waterfalls along the Kancamagus National Scenic Byway, golf, and the Settlers Green Outlet.

I can see the Arlington Hotel becoming a destination for Jewish family gatherings, even if only Grandma eats kosher. Maybe this is the new Catskills, with more nature options and gourmet meals.

My husband and I would like to thank all the hotel staff for their hospitality. We are looking forward to bringing our friends.

See more pictures and videos at [facebook.com/shalommagazine](https://www.facebook.com/shalommagazine)



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Temple Beth Zion of Brookline

The building revitalization of Temple Beth Zion of Brookline is in process. On November 21, Acella Construction began preparing the building for renovations, which are due to be completed by February 22. This is a short amount of time to get a lot done, but their hope is to complete the work on schedule.

When it is finished, the new and updated third floor will be known as the Reb Moshe and Anne Waldoks Lifelong Learning Center. This space will be fully accessible and used by both adults and children for learning "Torah" in the broadest sense of the word. This renovation helps Beth Zion achieve their highest goal - providing the space, and the opportunities, for the intellectual and spiritual growth for its members, and the community



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Light



By Dr. Rebecca Housel

Chanukah is known as the Festival of Lights. Almost every Jew knows the story of our ancestors' triumph over persecution: The Maccabees taking a small band of men and defeating a great army. The miracle of a single day's worth of oil staying lit for a full eight days and nights. The dreidel, a clever way of teaching Jewish children Hebrew in a time when that was not allowed. But today, Chanukah has been marginalized by the other big commercial holiday in December, Christmas. The Chanukah bush is a great example of Jewish assimilation into the American socio-cultural paradigm. And, it can feel threatening to those of us who understand the last 4,000 years of history. But perhaps, an ancient Jewish philosophy can bring ohr, Light, from the darkness of fear: Kabbalah.

I live in an area of New York with the second largest Jewish population in the State. While that might sound impressive, it equates to roughly 25,000 Jews in a mid-sized city grounded in its 65% Conservative Catholic constituency. So, it was not a great surprise that Wegman's, now a major grocery retailer in the Northeast, had three small shelves, separated from the rest of the store, with Chanukah-esque things, like Matzah ball mix, egg noodles, and Manishevitz grape juice. There were chocolate gold coins, too. An electric menorah. And, ornaments for a Chanukah bush.

At first glance, ornaments for a Chanukah bush are insulting. Annoying at the very least. But the more I thought about it, the more I began to see the Light. Light is what we bring to the world each night of Chanukah. And, Light is something the world has more of at Christmas, too. Candles are a part of that tradition as well. From a purely Kabbalistic perspective, anything that brings more Light into the world is a good thing.

According to Kabbalistic teachings, Light is Divine. It is God. It is the Universe. It is the All. As the Ancient Greek philosopher, Parmenides, said, "...nor is it divisible, wherefore, it is wholly continuous." Humans have divided Light into categories, labeling each one with "Christian," or "Jewish." But, Light is Light. And, we are all born with the Light we need to repair ourselves, and, the world.

Outside of the crass consumer capitalism both Christmas and Chanukah generate, Light is what permeates both holidays. And, it is that very Light that creates more smiling faces, more happiness, more compassion amongst all who see it. Whether the physical lighting of a Chanukah candle, or, the lighting of an advent candle, both ignite the Light within every soul who see it. The web of humanity is stronger during Chanukah because every Jew around the world is bringing Light into it...together. And, it is thanks to another Jew that the rest of

the world joins us in the creation of Light.

Kabbalah helps illuminate the things we cannot always see through the pain of existence. Though spiritual leaders who claim to follow Jesus's teachings have encouraged followers to persecute Jews for nearly 2,000 years, they still call a Jew "the son of God." Synonymous with "the son," Jesus, is the symbol of the Sun - *shemesh* in Hebrew. The Sun is what gives our world Light so we may fulfill our purpose of Tikun Olam. Tikun means "repair." It is the equivalent of karma. Not punishment or revenge, but reparations. Adjustments to the soul. Light, no matter how it may be labeled, allows us all to do just that.

For Chanukah this year, use compassionate wisdom through the Light of Kabbalah as you are bombarded with Christmas. See it for what it is: An opportunity for more Light to enter the world. Whether on a menorah, Chanukah bush or Christmas tree, the Light that permeates the month of December is very much needed as we bring 2016 to a close and welcome 2017. An abundance of Light may help remind humanity that people are more important than problems. Solutions are all around us. And, those solutions are easier to see if there is more Light. Chanukah Someach to all!

Dr. Rebecca Housel is the author and editor of international best-selling books sold in 87 countries and nine languages. You can read more on her blog: RebeccaHousel.com. She is also the CEO of Soul Arrow Entertainment, whose #EMMA initiative helps support special children realize their dreams: #EMMA=Everything (in) My Mind Awaits™



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Yityish “Titi” Aynaw – The Miss Israel we should all know about

By Miriam Spritzer

Miss Israel 2013, Yityish “Titi” Aynaw, the first Ethiopian to ever win the Miss Israel title, made a visit to New York in November. During her brief stay in the city, Titi participated at a roundtable organized by the online Jewish newspaper The Algemeiner.

At the roundtable, the invited guests were able to participate in a casual conversation with Titi, who shared some of her funny stories, as well as her achievements, and the effects that they brought to the Ethiopian community in Israel. She proved that her looks are just a small part of the beautiful person that she is.

Meeting Yityish “Titi” Aynaw and hearing her story was quite an experience. Although her story is very current, it was not that different from those we would hear about the 1920s or even the 1940s, for it included the same elements of survival, adaptation, taking risks, and giving back to the community.

Titi’s story is very well known in Israel, but unfortunately not as known within the Jewish communities around the world. As a reporter, I was surprised by how little I knew of her. After learning more about Miss Israel 2013, I realized that her journey should be considered a definite “must-know” for members of the tribe.

Titi grew up in a small and poor village in Ethiopia, where her family was the only Jewish family in the area. Although she has never experienced anti-Semitism in Ethiopia, she recalls that she knew her family was different from others in the village. They observed Jewish traditions and had a fairly normal life, except for when they lit Shabbat candles that were hidden from the outside. When discussing her life in Ethiopia, Titi joked about growing up without wearing shoes, and leading a very simple and rustic lifestyle that was completely the opposite of her current existence.

Titi made Aliyah to live with her grandparents after her parents passed away when she was 12. Having lost her parents at such a young age, she matured quickly and soon realized that in order to make a good life in Israel, she would have to work hard. She quickly learned Hebrew, and worked on becoming a top student, and she participated in many sports teams as well.

Like most Israelis, she joined the Army after high school. She became a Lieutenant, and was responsible for leading and training more than 300 men. I joked with her, asking what was more difficult, the Army or the beauty pageant, and she answered, laughing, “The army was a little bit more difficult.” Titi enjoyed her work in the Army, and took it very seriously, as her role and responsibilities were very high-level.



The beauty pageant was not something planned; it was supposed to be a fun thing to do right after the Army, while she was figuring out what her next steps would be. One of her best friends motivated her to audition, as the winner would receive a car, in addition to prizes. The friend said she would help in everything and they would share - Titi would keep everything, and give the car to her. Titi explained that she never expected to win, or even to pass the auditions. She

found the first tryout intimidating, and thought about giving up on the idea. The same friend convinced her to stay in the competition. She said, “Do you see any other Ethiopian here?” The answer was no, so she continued, “OK, so there is already a 50 percent chance of you winning. Are any of the other girls here a Lieutenant in the Army?” Again, the answer was no. “Well, then,” she said, “your chances of winning are very high.”

Titi not only won the competition, but she made history as the first Ethiopian to win the title in Israel, thereby opening a lot of doors for its African descendant community.

I asked Titi about what impact her winning the title had on Israeli entertainment and fashion industries. She replied, “When I auditioned for the pageant, there were no other Ethiopians there. We didn’t think that it was possible to participate. Today, there are many girls who participate in it. I was the first one, but it has opened many doors for the community, on TV, billboards, and magazines. Today we see more Ethiopians in media, like recently on ‘Big Brother’ and ‘Masterchef.’ That is all very positive.”

Titi also highlighted that today, six of the main models in Israel are black, and that the presence of these new role models in media has been great for the self esteem of the Israeli Ethiopian community.

The impact for her being Miss Israel 2013 was immense. She went on to participate in the Miss Universe pageant; she has worked with major fashion and entertainment figures, and was able to meet world leaders she never expected to meet, including U.S. President Barack Obama, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Titi hopes to grow in her fashion career and initiate more international projects, as well as and continue her work in charities, especially in Ethiopia and Israel. As for the car that was a prize from the pageant, Titi kept her promise and gave it to her friend, but she was the first one to drive it.

Miriam Spritzer is a professional coach and lives in New York. The journalist is the founder of www.funnygirl.com.br

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Life after Tishrei

Shmuel Helinski, Esq.

What a wonderful month for Jewish people around the world, the month of *Tishrei*. A virtual triathlon of religious observance - some may believe the crest of the hill being shuva - or literally, "return."

Many Jewish people, preceding the month of *Tishrei* in the month of *Elul*, undergo vast preparation for our new year and eventual atonement. Much like a businessperson occasionally sits back from his or her work to take a look at the big picture, so do we - but of our lives, our careers, our strengths and shortcomings. We begin to look at the big picture of our lives, ways to improve in the new year, and ways to be closer to G-d. In *Elul*, we begin to take stock in our lives and prepare for atonement.

Once completing the *Tishrei* triathlon, much like in an athletic triathlon, many of us take a break. We don't go to shul and don't pray during the day. We take breaks from tying *teffilin*, maybe not say *Shema* here or there. After all, we did a really good job in *Tishrei*, and, regardless, our fate for the next year is set in stone anyway, isn't it? This is life after *Tishrei*.

It is sometimes asked, if every penny we will make in 5777 is determined on Rosh Hashanah, then why do we need to pray throughout the year, strictly speaking, thrice daily? Why say *Tehillim*? What are we praying for if everything is already set in stone? The answer is simple.

While it is very true that our fate is written on Rosh HaShanah, as the saying goes, sometimes you can lead a Jew to the mikvah, but you can't make him dunk. Tefilah, or prayer, throughout the year enables us to access that which was has been decided for us. I often hear others say that they don't see miracles. But you see only what you choose to see. Similarly, opportunities may be staring us directly in the face. But, without the energy, the motivation, the interest, or the physical ability, time and so many other factors, we can't seem to seize it. We pray so that we may have the abilities to access the wealth of goodness that we have been blessed to receive. We live observant lives to be closer to our Creator and, as His children, be guided properly, be raised correctly, be what we should be to ourselves, to our own children and

to our people, and, of course, to be protected from bad decisions and from bad circumstances.

As a busy downtown lawyer, I was once forced to make a court appearance on a Yom Tov. It was my worst day in court, ever. I immediately went to my shul - the Wellesley/Weston Chabad - and declared that I was being punished for having worked on a Yom Tov. A smiling, visiting Reb said simply, "You're not being punished, Shmuel. If you place your finger into a fire, you will most assuredly be burnt."

There is a story of a man and his family who were caught on the roof of their house during a flood, trapped. The man prayed and prayed for Hashem to save him and his family. As he was praying, a lone man in a boat floated by, offering space in the boat for the man's family. The man declined the offer, declaring that Hashem would save him amidst his fervent prayer. Similarly, a rescue team came to the house and the man again declined. Finally, a helicopter attempted to lift the family from harm, but the man again refused, firmly believing that Hashem would save him. But sadly, he and his family perished from the flood. At the Heavenly Gates, he asked Hashem why He did not save him and his family. Hashem asked, "Whatever do you mean? I sent a boat, a rescue crew, a helicopter."

Many of us in *Tishrei* "returned" to Hashem by atoning for not having prayed enough last year, for not being observant enough, for maybe not keeping the Shabbat. When our slates were wiped clean on Yom Kippur, a day later we were already asking for forgiveness for messing up again. Life after *Tishrei* is not about perfection, it is about action.

Life after *Tishrei* is not a time to take a break. It is not a time to be patting our backs for our hard work on *Tishrei* and beyond. It is a time to start making good on our promises, to fulfill the mitzvah, to love our fellowman as ourselves, and to fulfill our heritage of bringing the world to a better place. It is a time to take a moment to recall our self-assessment in the month of *Elul*, and recall the promises that we made to ourselves and to Hashem.

Come to shul on Shabbos. Participate in a Jewish event. Live the gift of being Jewish.

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Lessons from a candle



By Chana Labkowski

While perusing your smartphone or tablet over your breakfast, you read myriad inspirational quotes, are motivated by an act of kindness on Facebook, see beautiful photographs of nature and read the latest post on your favorite blog. *Without taking too many breaths.*

You check your email before taking the train to work and at least a couple of messages from your friends and family are pointing you in the direction of something they read and thought you would love.

In this modern-day age of instant access to information one has many opportunities to be inspired. All in the course of minutes. It's like a candle bursting into flame many, many times over.

You may attend a lecture which inspires, view a webinar, read the latest self-help best-seller or view one of the thousands of amazing TED talks. The flame flickers.....

Most of the time, the inspiration fizzles out. The flame may last a few seconds, minutes or even a few days. Something in the back of your mind pushes you to put that latest productivity hack into practice. Or, you really want to change a behavior, adopt a new habit or leap into a different future.....But you just don't.

Why?

Here are some of the most common reasons:

1. **Expecting perfection.**
2. You want to change, but don't know how. In other words, it sounds nice in theory, but practically you're **lacking the skills.**
3. **Excuses** or hidden beliefs.
4. It's a "**Should**". Like...." I should lose 20 pounds" or "I should drink a green smoothie every morning".
5. You are **just too busy.**

Sound familiar?

Now, think about that candle bursting into flame.....The flame always defies gravity! Even when you turn the candle upside down. Try it. It is in fact rising upwards in an act of self-annihilation. So, what keeps

it burning? The oil, the wick, the wax of the candle. The oxygen in the air. Have you tried putting out a fire? The flame strives upwards, but what fuels the flame keeps it grounded.

If you are inspired, it's a flash of fire. A light which illuminates. As long as there is fuel feeding the fire, the flame burns.

Here are some tips for turning the flame of inspiration into sustainable action and keeping it burning:

1) **Let go of perfection.**

Instead, create smaller attainable goals with a doable timeline. Salvador Dali said: "Have no fear of perfection - you'll never reach it."

2) **Learn the skills.**

If you want to change the modus-operandi of your relationship or start working out, willpower is not enough. Speak to professionals, read books and practice! This applies to any skill: meditating, eating healthy, leadership, even learning to crochet!

3) **Choice.**

Choose to act on your inspiration. Don't let it be something you **SHOULD** do. Define your own integrity.

4) **Time Management.**

Instead of dedicating every minute to your new endeavor, decide in advance how much time you feel you realistically need to accomplish your goals for that week. Block off the hours needed. You can use this time for reading, thinking, journaling or studying everything connected to the new you. Repeat the process anew the next week, and the next....

5) **Get Support.**

This is especially helpful when you are examining your beliefs. How are they serving you?

A Coach or even a friend can help you clarify your obstacles, and help move you forward. Studies show that people who are supported in their efforts have more success.

These tips serve to fuel the flames, keeping your inspiration going and the fire in your heart growing. And then.... something magical will occur.

When the flame of a burning candle ignites another candle, it doesn't diminish its own light, it just illuminates more! You will be able to inspire others without losing your drive and inspiration!

At this time of year, we celebrate the triumph of light over darkness, and light candles to commemorate the miracle. We start with one and add another one every night until we've reached the end of the holiday. This is to remind us to keep adding, and growing and *inspiring*. Happy Chanukah!

Chana Labkowski is a personal and professional development coach and motivational speaker. She currently resides in S. Paulo, Brazil and has a global practice serving clients worldwide. Clients out of the area use her VOIP line or Skype. Schedule a complimentary session by emailing chana@insightcoach.pro.

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Maestro Josh Jacobson and the Zamir Chorale of Boston teamed up again with Cantor Peter Halpern of Temple Shalom of Newton to present a program of rarely-heard nineteenth century Jewish liturgical music from synagogues of Vienna, Berlin, Paris and London on November 14, at Temple Shalom of Newton. "The Majesty of Hallel" was the third performance in Zamir's Divine Majesty series, featuring the great masterpieces from Lewandowski, Sulzer, Naumbourg, Halévy, Alkan and Mombach. The concert was live streamed and can be viewed on YouTube (visit Zamir.org for further information). The Divine Majesty Series is made possible by an anonymous underwriter in memory of Mary Wolfman Epstein and Cantor Barney Mould.

Photo by Mickey Goldin

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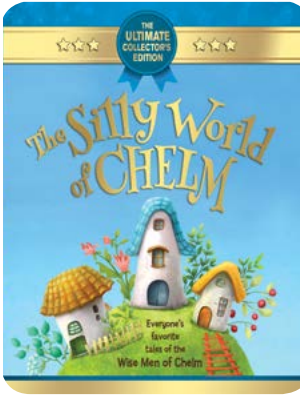


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The Budget Problem



Once upon a time, the village of Chelm suffered a terrible financial crisis. The mayor let it be known that there was not enough money in the village coffers to pay its police force. "What are we to do?" the mayor asked the village elders.

"It is so simple," they exclaimed. "We will outlaw crime! If we outlaw crime, then there will be no need to have a police force."

"How brilliant!" thought the villagers.

And so it was that crime became

illegal in Chelm, and the police force was done away with.

The following year, the mayor once again called a meeting of the village elders and announced that they were in worse condition than they had been the year before. Since they outlawed crime, and did away with the police department, the town treasurer had run off with the remaining funds.

"Indeed a predicament!" sighed the elders.

"But why do we need to have money in the town fund?" they asked.

"Well," said the mayor. "We need money to pave the streets."

The wise men of Chelm put their heads together and declared, "From now on we will not pave any more streets. We have enough paved streets!"

And so it was that the budget crisis was solved.

But the following year, the mayor met with the village elders and declared once more, "I have sad news to tell you. We are out of town money once more."

"That is very sad," they said. "Why did this happen?"

"Well," said the mayor, "since we no longer pave the roads, salespeople have stopped visiting our village. They used to pay taxes in order to make sales here. They stopped coming because the broken roads

destroyed their carts."

"Indeed, this is a problem," replied the elders. "Where else can we save?" They all thought and thought, and could find no solution.

Finally, the wisest of the elders, known as the Sage of Chelm, got up and spoke. "What do we need town money for? We have outlawed crime, so we do not need a police force. Since the tradesmen do not visit our community any more, we do not need to pave our streets. So what do we need money for?"

"Well, I must be paid!" said the mayor. "Since I became mayor I have not had a chance to work my farm. My only source of income comes from being mayor of our city."

"Aha!" smiled the wisest man in Chelm. "The answer is simple. If we let you go back to your farm, you will not need a salary to manage our town, which runs by itself. Therefore, it is decreed that the village of Chelm, from this day on, will no longer require a mayor!"

Everyone agreed - indeed, this was a solution that would save the village from bankruptcy - but it did not! Soon, a group of scholars gathered at the door of the Sage of Chelm.

"Oh, dear Sage," they said. "We are but humble teachers. True, we get satisfaction from teaching the children, but we still have to eat. It has been months since we have been paid, and now we have been told there isn't enough money in the town treasury for even one week's pay!"

The Sage of Chelm shook his head in disbelief. "I am so sorry. How could this have happened?"

"We don't know," said the teachers. "But please understand, if we cannot earn salaries as teachers, we must go back to the fields to plant crops so that our families can eat."

"But who will teach our children?" asked the Sage.

"If there is no money to pay us, then the children will have to teach each other. The older ones, who are almost teachers, will teach the younger ones. We will return to the fields to feed our families."

The Sage of Chelm shook his head sadly, but what could he do? However, despite all the money saving ideas, the village remained in a bad financial state.

"There is no more money to have even the smallest service carried out," the villagers complained to the Sage.

"Well," the Sage wondered out loud. "What do we need money for now? We have done away with the police and the teachers, and have stopped paving roads. We no longer have our mayor, so what do we need money for?"

The villagers thought and thought. Then finally one man exclaimed, "You are right!"

"Indeed," said the Sage. "So let it be known to all, that from this day forward, there will be no taxes collected in the village of Chelm!"

As soon as word reached the neighboring villages, everyone from miles around began to move to Chelm. "Why should we pay taxes where we live?" they said.

And so in just a few days the village of Chelm was bursting with prosperity. In no time at all, new homes were built, and these new homeowners were paving their streets. They wanted their children to be educated, so they hired their own teachers. And those who wanted to protect their homes, hired their own guards. And so, the budget problem was solved at last.

Excerpted from the newly released book, "The Silly World of Chelm." Available at www.WorldOfChelm.com and at Amazon.com.

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Be Like the Maccabees

By Rep. Lori A. Ehrlich

Chanukah is a time for celebration with family. It is called the Festival of Lights and the Feast of Dedication. We celebrate by eating latkes and playing dreidel. These modern traditions are fun and comforting, but this year I want to take a moment to reflect on what the original story of Chanukah can teach us about the world around us today.

The Jewish people have always known what it is like to be the other in society, to be spurned for dressing or worshipping or thinking differently. And the Jewish people have always endured and thrived, even against long odds.

And it was no different when, in roughly 168 BCE, the Seleucid King Antiochus IV looted the Second Temple and outlawed the practice of Judaism. The king tried to take a multicultural realm and force everyone else to follow his Hellenistic (Ancient Greek) culture. He erected an altar to Zeus in the Temple and rounded up dissidents. King Antiochus IV was also a vain king, his name literally translated means “God Manifest”, and he has his visage on coins adorned with things like “bringer of victory” and “Make the Seleucid Empire Great Again”.

Did the Jews of this time sit around and say “woe is us, all is lost?” No, instead they took charge of their community, organized, got their neighbors involved, and started a resistance movement called the Maccabees. Certainly there were many people did not want to cause a fuss, people who called the Maccabees too zealous in their pursuit of justice, people who said Antiochus wasn’t that bad. But there were also those who could not sit still while their liberties were under assault.

The Maccabees spent years in the wilderness fighting an oppressive system. Surely there were times when it seemed like the government was too powerful and nothing would ever go back to the way it was before. But they did not give up, and eventually they drove the Seleucid forces away.

When the Maccabees finally regained Jerusalem they found their most sacred institutions had been desecrated. The Temple had been used to sacrifice pigs to pagan gods, and the holy olive oil used to light the menorah in the Temple had been tainted. But again, the Jews did not give up. They set about doing the hard work of rebuilding their institutions, including making more oil to keep the light burning in the Temple. To everyone’s amazement the oil that was only supposed to last for one day instead lasted for eight, enough time to make more oil and repair the damage done by the Seleucids. You never know what you can bounce back from until you try.

This is a story about standing up for what you believe in. It is about persevering in the face of injustice aimed at the least powerful. It is about the resilience that the Jewish community has consistently demonstrated, and the kind of resilience that our country needs right now. We did not let a bully and a bigot determine our future all those thousands of years ago, and we won’t let it happen now.

Lori A. Ehrlich is a State Representative for the 8th Essex District. She lives in Marblehead.

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What Was the Real Miracle of Chanukah?

By Rabbi Joel E. Hoffman

In many prayer books there is a paragraph to be recited after one lights the Chanukah menorah. This paragraph praises G-d for the different types of miracles G-d created during the original Chanukah story, and uses the words Salvations, Miracles and Wonders for different types of miracles. But what were these specific miracles in the Chanukah story? First of all, we must understand these terms before plugging the Chanukah story into them. They are all different levels of miracles.

A Salvation is an event where two equal forces compete, and the “good guys” win. This is the lowest level of a miracle. The second level, which is called a Miracle, is an event that is counter to nature, and is exactly how we understand the term miracle in everyday language. A Wonder is the highest level of a miracle, but it occurs within the framework of nature. Contrary to a Salvation that also occurs within nature, a Wonder did not have to occur at all, but did, and the fact that it did occur is why this is the highest level of miracle.

In the Chanukah story when Mattisyahu and his sons killed the Greek army unit at Modin, this was a Salvation level of miracle. There were two equal forces fighting. but Mattisyahu and his brothers won. The Jewish military victory over the Greeks was the middle level of miracles called Miracle. This is because the Greeks were more superior militarily and should have defeated the Jews, but the Jews won. Thus, a Miracle. But now we have a problem, because the one day’s worth of oil burning for eight days in the menorah can’t be classified as a Wonder level of miracle, because this was beyond nature - whereas Wonder level miracles occur within nature!

A resolution to this is to understand that there were several miracles in the Chanukah story, and the one day’s worth of oil lasting eight days was one of the second level of miracles. It is just that Hebrew School curriculum writers and teachers have chosen to highlight the one day’s worth of oil lasting eight days as “the” miracle of Chanukah. The miracle of Chanukah, however, is really the miracle like the Wonder level of miracle.

So what was this Wonder level miracle? THE highest level of miracle in the Chanukah story is the fact that the Jews even found one jar of oil

that had not been opened by the Greeks. This may sound a little anti-climactic at first, but once one knows some of the historical details to the Chanukah story, and one understands the cause and effect of how Jews do *mitzvot* and how G-d does miracles for us, it will make sense.

The Greeks were not opposed to Jewish culture and practices, as long as the Jews did not claim that the practices were commanded from G-d. According to Jewish law, if possible, the oil used in the Temple’s menorah had to be pure. In part, this meant untouched. The Greeks obviously knew this, so they opened all the oil containers and touched the oil in each container. Again, contrary to what many of us were taught in Hebrew School, which was that the Greeks destroyed all the oil, the fact is they just opened all the oil containers and touched the oil in each one. The Greeks didn’t mind that a menorah was lit in the Temple, it just had to have a Greek touch (pun optional).

Additionally, according to the Kabbalah, this is the cause and effect of the Jews deserving each type of miracle: (a) Jews merit Salvation level miracles to occur through fulfilling G-d’s will. For example, in the *Shema* it states, “If you will walk in my statutes and keep my commandments...I will give you rains in their season, and the land shall yield its produce.” (b) A Miracle level miracle is merited only if Jews go beyond what G-d commanded and perform the *mitzvot* with *hiddur*, *hiddur* meaning enhancement or beautification. For example, using a beautiful *Kiddush* cup for *Kiddush*, or for us today using an oil Chanukah menorah. Because a Jew goes beyond what is required, G-d goes beyond nature in doing miracles. (c) Wonder level miracles are merited by Jews who do *mitzvot* with *mesirat nefesh*. *Mesirat nefesh* is translated as “self-sacrifice” to do *mitzvot*, but it is much more than this. *Mesirat nefesh* means that a Jew reaches the level of surrendering his personal identify to an identity where his/her purpose is to perform *mitzvot*. This is an internal mode that is not obvious beyond the ordinary; thus, Wonder level miracles do not violate the natural world. Now plugging this back into the Chanukah story, since the non-Hellenized Jews were operating on the level of not only doing *mitzvot* with *hiddur*, but also with *mesirat nefesh*, it now makes sense that G-d rewarded them with the highest level of miracle, a Wonder level miracle, of being able to light the menorah with pure oil. The fact that this one day’s worth of oil lasted eight days was only a second-level miracle. Thus, it should now make sense why “the” real miracle of Chanukah was finding one unopened jar of oil.

A practical lesson we can take from the above is that, according to the theology of the Kabbalah, there is a correlation between how we do *mitzvot* and the degree to which G-d performs miracles for us. Thus, if we want G-d to do all different types of miracles for us, we should evaluate how we are doing *mitzvot* - normally/simplely, with *hiddur*, or also with *mesirat nefesh*.

Rabbi Joel E. Hoffman teaches Middle School Science and 6th grade Hebrew School, and writes on Jewish themes. This d’var Torah was based on a talk by Rabbi Menachem M. Schnersohn.

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Eight Kinds of Light

By Rabbi Katy Z. Allen

Each night for eight nights one more light is kindled, at the darkest time of the year, until nine candles burn brightly in our windows or on our tables. Candlelight is the heart of Chanukah.

What do the eight lights over the eight days mean? What do they represent? What might be the meaning of the increasing light throughout the holiday?

The potential answers are myriad. One way to answer the question is to consider each candle as representing a different source of external light in partnership with a different aspect of inner light, creating eight pairs of physical/spiritual light to consider during Chanukah.

Here's one such set to consider:

First Lights: Sunlight and Gratitude (Hodayah)

The light of the sun provides all the energy needed to fuel life on Earth. The light and heat of the sun make it possible for all kinds of life - algae, grass, elephants, maple trees, humans, and everything in between - to exist and to thrive. That's a lot to be grateful for!

Second Lights: Starlight and Faith (Emunah)

The Universe contains roughly a billion trillion stars (1, with 21 zeros after it!) that burn as fiercely as our sun, or more so. The stars' apparent tiny-ness is a result of their distance from us, for many are far larger than our sun. Stars are a reminder of the enormity of the universe through both space and time. The candle burning in our window is but a blip on the screen of billions of years and trillions of miles. We are miniscule in comparison to the vastness of time, space, and substance that is beyond human comprehension. In this context, stargazing can bring forth a sense of deep faith.

Third Lights: Moonlight and Humility (Anavah)

Despite shining brightly in the nighttime sky, the moon does not give off any light of its own. The moonlight perceived here on Earth is primarily light from the sun that is reflected off the moon's surface, with a little bit of reflected starlight added in. We can learn from the moon about moving away from the brightest spots in order to reflect light from others, fostering humility.

Fourth Lights: Firelight and Wisdom (Chochmah)

Fires can be lit intentionally or accidentally, or can result from lightning strikes or lava flows. Fires burn hot and can be dangerous and destructive, but fire also provides needed warmth, as well as heat for cooking. Knowledge, experience and thoughtfulness wrapped up into wisdom can help keep the fires in our lives, both literal and figurative, within meaningful and safe parameters.

Fifth Lights: Lightning Light and Strength (Koach)

Lightning is an electrostatic discharge that leaps from cloud to cloud or from a cloud to the ground, causing the familiar flash of bright light and deep rumbling sounds. Lightning is potent; it can split a tree or

start a fire, and a single bolt contains enough energy to power about 50 houses for a day. Personal strength can come from many sources, some slow-moving and some sudden and powerful, like a lightning bolt, and can provide the wherewithal to keep going through the myriad challenges of life.

Sixth Lights: Candlelight and Compassion (Rachamim)

A candle gives off very little light, but is usually kindled with intentionality and a search for meaning, comfort, connection, or inspiration. Even the light of one small candle dissipates the darkness. So, too, the compassion of our hearts can light up the dark days of those around us, transforming their experience and awakening them to previously hidden blessings.

Seventh Lights: Lamplight and Integrity (Osher)

Most lamps are fueled by electricity, and most electricity is formed through the burning of fossil fuels, extracted from beneath the surface of the Earth and then sending carbon into the atmosphere when burned. Awareness of the source of the energy for our lamplight can foster a sense of integrity as we become more thoughtful about the amount of light allowed to be given forth in our homes, cars, and businesses.

Eighth Lights: Firefly Light and Love (Ahavah)

Fireflies contain a compound in their abdomens that reacts with incoming air to create the memorable glow of a firefly. By regulating the airflow, these nighttime insects create a pulsating pattern. One function of the light is to signal a firefly's search for a mate - a light-filled insect love message. We, too, can spread love when we allow ourselves to light up from within.

These are just some examples of finding meaning in the Chanukah candles beyond what is readily perceived. What other external/internal or physical/spiritual light pairs are meaningful to you this Chanukah?

Rabbi Katy Allen is the founder and rabbi of Ma'yan Tikvah - A Wellspring of Hope. She blogs at www.mayantikvah.blogspot.com.

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7 Warning Signs That Mom or Dad Could Use More Support

By Michael Schaus

Throughout my many years working in the senior living industry, I have observed that holiday visits are often a wake-up call for adult children, who realize their parent isn't doing all that well living alone. Although it can be difficult to face the reality of elderly relatives who are more frail or forgetful than the last time you visited, it can also be an opportunity to make a change for the better.

Use this checklist to determine whether your parent could benefit from a more supportive living arrangement.

1. Check **the mail**: The mail offers clues to how your parent is managing money, a common warning sign of cognitive trouble. Look for unopened bills, letters from banks or creditors, or thank-you messages from charities.

2. Give a **hug**: Clues aren't always visible from a distance. You might learn more from a hug. Look for obvious weight loss or gain, or increased frailty.

3. Check **the medicine cabinet**: Individuals over 65 take an average of 14 prescriptions a year, and those over 80, more than 19. That's a lot to keep track of! Medication errors are leading causes of hospitalization in older adults. Look for expired, discontinued or duplicate prescription bottles.

4. Inspect **the kitchen**: This room is especially revealing. Look for expired perishables, multiples of the same item, a freezer full of frozen dinners, broken appliances, signs of past fire.

5. Walk around **the house and yard**: Lack of maintenance may mean that your parent needs more help. Look for clutter, lax housekeeping, grimy bathrooms, and signs of neglect.

6. Observe your parent's **social life**: Social circles can shrink with age, which can have health and safety implications. Look for signs of isolation: rarely leaving the house, disinterest in activities that were once important, lacking a group of friends to socialize with.

7. **Take a drive**: Ask your parent to take you out for a spin. Look for dents, signs of being easily distracted, impaired driving, and dashboard warning lights.

-Encouraging a parent to move can be stressful for all concerned. Keep in mind that Assisted Living does not mean a loss of independence. Quite the contrary. Assisted Living is designed to maximize autonomy within an environment that provides seniors with choices, celebrates their individuality, and allows them to thrive. Your Mom or Dad will enjoy a safe, comfortable, social lifestyle, and you'll spend less time worrying and more time enjoying your times together as you visit.

Michael Schaus is the Executive Director of Cornerstone at Canton, an Assisted Living and Alzheimer's Care Community in Canton.



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11 Points of Advice from an Ivy-League Alumna Interviewer

By Larry Dannenberg, CEO, www.CollegeSolutions.com

Many schools, including those in the Ivy League, no longer offer on-campus interviews. Instead, they rally hoards of alums to meet and interview applicants.

Shortly after you have submitted your application, you will be contacted, usually by email, by a local alum, and asked to set up a meeting. Having been one of those alums for the past few years, I'd like to offer some advice.

1. Respond promptly. Don't make the interviewer chase you down. It's embarrassing if you hear from your guidance counselor or parent that you haven't responded to an email inquiry about an interview! Remember that these alums are volunteers, not paid admissions officers, and they are busy people, just as you are.

2. Use respectful and polite language, in your email communications as well as in person. Do not refer to the alum by first name! Use "Ms." or "Mr." in your replies, unless he/she suggests otherwise. Even if the alum signs the email "Joe Smith," reply to "Mr. Smith." Do not use colloquial expressions in your emails.

3. Be helpful when setting a meeting date. We know you are busy, but you may have to re-arrange your schedule to find a time that works for your interviewer. If you make it difficult, you can be sure that the interviewer will say so in his report.

4. The interviewer does not have access to your application, or any information about you except your address and name of your current school. You need to be able to give a brief summary of your academic and extracurricular interests, in order to create a picture of yourself for your interviewer. But the interviewer's job is not to rehash the bullets on your application; he hopes that you will convey the kind of person that you are. Are you serious and super-focused? Are you silly and creative? Are you shy, or outgoing? Don't be afraid to express fears, as well as interests and passions.

5. Ask lots of questions! Ask about the choice of major, the dorm life, the social life, what he liked and disliked, and how much the school plays a part in his life now. Questions are good.

6. Take this interview seriously, but remind yourself that it is not like a job interview. Remember, these are volunteers, not staff from Admissions Offices, and therefore, their reports are supplemental. The Admissions Offices love to be able to say that "99 percent of our 30,000 applicants were interviewed by an alum!" The alum will offer a perspective in his report, based on your meeting, but the meat of the information that the admissions committee will consider is in your application. The interview is an opportunity for you to get a feel for the kind of person who attended this school.

7. As mentioned in #4, the interviewer will be looking for something to write about that may not be in your application. Think of ways to convey the "unique" you to your interviewer. Bring a resume, if you'd

like, or anything else that would be fun to share (within reason!). Artwork, photos, or stories of your experiences in high school or over the summers are all great to share. What was your favorite high school class? Who is your best friend, and why? What was your biggest success/failure in high school?

8. Do not feel the need to buy a new outfit. Meetings are usually in coffee shops, libraries, or maybe even at your school, so dress nicely and neatly, but you do not need to "dress up."

9. Usually, the interviewer will not send emails to you afterwards, unless he has offered to provide additional information. You probably won't hear from him again, unless you are accepted by his school. However, you should WRITE A THANK-YOU EMAIL! In my years of interviewing, I have received only about 10 thank-you notes from students. Boy, does it make a difference. You can ask more questions, if you have some, but please send a quick email thanking the interviewer for his time and for sharing his thoughts about his school.

10. Please don't hold it against the interviewer if you are not accepted. This is a numbers game, as you know, and the interviewers are often just as frustrated by that game as you are. You should want to leave the interviewer with a good impression, no matter the outcome, so that he will write a good report, and also, since you probably live nearby, for possible future encounters.

11. One final piece of advice: don't let your parents contact the alum interviewer. Again, these are volunteers, who likely do not have time to handle parents' questions. If for any reason there is a problem, you can contact the Admissions Office directly.

NOTE: We recently worked with a student who had an alumna interview and didn't get into the university. Both she and the interviewer were disappointed. The interviewer, impressed by the student's credentials, decided to hire the student for a summer internship. While not getting into the university was a disappointment to the student, the internship proved to be invaluable in helping the student work toward her goals and learn about her field of interest.

Relax, be yourself, and be respectful. Good luck!!

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American Maccabees

By Steve Schuster

Less than two weeks after Hillary Clinton conceded the terrifying 2016 U.S. presidential election to Donald Trump, my wife Julie and I left the country. Granted, it was only to take a much-needed vacation, but the topic of fleeing America should our beloved country elect this authoritarian demagogue, a literal hatemonger in every sense of the word's definition, was never far from our thoughts over the past 18 months. I'm not, by nature, a quitter, and as long as there's no clear and present danger to our family, we're likely to remain on U.S. soil.

Nevertheless, 11/9 was a new, dark day in America, and nothing the nascent Trump administration being birthed from Trump Tower (a name that now carries all the foreboding of a *Game of Thrones* citadel) has done has brought any sense of relief to us Americans. Fear, panic, and depression are the prevailing emotions of the waning days of 2016, and this is no less true for our Jewish community, for "we have seen this movie before."

As President-elect, Trump continues to expertly fan the flames of victimization, cite tabloid conspiracies, assign blame and, through omission, give license to alt-right extremism. And like anyone who is paying attention, I'm truly alarmed by the shocking post-election rise in hate crimes. This includes the sudden appearance of swastikas coupled with viscerally stinging anti-Semitic slogans and hate-filled Holocaust references that we fantasized were permanently dead. Lest we be accused of "In every generation our enemies rise up against us" Jewish paranoia, the parallels between Trump and Adolph Hitler and Benito Mussolini only get stronger with each news cycle. Internment of Muslims, taking citizenship away from flag burners, claims of rigged elections, intimidating journalists, and prosecuting political opponents are among an endless stream of ideas that unambiguously represent a totalitarian mindset. Trump and his newly assembled cabinet not only echo some of these early fascists, but the far right is being solidly embedded into the American mainstream, with unprecedented access to American seats of power.

In describing Chanukah, following the establishment of the Second Jewish Commonwealth in today's Israel, Flavius Josephus called it a celebration of "liberty beyond our hopes." The same phrase is easily applied to the Jewish journey in America, thus far an unprecedented

success in our people's long history. And now it is time for us to turn our attention to taking action to preserve and protect the "liberty beyond our hopes" of our American experience, and to *lead* the fight for the rights of all Americans.

Like Judah Maccabee (*Yehuda ben-Mattityahu*) and his brothers, who were shaped by their high-priest father into uncompromising patriots who yielded to no one, we must, as it is written in Maccabees I, "fight for our people, and our sanctuary." As modern day American Maccabees, we must learn to recognize fascism, even when it's wrapped in the stars and stripes. We must not ignore the creeping authoritarian signs of fascism, and we must never, ever accept this as the new normal. We must not excuse or dismiss Trump's excesses as mere political rhetoric - extremists historically follow through when they have the power. And when we see something we know is simply *wrong*, we must take action.

Already, in echoes of the repressive past, Trump's categorically false tweets about "the millions of people who voted illegally in 2016" cannot be dismissed as just another Twitter meltdown from the president-elect, but must be acknowledged as a prelude to massive voter suppression. As American Maccabees, we must recognize that Trump has little respect for the institutions that preserve American democracy, whether it's the right to vote, or freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

And it's pure folly to believe that Trump will be the great savior of the U.S./Israel relationship. America's patronage of Israel has historically been based more on ideological and philosophical imperatives, coupled with pragmatism. Trump has already been explicit in harboring no nostalgia for backing up other strategic allies of half-a-century's standing, and he shows *no* evidence of possessing any ideological foundation that might ensure he would support Israel in tough times. Furthermore, Trump's complete lack of understanding of foreign policy and foreign relations, and his cartoonish view of the Middle East inform his dangerous opinion that success in the region is about nothing more than garden-variety deal making. And alarmingly, Trump seems perfectly happy to allow Putin and his de-facto allies, especially Iran and Hezbollah, strengthen their position at Israel's doorstep.

Trump is a man whose lifelong behaviors demonstrate wholly consistent disregard and disdain for foundational democratic and Jewish values, ethics and laws, if not in name, then certainly in spirit. Don't let Trump divide our Jewish community. United, the original Maccabees defeated a Greek army of 20,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry. As Sun Zi said in the *Art of War* (~500 B.C.E.), "He whose ranks are united in purpose will be victorious." United, American Maccabees must fight at every step to ensure that "liberty beyond our hopes" is sustained, for American Jews and for all people who value life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness as the American way.

Steve Schuster is the CEO of Rainier Communications.



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Why All Jews Must Show Derech Eretz To President Elect Trump

By Cindy Grosz

You put three Jews in a room, you give ten opinions on a single topic. Some are excited. Others went to shuls and the Rebbe's grave, following the actions of Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner, as reported in the press, and prayed before the election for these results, while others are still surprised, upset and fell as if they some are still sitting *shiva*.

Jews are singled out in a way no other group is. We have certain names, some wear our religion on own head, yarmulkes, that shows the world who they are. We eat in kosher restaurants or nosh on bagels, kugels, and teach the world that the best medicine is chicken soup. With today's technology and ability to identify and share information, everyone follows trails like how we vote, how we practice our religions and which charities we donate to. The minute some group protests, we see on the news posters with slogans like "Jews own Wall Street," or "Jews Own Hollywood."

We are under a different microscope than most. We are a targeted group. Anti-Semitic act of violence around the world, throughout the country and in every Jewish neighborhood is rising according to statistics shared in the press. Students and staff on college campuses are targets of hate crimes.

Whether you love or hate Donald J. Trump, he was elected president. We must support the winner of the November elections.

We may admire him. We may not agree with him. We might actually disagree with everything he stands for. Then again, based on the results around the country on state legislators, governors, house and senate seats and many of the issues on the ballots many in our country believe in him, or at least are willing to give the Trump/Pence a chance.

I recently had the honor to speak at a "Support for President Trump Rally" in front of Trump Tower. I discussed how if the shoe was on the other foot, I and others would be upset, but we would accept the choice of the people and respectfully follow the laws and positions of a Clinton/Kaine administration, just as most of us did the past eight years. We would have no choice until election-time 2020. The rally brought together people from all faiths, economic status, and social backgrounds joined together.

I recommended carefully researching facts and opinions before you share them. Many are complaining that Trump is this or Trump does that - often sharing information that is inaccurate or bias with an intended purpose. It only makes those whose spread gossip look bad.

I also suggested that people should watch carefully what actions take place during the first few months of the administration. We should not expect miracles and even every promise and pledge made completed on a 100-day deadline. However, we should expect some developments. We should demand transparency and accountability.

As a pro-Israel activist, I can tell you without a doubt, the current Republican platform on Israel is the strongest ever, from either party, past or present. President-Elect Trump has already promised investigations into the anti-Israel activity

on college campuses nationally.

Cindy Grosz is the Radio Show Host of Cindy's Corner Radio Show and Best-Selling Author of Rubber Room Romance. You can read her articles on [madisonscpc.com](http://www.madisonscpc.com) and hear her show every Wednesday night at 8 pm Eastern at <http://www.blogtalkradio.com/madisonradio>.



Cindy Grosz being interviewed by Drew Scott of News 12 New York



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Lt. Weitzenkorn and Carly Boileau

Sharon JWV Post presents Siddurim to cruise ship

On Friday evening, Nov. 4, on board the Royal Caribbean Serenade of the Seas, Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Weitzenkorn, USAF (Retired), Commander of Sharon Post 735, Jewish War Veterans of the United States presented 30 copies of Siddur Likrat Shabbat to be used aboard the ship for Friday night services. Carly Boileau, the Serenade's cruise director, accepted the books on behalf of the ship. The presentation took place just prior to Kabbalat Shabbat, which was led by Lt. Col Weitzenkorn. While on active duty, Weitzenkorn additionally served as a Jewish lay leader in Vietnam and Germany. Cantor Alan Kritz of the Jewish Cemetery Association of Massachusetts obtained the Siddurim from Congregation Adas Shalom in Quincy, and generously offered them for donation.



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On Wine and Water

“... a song of praise is sung only over wine.”
Brachos 35a



By Rabbi Yosef P. Glassman, MD

The culture amongst which we are surrounded seems to put alcohol at center stage, and, frankly, it is difficult to avoid, whether at the supermarket ad or even at a Disney theme park. Yet, despite its casual omnipresence and glorification, cold statistics tell us that alcohol is more damaging to individuals and society as a whole than even crack or heroin. No joke.

Indeed, a path where alcohol flows proves to be one of the most treacherous physical paths anyone may follow. Romanticized on a billboard on one side of town, on the other, a neighbor sits in a hospital bed, suffering from liver failure, gastrointestinal bleeding and orthopedic trauma from real and present danger.

Jews, as a group, have been fortunate, however, to have largely avoided the social perils of alcohol. Sociologists have pointed out and marveled that Jews proportionately and frequently drink more wine, beer and spirits than any other ethnic or religious segments of the population, yet miraculously have the lowest proportion of negative social consequences due to that consumption. Yet, despite the higher frequency, the overall amounts of alcohol, in fact, are amazingly low. Israel boasts one of the lowest amounts of alcohol consumed per capita in the world, with one of the highest life expectancies. Paradoxically, perhaps however, someone who drinks zero alcohol often lives a shorter life than someone who has one drink per day.

Surely, from a Jewish perspective, alcohol is one of the most paradoxical and perplexing of substances, embodying both extreme positivity and negativity simultaneously. Where on the one hand, King David tells us emphatically that wine “gladdens man’s heart” (*Tehillim 104:15*), on the other, our Sages warn that it “reddens the face of the wicked in this world and pales it [with shame] in the next.” (*Sanhedrin 70*).

That said, Jews never shy away from proudly displaying a bottle of the fermented matter on the table every Shabbat and Yom Tov. Wine is a source of joy, and even a requirement for remembering the Shabbat, despite its having potentially caused the downfalls of both Adam

and Noah. The Zohar (3:95a) refers to wine as “simchat Torah” and “from the crown of the King.” Yet, while wine causes “G-d and men to rejoice,” (*Shoftim 9:13*), if one “drinks two cups, he loses two parts of his mind.” (*Numbers Rabbah 10*)

Leaving one’s head further spinning, the Sages discuss the varied ways to drink non-Jewish made beer, whether at the door of the shop, like Reb Papa, or in privacy of one’s house, like Reb Ahai (*Avodah Zara 31b*), never mind at the local kiddush. Indeed, ancient beer vats have been excavated in Israel, attesting to its presence in Jewish spheres for millennia. These certainly did not belong to our Muslim cousins.

What is the secret to resolving this paradox and mystery? Water. Yeshayahu tells us that “All who thirst, go to water,” (*55:1*) and *Bava Kama* reminds us that “there is no water except Torah.” (*17a*) The *Ohr HaChaim* also points out that Avraham Avinu may have referenced the Torah, when he signaled that “a little water be brought.” (*Breshit 18:4*)

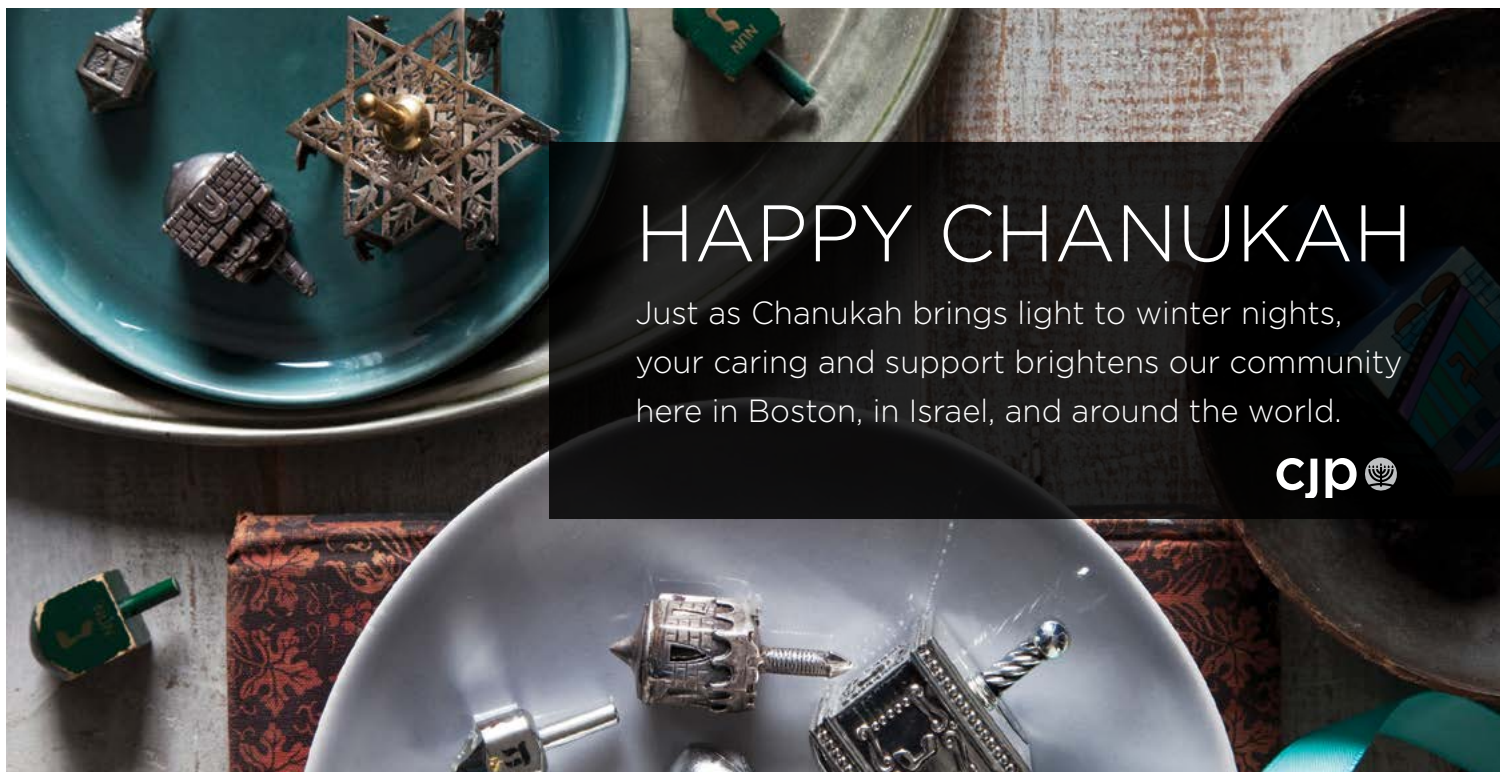
In addition to washing out the kiddush cup with water, many add a few drops of water to their wine, not only as a reminder of when wine once required dilution, but also to symbolize the drop of *rachamim* with which Hashem added to the *din* (i.e. wine) to create that world.

It is not by chance that the Torah is strongly compared to water or rain (*Dvarim 32:2*). Like the intimately inextricable life force of Torah, water binds, carries information and dives to the deepest and lowest of depths of our physicality. This is the same with physical water and our brain. The brain, amazingly, is 73 percent water, and can’t function well with less. Water covers the earth, yet only 1 percent is potable. Humans are literally sustained by a single cosmic drop of water that Hashem has provided, and continues to provide via cosmic ice sent from the deepest reaches of space. All Torah.

And while alcohol is indeed a stupefying poison, whose powers to create laughter and to destroy worlds are equal, the all encompassing water of Torah resolves the deadly paradox.

Infinite blessing,

Dr. Yosef P. Glassman, IDF Reserve Lieutenant, mohel, and Harvard trained geriatrician, is the CEO of Hadarta.org, which integrates Torah concepts to applied geriatric medicine.



HAPPY CHANUKAH

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New Palestinian school books reject Jewish History

By David Bedein

After you read this report, ask members of the Massachusetts congressional delegation whether they will vote for continued unconditional US funds to UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency). The U.S. is the largest donor nation to UNRWA, donating \$400 million to the UNRWA budget with no strings attached.

In November, The Center for Near East Policy Research concluded a new study authored by Dr. Arnon Groiss, who researched recent Palestinian Authority (PA) schoolbooks used in schools operated by the UNRWA in Judea, Samaria, Gaza and Jerusalem.

A 25 page executive summary can be found at: <http://israelbehindthenews.com/jews-jewish-state-schoolbooks-used-unrwa-de-legitimization-demonization-indoctrination-war-2/15319/>

The most recent PA-published books strongly emphasize the violent struggle for liberation of the territories inside pre-1967 Israel.

PA schoolbooks used by UNRWA make no pretense of following the principles agreed upon within the Oslo Accords - mutual recognition, resolution of the conflict by peaceful means only, and rejection of violence.

New PA/UNRWA school books instead reject the Jewish presence in the country in antiquity, and even negate the idea that there were holy places to the Jews - such as the Western Wall in Jerusalem, the Temple Mount, The Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron, and Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem - which are instead described as Muslim holy places usurped by Jews.

New PA books refer to the Jews' genocidal intentions, while presenting the Palestinians as the only victims in the war.

The New PA school books are replete with accusations of the Jews conducting massacres, destroying villages, attacking Arab countries, murdering Palestinian children, assassinating Palestinian leaders, demolishing homes, uprooting trees, robbing land and water, jailing Palestinian "freedom fighters," damaging the Palestinian economy, bearing responsibility for both in-family violence and drug addiction in Palestinian society, and generally polluting the Palestinian environment.

PA books used in UNRWA schools never advocate peace, and never discuss a future of co-existence with Israel.

Instead, they talk about war for the liberation of Palestine from Israel, with no restriction on this struggle to Judea, Samaria and Gaza. Radical Islamic ideas - Jihad, Ribat (standing on guard against the enemies of Islam) and martyrdom - are exalted for students to emulate.

UNRWA also uses texts that call for Jihad against Israel, eliminating Israel from maps, and falsifying history and historical documents.

UNRWA does not recognize Israel, a member of the UN since 1949, as a sovereign state.

Another book shows a map of the whole country accompanied by the following assignment: "I will color the map of my homeland with the colors of the Palestinian flag."

In addition, Tel Aviv, having been formerly considered a city established by Jewish settlers and, accordingly, not shown on the map, now appears on a map with an Arabic name (Mathematics, Grade 1, Part 1, 2016, p.143), possibly insinuating a newly developed Palestinian myth that depicts Tel Aviv as an occupied Arab city. The book itself does not state that, but such a myth is found on the Internet.

Finally, the preface to the 2016 textbooks of National and Social Up-bringing for Grades 3 and 4 says it all: "This book is intended to build and strengthen the set of values and nationalism among the younger generation of our sons, the students...in order to withstand the various challenges imposed by the conquest that oppresses our land, and uses various means in order to continue its hegemony and control over our fate and resources, and liquidate all the local, regional and international efforts aiming at liberation, construction and the establishment of the Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital."

UNRWA's betrays its moral obligation towards its students' well-being, as it lets into its schools textbooks that educate the children to war against the State of Israel, thus endangering their very future.

Donor states which finance UNRWA's educational activity should check the books used in the schools that they fund.

Are there not things that a UN school should not teach?

David Bedein is an investigative journalist and director of the Center for Near East Policy Research & Israel Resource News Agency. To learn more on the subject visit <http://israelbehindthenews.com>.



Map of Middle East on Palestinian school books


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Holy Food (originally One Hundred Cans by Andy Warhol)

In this elegant coffee table book, author Esty Frankel-Fersel “converts” classic art masterpieces into Jewish counterparts. Imagine Vermeer’s *zaftig* milkmaid kneading challah, or Moses bringing down the tablets amid a Georgia O’Keefe desert landscape.

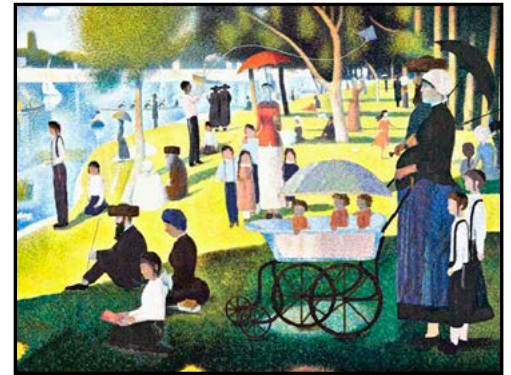
A vibrant Kandinsky color plate, gold foil stamp and glossy black background are featured on the book’s cover. Inside, each traditional masterpiece is shown opposite its “converted” version, allowing the reader to search for the sometimes obvious, sometimes more subtle differences. The works of art reproduced span from early 16th century classical Renaissance works to modern day pop art.

Every “converted” painting is an original work by the author, most created with oil and acrylic on canvas in glowing color. Explanations of the Jewish content are provided alongside each reproduction, for readers not familiar with Jewish observances. A special section of popular Yiddish expressions matched to famous works of art is sure to draw chuckles.


About the Author: Esty Frankel-Fersel was born in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. She attended Bais Yacov through high school with a year of seminary in Israel. As a young adolescent, Esty joined a local art school where, for the next 15 years, she took instructional classes, learning the skills of copying and reproducing works of art with oil on canvas. She attended Brooklyn College and Wurzweiler School of Social Work, earning an MSW. While dealing with daily responsibility and stressors, Esty always found comfort in drawing and painting. In 2006, Esty came up with the idea of adding an image of a family performing the Tashlich ceremony to Monet’s famous “Bridge over a Pond of Water Lilies.” This led to more “converted” paintings and to her ultimate accumulation of over 60 works of art with Jewish twists and Yiddish expressions through the arts - and to the publication of *Converted Masters*.



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Who Decides the Capital of Israel?

By Daniel Pomerantz



In 2012, *HonestReporting* forced *The Guardian* to apologize for unilaterally deciding that Israel's capital city is not actually Jerusalem, but Tel Aviv.

This was no mere mistake: when approached to make a correction, *The Guardian* initially refused, and effectively took the position that Israel was wrong about the location of its own capital. *The Guardian* backed down and apologized only under threat of litigation.

Thanks to *HonestReporting's* efforts, Ofcom, Britain's press regulatory body at the time, changed its rules, and *The Guardian* changed its entire "style guide," which means the newspaper now has an overall policy of referring to Israel's capital as "Jerusalem."

In November, the Czech Republic bowed to pressure from Palestinian groups, and announced that its textbooks would teach schoolchildren this very same fallacy - that the capital of Israel is Tel Aviv.

The country later backed down, only after significant diplomatic pressure from Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat.

However, this double standard remains all too common - the United Nations, a variety of countries throughout Europe and Asia, and the entire Arab world have declared that Jerusalem is not Israel's capital, even though they don't decide capitals for any other country on Earth.

So, who actually gets to decide a nation's capital?

Does the Czech Republic get to decide where the capital of Israel is located? Does *The Guardian*? And if so, why pick Tel Aviv? Why not Be'er Sheva or Eilat? Does Israel get any say at all in deciding its own capital? How does this work with other countries in the world?

First of all, what does the dictionary say?

Merriam Webster's Dictionary defines "capital" as "having the main offices of a government." Black's Law Dictionary, which serves as the standard reference for legal definitions, defines "capital" as "The most important city or town of a country or region, usually its seat of government and administrative center."

*There is absolutely no question
that Jerusalem is the legislative
center of the State of Israel.*

It is home to the highest offices of every branch of Israel's government: the Knesset (Parliament), the Supreme Court, and the residences and offices of the Prime Minister and the President. In addition, the head offices of most Israeli government ministries are located in the *Kiryat HaMemshala* (Government Campus), also in Jerusalem.

What about foreign embassies?

Some nations and newspapers argue that Jerusalem could not possibly be Israel's capital, because the majority of international embassies are located elsewhere in the country. However, the location of embassies has nothing to do with defining a nation's capital under both common and legal definitions.

For example, there are three countries (Comoros, Senegal, and Seychelles) whose U.S. embassies are located in New York and not in Washington D.C., yet this does not make New York the capital of the United States. There are dozens of countries whose German embassies are in Munich and dozens more are in Stuttgart, yet this does not mean that Berlin is no longer the capital of Germany.

Who Decides the Capital of Israel?

What about international recognition?

Palestinians and Arab countries dispute the correct location of Israel's borders. (In fact, most Arab countries deny that Israel exists at all.) Yet this, too, is entirely irrelevant to determining a nation's capital.

In an exclusive statement to HonestReporting, Professor Eugene Kontorovich, international law expert from Northwestern University, explains:

Nothing in international law gives other countries a say in where a country's capital is.

Kontorovich goes on to explain that a fundamental principle of international law is that anything not covered by international agreements is considered a domestic matter, to be decided by the laws of the individual country. In layman's terms: if Israel determines that Jerusalem is the capital, then Jerusalem is the capital. This is according to the principles of international law.

Professor Kontorovich points out an additional problem with the foreign treatment of Jerusalem. Israel's seat of government is located entirely within parts of Jerusalem that are not subject to controversy, therefore, "...the position [of many newspapers and countries] is that ALL of Jerusalem is not really part of Israel."

What about territorial disputes?

There are presently 124 countries involved in territorial disputes, and dozens of countries that are not recognized at all by at least one other country in the world. Yet this does not impact determining a capital city. For example, the city of Nicosia is partly located in a portion of Cyprus claimed by Turkey, yet it is nonetheless the capital of Cyprus. During the Cold War, Berlin was divided, and for practical reasons, most government functions were moved to Bonn. Yet Bonn was only a "de facto" capital, while Berlin remained the "de jure" capital of Germany.

These are just two examples among many. In fact, our research has not been able to uncover even one case where a nation's capital was determined by anything other than that nation's own decision.

Except for Israel.

Quite simply, Israel, and Israel's capital, ought to be held to the same standards as every other country on Earth.

Daniel Pomerantz is a Senior Editor at HonestReporting, and an American attorney living in Israel. HonestReporting monitors the news for bias, inaccuracy, or other breach of journalistic standards in coverage of the Arab-Israeli conflict.



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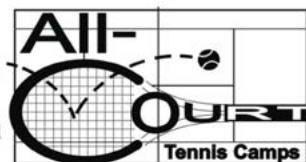
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