

Zachor v'Sappeir: Jewish Memory and the Holocaust

*A curriculum guide for Jewish high school students culminating with student
designed Holocaust Remembrance Activities and Exhibits*

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Rationale

Where did I get the idea for this guide?

In 2012, as part of my Master's capstone project, I interviewed several teachers and administrators at Jewish high schools to learn about how they teach the Holocaust. Through these interviews, I learned that most high schools teach the Holocaust within language arts and social studies classes, more often than not, using curricular approaches similar to those used in non-parochial schools. They read Elie Wiesel's *Night* in language arts class; they study about the rise of the Third Reich, concentration camps, and the Final Solution in the context of World War II history; and in U.S. history, students learn about the U.S. Military's role in fighting the Nazis and liberating the camps. In some schools, students explore the dangers of racism, prejudice, and propaganda through programs such as *Facing History and Ourselves*.

However, I was surprised that was the end of it. I thought to myself, "How could a Jewish school teach Jewish students about the Holocaust in the same way any other school does to non-Jewish students?" I expected students would be learning about the Holocaust in Jewish history or Judaic studies courses. "What about the impact of learning about the Holocaust on students' Jewish identity?" I was disappointed that not a single school mentioned dealing with the psychological impact or theological implications of the Holocaust for their students. If we teach Jewish students about the Holocaust without providing an opportunity for them to explore what it means to relate to the Holocaust *as a Jew*, we miss an opportunity to help students think deeply about what it means to be a member of the Jewish People and to live a Jewish life.

What do the experts have to say?

Jon Bloomberg, a scholar of Jewish education, writes about the need for specific goals for teaching the Holocaust to Jewish students. As I've written elsewhere (Davidowitz, 2013):

In his article, "Defining the Uniqueness of Holocaust Teaching in the Jewish School," Jon Bloomberg identifies two goals of Holocaust education specific to Jewish students: 1) "strengthen Jewish identity," and 2) "clarify what it means to be a Jew in the post-Holocaust world." According to Bloomberg, in order to address Jewish identity, educators must deal with the issue of resistance or lack of resistance in a balanced and intricate manner.

A student who is not disabused of the widespread notion that Holocaust victims went to their deaths 'ka-tzon la-tevcha' ('like sheep to the slaughter') will inevitably feel a certain sense of shame and discomfort as he considers these Jews and their behavior; hence a formidable barrier will be erected in the way of his achieving a sense of identification with them and a feeling of pride in their reactions to their terrible fate. (Bloomberg, 1985, p. 25)

*However, teaching that resistance was everywhere and that partisans and the Warsaw Ghetto uprising was usual, is a distortion of historical truth; students are not convinced by it (Bloomberg, 1985). In regards to helping students understand what it means to be a Jew in the post-Holocaust world, Bloomberg explains, teachers must address the issue of faith. Teachers should struggle alongside their students about the big questions such as “**Where was God?**” They do not have to feel like they have all the answers. From studying the Holocaust, Jewish students must draw the conclusion that,*

The importance of **maintaining a sense of Jewish unity** is rooted in an awareness of the common destiny shared by all Jews, the priority which should be placed on assuring continuing the Jewish survival and vitality, and the centrality of the continuing existence of the Jewish state. (p. 27)

*Simone Schweber, an expert on Holocaust instruction, identifies an additional consideration unique to Jewish students. She warns of the phenomenon, “Holocaust Fatigue.” In the article by the same name, Schweber points out that by the time Jewish students reach middle school and high school, many of them have learned about the Holocaust repeatedly, often receiving the same messages with each lesson. She emphasizes that if educators are going to teach older Jewish students about the Holocaust, **they must be challenged to think more deeply and through new points of view** (Schweber, 2006).*

Is this just another Holocaust curriculum to add to the stack?

No. In pursuit of Bloomberg’s goals, this guide is not a history curriculum. Rather, it aims to help students place the Holocaust within the larger context of the narrative of the Jewish People, and thereby invest in the responsibility to *remember, retell, and respond* to the Holocaust, just as we do the Exodus on Pesach, Esther on Purim, and the Maccabees on *Hanukah*. The curriculum presents students with the idea that the Jewish narrative, as told through our ancient texts, liturgy, and rituals, is a study on multi-perspectivity. That is to say, every event in the Jewish historical narrative is told to us through multiple sources, each one presenting different roles of the Jewish People, their enemies, and God; each one portraying Jews as victims or heroes, passive or active, to varying degrees. Each text asserts individually, who is responsible for the survival of the Jewish People through each historical trial and tribulation.

For Day School teachers, this curriculum provides the opportunity to take an interdisciplinary approach to Holocaust education by teaching this curriculum parallel to, or in sequence with Holocaust studies in language arts and social studies courses. Teaching this curriculum in supplementary schools provides students the opportunity to explore the Holocaust in a Jewish context which they do not have in their non-parochial schools.

Throughout the course, students will reflect on how the Jewish Holocaust narrative affects their Jewish identity. Specifically, students will explore questions of how learning about the Holocaust affects their sense of belonging to the Jewish People, their relationship to non-

Jews, and the sense of obligation and responsibility they feel to Jews and non-Jews around the world.

Based on interviews I conducted with teachers in Jewish high schools¹, students often feel *stuck* or *disempowered* after learning about the Holocaust. These teachers believe their students need an opportunity to *do something* with what they have learned. This guide fills this need and fights Holocaust fatigue by moving the Holocaust from the history and language arts classrooms to the Jewish studies classroom and the school or congregational community. Instead of presenting students with facts and figures, or even universal moral lessons, this guide asks students to *respond* to what they have learned or are learning about the Holocaust; not only are they asked to respond, but they are asked to respond *as Jews*. Therefore, in order to empower students, this curriculum culminates with students designing Holocaust Remembrance Week activities for their school community such as commemorative ceremonies and rituals, educational exhibits, art, and social action projects.

A note about the word “Narrative”

At first, some might be alarmed at the use of the word *narrative* in proximity to any discussion of the Holocaust, as this elicits reminders of Holocaust denial. However, there is no room for Holocaust denial in this curriculum. The point is that the Holocaust is composed of multiple perspectives and narratives that make up its entirety. No valid narrative or perspective questions the existence of the Holocaust. When we deconstruct these narratives, we are better equipped to fulfill the commandment to *retell and remember*. Just as Biblical, Apocryphal, and liturgical texts narrate other events in Jewish history, today testimony, film, literature, and museums tell the story of the Holocaust.

What about the content?

The content of this guide covers the Exodus, *Hanukah*, and *Esther* narratives, holiday liturgy and ritual, as well as certain aspects of Holocaust history. The guide builds several skills, the first of which is the ability to deconstruct narrative texts from Jewish history by identifying and analyzing the author’s perspective and intent. For example, in the second unit, students examine two versions of the *Hanukah* story, one which focuses on the human strength of the Maccabees, while the other focuses on divine intervention. Second, is the ability to use these texts as building blocks to construct the overarching Jewish narrative as well as the Holocaust narrative, with an appreciation for the multiple, and often competing, perspectives within it. By examining scenes from different Holocaust films, students deal with the competing representations of Jews as victims versus heroes. In another lesson, students research different Holocaust museums and their approaches to the ‘Never Again’ concept - the particularistic view of ‘Never Again’ for the Jews, versus the universalistic view of ‘Never Again’ for humanity.

On the affective level, this guide attempts to develop students' self-awareness by grappling with, reflecting upon, and finally, expressing facets of their identity. The affective aspect of the guide comes into play in many activities that include journaling exercises, group reflection sessions, and creative activities such as the design of a Holocaust remembrance activity. Ultimately, this guide requires students to explore two questions: How does the Jewish historical narrative, as I encounter it, make me feel about being Jewish? Second, given my understanding that the way we represent our past shapes our future, how will I choose to remember, retell, and respond to the Holocaust?

Just as ancient rabbis instituted Pesach, *Hanukah*, and Purim to *remember* other events in Jewish history, so, too, do we observe *Yom Hashoah*. However, unlike the other holidays, there are no rabbinically mandated prayers or rituals for *Yom Hashoah*. Granted, some rituals have become customary, such as lighting *yizkor* candles, but this guide asserts that anything is possible. Students should decide for themselves how to retell and remember the Holocaust in their own school community or congregation. They consider questions such as: To what extent should we focus on the victims, to what extent on the heroes? To what extent should we mourn loss, express anger, be grateful for our survival, or pledge "Never Again?" In any case, how do we go about it?

Assessment

This guide contains several forms of assessment including rubrics, self and peer evaluation, journal prompts, and finally, the authentic assessment that culminates as students present their proposed activities for Holocaust Remembrance Week. In unit one, students are presented with the responsibility for planning the school's *Yom Hashoah* (Holocaust Remembrance Day) program in the spring.

- As students learn about traditional forms of remembering Jewish historical events, they consider how these traditions can be applied to Holocaust remembrance
- As students learn about the multiple voices and multiple perspectives that make up the Holocaust narrative, they consider how they would like to retell and remember the Holocaust for themselves and in their own community
- Students design and present their own creative innovations for remembering the Holocaust
- Teachers have the option of letting students plan activities for Holocaust Remembrance Week that would include their creative innovations.

Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions

Big Questions

- How might we fulfill the commandment to remember?
- What purpose might be served by the ritualized retelling of events in Jewish history in which we engage on Jewish holidays?
- How do the ways we remember and retell Jewish history affect our Jewish identity?
- How might the rabbinic instructions for observing certain Jewish holidays inform the ways we remember the Holocaust?
- Why and to what extent are Jews responsible for responding to injustice in the world?

Big Ideas

- The process of remembering historical events can take many forms.
-
- The way we retell events in Jewish history shapes our identity.
-
- Ritual is capable of spiritually healing us from the past.
-
- Social action is an obligatory AND empowering response to surviving national persecution.

Letter to the Teacher

Dear Teacher,

Thank you for your interest in this curriculum guide. It is my hope that this guide will empower you to facilitate a meaningful experience for your students as they explore the relationship between the Jewish narrative, the Holocaust, and their identity. The first lesson of this guide aims to create a safe space in the classroom where respect, empathy, and freedom of expression are inherent to the class culture. The second lesson introduces the skill of active listening, an essential tool for interacting within this safe space. I suggest you make time throughout the course to check in with students about whether they feel the learning community is indeed a safe space. If not, the class must find a way to create or restore the safe space. The skill of active listening cannot be learned in one lesson; I suggest you integrate opportunities for students to intentionally practice active listening throughout the course.

Please note that two of the film clips presented in Lesson 3.1 are somewhat violent. Both films from which the area taken, *Schindler's List* and *Defiance*, are rated R. It is important that you gain parental permission before showing these film clips in class. It is also important to warn students that they might find these scenes upsetting. I recommend you give students the option to either put their heads down or leave the room if they do not want to watch the scenes.

While this guide concludes with students' proposals for Holocaust Remembrance Week, ideally you will create the opportunity for the class to actually prepare and carry out these activities for the whole school or congregation to experience.

I used several fascinating scholarly articles and book chapters as the foundation for the content of this curriculum, and I have included them in the resources sections of the guide. I hope you will take the time to read these articles, as I believe they will provide you an extra depth of understanding on which to base your teaching. Finally, I hope that not only your students, but you, too, will find meaning and understanding as you explore the relationship between the Jewish narrative, the Holocaust, and your identity.

B'Kavod,

Natalie Horwitz

Unit One: Why do we remember?

Big Ideas

- The process of remembering historical events can take many forms.
- The way we retell events in Jewish history shapes our identity.
- Ritual is capable of spiritually healing us from the past.
- Social action is an obligatory AND empowering response to surviving national persecution.

Essential Questions

- How might we fulfill the commandment to remember?
- What purpose might be served by the ritualized retelling of events in Jewish history in which we engage on Jewish holidays?

Lesson 1.1: Creating Safe Space and Active Listening (Scripted)

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Discuss how it feels to talk about the Holocaust
- Share three words they associate with the Holocaust
- Create a plan for making the classroom a safe space and commit to following this plan
- Practice active listening
- Explain one reason they need a safe space to talk about the Holocaust

Materials

1 Chair

Copies of the cartoon strip template (Resource 1.1a)

Copies of “The 5 steps of active listening” (Resource 1.1b)

Adhesive

Markers

A large poster or sheet of butcher paper

Learning activities

50 minutes total

Set induction: How comfortable are you talking about the Holocaust?

10 minutes

Identify a chair, desk, or other object in the room as a reference point. Explain that this object represents your comfort level with talking about the Holocaust. Ask students to place themselves at a point in the room relative to the object to represent their comfort level talking about the Holocaust. Ask students to remain silent for this activity.

Ask students to move around the room and take their time finding their spot. Ask everyone to give each other personal space. After a minute, once students have found their spots, ask for a few volunteers to explain why they chose their spot. Ask students at varying distances from the chair to share, keeping in mind who feels more or less comfortable. Before telling students to sit down, tell them to pause for a moment and observe where their classmates are standing relative

to the chair, meaning how comfortable each person is about talking about the Holocaust. Ask for 3-4 volunteers to explain why they chose to stand where they did.

Activity One: Creating a safe space

20 minutes

Say to students, "As we can see, talking about the Holocaust is difficult for people. For some it is more difficult than others, and it is easy for very few. (Most likely this is what will be reflected in the first activity. If for some reason this is not the case, you can still talk about the importance of safe space.) Ask students, "What is a safe space?" (Possible responses include: "Where you can be yourself," "Where you are not afraid to share your mind," "Where you treat each other kindly.") Take 3-5 descriptions and write them on the board. Then ask, "How do people treat each other in a safe space?" Write the guidelines that people share on the board. Possible guidelines include: In a safe space, people...

- Accept differences
- Show respect
- Show empathy
- Listen carefully
- Contribute and participate
- Explore ideas
- Seek to understand the other's point of view
- Are open-minded
- Share honestly
- Treat people sensitively

If responses seem redundant try to either clarify the nuanced differences between guidelines or eliminate repetitions. You can do this by asking, for example, "Do any of these guidelines seem to be saying the same thing?" Or, "What is the difference between _____ and _____?"

For the next part of the activity, students will work in pairs. Assign each guideline listed on the board to a different pair in the class, and pass out the cartoon strip template to each pair.

Tell students they have five minutes to create a cartoon strip of an imaginary class discussion illustrating the guidelines they have been assigned. In the title section of each box they should write a description. The purpose of this activity is to get students thinking about the significance of our words as well as nonverbal communication. After the five minutes are up, ask students to post their cartoon strip on the class poster and write their guideline in large letters next to the cartoon strip. Have each pair present their cartoon, and then give students a chance to walk up to the poster to view each other's work and sign their name. By signing their names on the poster, students agree to treat each other according to these values throughout the course. Keep the poster to hang for future class sessions.

Activity Two: Active Listening

15 minutes

Tell students that in the following activity they will learn about active listening. Pass out “The 5 Steps to Active Listening.” Ask students to read through the document with a partner.

Reconvene the class and ask for a volunteer to name the first step of active listening. Write the step on the board and ask the student to briefly explain what that step means. Repeat for each step so that each step is listed on the board with a key phrase that explains it’s meaning. The five steps are: 1) Prepare mentally, 2) Pay attention, 3) Allow the speaker to communicate without any interruptions, 4) Provide feedback, 5) Repeat the feedback process until you feel the message was amply communicated.

Tell students they will now practice active listening. Write the following two questions on the board: “What is one aspect of learning about the Holocaust for which you think you want a safe space? Why” Ask students to sit with a partner. For the first round, one student will take 2 minutes to share while their partner listens actively. This is followed by one minute of the feedback process in steps 4-5. After three minutes, the partners should switch and complete the activity for another 3 minutes.

Reconvene the class, and ask for 2-3 volunteers to share whether this experience felt the same or different from when they are usually talking with their peers in a social setting. Ask why or why not, and how so? Students answers might include, “It was different because no one was interrupting me.” Or, I felt self-conscious because all the attention was on me.” Or, “I found it difficult to focus on one person talking for so long.” Make sure to have students share about the experience of talking AND listening. Conclude by summarizing students’ answers. Tell the class it will be important to practice listening throughout the course.

Closure: Share

5 minutes

Ask students to answer the following question on an index card to submit to the teacher: “What is one aspect of learning about the Holocaust that each of you feels s/he will need a safe space?” Students should take 1-2 minutes to complete their answers. Technology option: Students may email their response to the teacher.

Lesson 1.2: Remembering the Holocaust (Scripted)

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Compare several different rationales for remembering the Holocaust
- Discuss personal beliefs about why it is important to remember the Holocaust
- Propose activities we can do individually and communally to remember the Holocaust

Materials

- 1 copy for teacher reference of Texts on Remembering the Holocaust (Resource 1.2a)
- 6 pieces of butcher paper with quotations written on them
- Different colored highlighters for students
- Copies of Remembering the Holocaust Discussion Questions

Learning activities

50 minutes total

Set-induction

10 minutes

Ask students to do a one minute free write in their journal responding to the question, “Is it important to remember the Holocaust? “Why or why not? ” Call on three volunteers to share what they wrote.

Introduction to course and authentic assessment

Tell students, “ Today we begin talking about why it is important to remember the Holocaust. We will begin this discussion today. We will also ask ourselves, ‘What can we do to remember the Holocaust?’ In this class you will explore what Judaism teaches about Jewish memory and the commandment *zachor*, to remember. We explore the question, what does it mean to remember in a Jewish way, by looking at Jewish commandments and traditions for remembering other critical events in Jewish history. Our class will be responsible for planning the programs for Holocaust Remembrance Week at our school. You will have the opportunity to brainstorm several ideas for the program such as museum exhibits and social justice campaigns. You will create new prayers, poems, and symbolic rituals. At the end of the course, each of you will join a planning committee of your choice. Each committee will be responsible for planning a different aspect of the week’s events and programs. I will encourage you to be creative. You don’t just have to replicate things that you have already seen.”

Activity 1

25 minutes

Post each of the texts from the resource sheet on butcher paper around the room. Ask students to walk around the room and read each text. They should bring a highlighter with them. Ask students to highlight key phrases in a text that stand out to them, put a star on the texts that resonate deeply with them, put a '?' next to texts that challenge them in some way, and put an 'X' next to texts that bother them. Once students have had a chance to rotate through each text, ask students to gather next to one of the texts they want to discuss further.

If necessary, rearrange the students so that there are close to even numbers of students in each group. There should be one group discussing each text. Pass out discussion questions. In each group, one student should be note-taker, one should be time-keeper, and one or more students should agree to represent the group in the forthcoming class discussion.

Activity 2

15 minutes

Once students have completed the text study, gather the class back together.

Facilitate a class discussion in which students share their answers to the discussion questions. At the top of the board write the title "The Holocaust". Draw a vertical line underneath the title. Label one column "Why Remember?" Label the other column "How to Remember". See below for the discussion questions, suggested answers to the questions, and to which texts they relate. As students answer the questions, write their answers in the chart. Encourage students to refer to the specific text(s) from which they drew their answers. Indicate the text references in the chart on the board. Encourage students to add their own ideas, even if they are just rearticulating an idea that has already been said. Guide students to any answers listed below that they missed or any answers you believe they missed. If they are still missing important answers, add answers to the chart.

1. According to each of these texts, why should we remember the Holocaust? Possible answers:

- - because to remember (*Zachor*) is a Biblical commandment (Text A)
- - to honor the memory of people who perished and honor the dignity of every human life (Text A, B)
- - to prevent an event like this from happening in the future (Text B)
- - to prevent indifference and intolerance (Text B, F)

2. Do you have any reasons to add?

Ask students to raise their hand for the reason they think is most convincing. Tally up the count on the board. Call on 2-3 students to give their reasons for why they voted the way they did.

3. According to these texts, what does it mean to remember the Holocaust?

Possible answers:

- Create rituals and prayers that mourn the loss of those who perished (Text F)
- Tell stories from the lives of the victims (Text F)
- Use the memory of the Holocaust as lessons to guide ethical decisions and way of life (Text D)

4. What are some specific ways to remember the Holocaust based on the texts they have studied?

**Note* Text D may be difficult for students to interpret. One interpretation of Elie Weisel's words are that we must use the Holocaust for teaching lessons about how to live ethical, responsible lives.*

Closure

Ask students to take two minutes to read through the texts on their own one more time. Ask them to find a single sentence that resonates with them in some way and highlight that sentence. In the last two minutes of class whip around the room and have each student read the one sentence they highlighted. If students have chosen the same sentence they should still read it aloud. Hearing the repetition of certain ideas can be impactful.

Journal Prompt

Reread your first journal entry, and think again about your experience. In your journal, respond to the following question: If you asked the creator of that piece, "Why do you think it is important to remember the Holocaust," what do you think they would say? Explain your answer.

Lesson 1.3: Profiles from the Holocaust

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- List their past encounters learning about the Holocaust
- Describe their impression of the main character(s) or person/people represented in those encounters
- Define the terms perpetrator, righteous among the nations, victim, resistor, survivor
- Present basic biographical information about a Holocaust figure and explain which of the above categories they believe that figure belongs to and why
- Defend their argument for which of the above types of people are most important for Jews to learn about and memorialize

Materials

- Copies of Holocaust Intake Form (Resource 1.3a)
- Copies of biographies packet (Resource 1.3b)
- Copies of Definitions of terms handout (Resource 1.3)
- Highlighters

Resources

- Holocaust Intake Form
- Bios of the figures
- Definitions of terms

Activities

50 minutes

Set-induction

5 minutes

Have students fill out the Holocaust Intake Form (Resource 1.3a/

Activity One: Defining Types of People involved in the Holocaust

10 minutes

Write the following terms on the board and ask for volunteers to define each one. Instruct students to define the words in a general context, not necessarily related to the Holocaust. Write definitions next to each word.

Pass out resource ___ with the definitions of these terms in the context of the Holocaust. Give students 3 minutes to read this resource independently. Before moving on to the next part of the activity, ask the class if they have any clarifying questions about the definitions.

For this part of the activity, students should work in pairs. Pass out resource _____, a packet with biographical information about different figures from the Holocaust. Instruct each pair to read a different biography in the packet and then answer the questions on page _____. Depending on class size, you may have more than one pair read the same biography.

Activity Two – Jigsaw

15 minutes

Assign students to sit in groups of five in which each student has studied a different biography. Instruct students to give a brief bio on the person they studied and say which category that person falls in to and why. They may say the person fits in to more than one category. Encourage students to share their opinions if they disagree with each other.

Activity Three – Discussion

15 minutes

Lead a class discussion revolving around the following questions:

- Which of these types of people is it most important to learn about? Why?
- As Jews, compared to non-Jews, are we responsible for learning about and memorializing certain groups more than others? Why or why not?

Closing

5 minutes

Draw a table on the board with five columns, each column labeled one of the different categories. Ask students to review the Holocaust encounter inventory they filled out at the beginning of class. Students should use the following key to label the experiences they have had about the Holocaust listed on their inventory. (P) Perpetrator, (V) Victim, (R) Righteous Among the Nations, (Re) Resistor, (S) Survivor. They may assign more than one label to each experience. Ask students to tally up how many experiences they have had about each category and add their number to the tally on the board. Write the total for each category on the board and summarize the results.

Lesson 1.4 Zachor v'Sappeir

Objectives

Locate the commandments to remember and retell the Exodus in the TaNaKh

- Summarize the rabbinical distinction between *zecher l'yetziat mitzrayim* & *sappeir yetziat mitzrayim*
- List and explain how one fulfills the rabbinic obligation to remember the Exodus
- Summarize a rabbinical extension of the commandment to remember the stranger
- Consider how the rabbinic laws of Passover create a model for Jewish remembrance

Background reading for teacher

- *Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Hametz Umatzah* – 7:1, with notes
- Bokser, *The Origins of the Seder* – chapter on “The Perspective of Early Rabbinic Judaism”, pages 67-75. (provided in resource __1.4b__)
- Shapiro, Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik on *Pesach, Sefirat ha-Omer* and *Shavu'ot*, chapter on “The relationship of two *mitzvot* to each other: The annual *mitzvah* of ‘*sippur yetziat mitzraim*’ and the daily *mitzvah* of ‘*zechirat yetziat mitzraim*’”, pages 15-17

Materials

- *Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Kriyat Sh'ma* 1: 1-3 and
- *Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Hametz Umatzah* 7:1
- Copies of *TaNaKh*
- *Mishna Pesachim* chapter 10

Activities

50 minutes

Activity 1

25 minutes

Tell students to read Exodus cha*ter 13-1-2/. 13:3 and 13:8 from a TaNaKh.

13:3 “Remember this day on which you left Egypt.”

13:8 “And you shall tell your sons.”

Discuss the following questions with the class: What commandments are given in verses 13-3 and 13-8? (To remember and to tell). Ask students what they think the difference is between these two commandments? What does it mean “to remember” something? Is there a difference between remembering something that has happened and retelling it? What is it?

How else can someone remember other than to retell the story? Do you think it is redundant to have both commandments? Why or why not?

Activity 2

25 minutes

Tell students that the rabbis also pondered why both of these commandments are necessary. Ask students to study the texts from Soloveitchik source in groups of three. You will want to prepare a text study using a combination of Hebrew and English that you think is appropriate for your class.

Explanation: According to Rambam, the commandment *lizkor*/to remember in 13:3 refers to the daily mention of the Exodus in the *Sh'ma*. In contrast, the commandment *vehigadeta*/you shall tell in 13:8, refers to the annual retelling of the Exodus during the Passover *seder*. The latter commandment requires more activity.

Ask students to deduce what the important features of the *seder* are according to the rabbis.

Explanation: The requirements for the *seder* reflect four aspects of early rabbinic Judaism: 1. Intellectual discussion 2. Not only retelling the events but also expounding a classic text that reviews the mythic history in which God redeems and provides for Israel 3. Explicit mention of redemption 4. Recitation of seven blessings. So we see, “retelling” is a very involved process, required of us every year on Passover.

Lesson 1.5: Ki Hayu Avadim

Objectives

Analyze how a Biblical text calls for social action responses to the Holocaust (List three calls for action that stem from the Exodus narrative)

Analyze how a Rabbinic text calls for social action responses to the Holocaust

Propose a modern application of a biblical, rabbinic, or modern “call to action”

Deduce or interpret a central theme of a biblical, rabbinic,

Determine the central message of a text (Biblical, rabbinic, or modern) of a text about protecting life

Translating a classical Jewish text about the laws of protecting life into contemporary “calls for action”

Propose a contemporary application of the laws about protecting life found *Hilkhot Rotzeah u'Shmirat Nefesh* (Laws of Murderers and the Protection of Life)

Background reading for teacher

Aaron Dorfman’s article: “Responding to Genocide: Jewish perspectives on the responsibility to protect.” found on *My Jewish Learning’s* website.

Materials

- Source sheet for biblical, rabbinic, and modern texts
- Example of *Daf* assignment

Activities

50 minutes

Activity 1

35 minutes

As a class, study chapter one of *Hilchot Rotzeah u'Shmirat Nefesh* (Laws of Murderers and the Protection of Life). Ask students to study the chapter in a group of three. Students should define the following terms:

- *Rotzeach*
- *Shmirat Nefesh*
- *Rodef*
- *Ben adam m'yisrael*
- *Nefesh ben adam*
- Next, students should study the texts on the source sheet from *Hilchot Rotzeach*

Journal Prompt

“Do you think *Torah* study, as proposed by the rabbis for the *Pesach seder*, is a meaningful aspect of remembrance? Would you include a text study in your plans for the Holocaust Remembrance program? What texts might be appropriate to study in remembrance of the Holocaust?”

List of Unit One Resources

Lesson 1 Resources

Resource 1.1a Cartoon Strip Template

Resource 1.1b “The Five Steps to Active Listening”

Lesson 2 Resources

Resource 1.2a Thoughts on Remembering the Holocaust

Resource 1.2b Discussion on Remembering the Holocaust

Lesson 3 Resources

Resource 1.3a Holocaust Questionnaire

Resource 1.3b Biographies Packet

Resource 1.3c Definitions of Terms

Lesson 4 Resources

Resource 1.4a “The Perspective of Early Rabbinic Judaism” by Bokser

Resource 1.4b “The Relationship of Two Mitzvot...” by Shapiro*

Resource 1.4c *Mishna Pesachim* Chapter 10

Resource 1.4d *Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Hametz Umatzah* 7:1 with notes

AND

Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Kriyah Sh'ma 1:1-3 with notes

Unit Two: What is the Jewish way to remember?

Essential Questions

How might we fulfill the commandment to remember?

What purpose might be served by the ritualized retellings in which we engage on Jewish holidays?

How might the rabbinic instructions for observing certain Jewish holidays inform the ways we remember the Holocaust?

Why and to what extent are Jews responsible for responding to injustice in the world?

What is the proper way for Jews to respond to the Holocaust?

Lesson 2.1 In Search of a Jewish narrative (scripted)

Objectives

- Deduce and discuss the themes of the traditional Jewish narrative as presented in “They tried to kill us, we survived, let’s eat.”
- Reflect on how the common Jewish narrative reflected in the song, “They tried to kill us, we survived, let’s eat” affects our Jewish identity
- Compose and present a song communicating an alternative version of the Jewish narrative

Materials

- *Hanukah* Card resource
- Song lyrics resource
- Cultural references article

Activities

Total time: 2 hours

Set-Induction

10 minutes

Show the *Hanukah* cartoon resource. Write the following in large letters on the board: “Is this funny?” Ask students to turn to the person next to them and discuss the question for one minute. Then ask the whole class if they think this cartoon is funny. Students should give a thumbs up or down. Debrief the exercise by asking students, “In what way is it funny or why isn’t it funny?” Ask for a few volunteers to explain their answers.

Activity 1

20 minutes

Note: Please review the lyrics to this song carefully before teaching the lesson. There are a couple lines in the song that may be considered *offensive*. Based on what you know about your students and your school culture you may decide to censor the song. If you want to completely omit certain lyrics do not use the video. Rather, just use the song lyric sheets and omit whichever lyrics you wish.

Step 1: Pass out lyrics to the song “They tried to kill us, (we survived, let’s eat).” Ask students to read the lyrics to themselves. Then, play the music video of the song found on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=34atu3WGUGC>. In this video, the song is performed by Jewmongous. The video can also be located by going to the Jewmongous website.

Step 2: After students watch and listen to the video, ask students to read through the lyrics and highlight or underline any terms they do not know. Pass out resources for explanations of terms. Most unfamiliar terms in the song should be listed on this resource.

Activity 2

30 minutes

Split students up into groups of 3 or 4. Groups should discuss the following questions:

1. How does hearing the message in this song make you feel about being Jewish?
2. Do you think the history, traditions, and cultural representations in this song are accurate?
3. Does it have a positive or negative affect, and why?

Gather the class back together and ask representatives from each group to share their answers to the questions.

Extension - Writing the Jewish Narrative in a Song

This extension can be used as an assessment after lesson 2.2 or at the end of Unit 2.

Tell students they will now have the opportunity to write their own song to describe the Jewish narrative. Encourage them to think about how they would present the Jewish narrative and Jewish culture in a way that makes sense to them. What would they want other people (both Jews and non-Jews) who hear their song to learn or think about Jews? What Jewish events in history would they include? What holidays or traditions would they include? Would they include any famous people or cultural references?

Students may work independently or in groups up to four. Students should write the title and chorus to their song. They should choose a melody with some significance, i.e. What kind of significance do you mean? Teachers need some more guiding direction here to be able to carry out the lesson.

Extension - Presenting the Songs

Have students present their songs to the class. After each performance, the presenters should explain the reason for their title and answer the question, “What did you discover through writing this song?” Encourage students in the class to ask questions to the presenters about their

lyrics. Call on 1-2 students to ask questions to the presenters and allow presenters time to respond.

Optional: Have students make music videos of their songs. If students make videos, they should also record themselves giving a brief explanation of the title and answering the question “What did you discover through writing this song.”

Lesson 2.2a: Narratives on Pesach, Purim, & Hanukah (scripted)

Objectives

Reflect on and discuss how Jewish narrative informs and affects our sense of responsibility and sense of positivity about being Jewish

Provide positive feedback to classmates who have given presentations

Present clear oral arguments for who is responsible for the redemption and survival of the Jewish People.

Materials

- Lesson 2 and 3 resources
- Copies of the TaNaKh
- Copies of a traditional Haggadah
- Microphones or pretend microphones (at least 2 – optional for activity 3)
- Small slips of paper (four/student)
- Laptop and projector (option for activity 3)
- Speakers (optional for activity 3)

Background reading for teacher

Schneiderman, Amy. “Exodus, *Esther*, and the Maccabees in Conversation: “They Tried to Kill Us; We Survived; Let’s Eat.” CCAR, Spring 2013.

It is *highly recommended* that the teacher read this article before teaching the lesson. The article provides a thorough explanation of the ideas contained in this lesson. An in-depth discussion of the texts found in resource ## are included in the article.

Background knowledge for teacher

God plays a different role in the narratives of Pesach, Purim, and *Hanukah*. As well, when the rabbis retell these narratives they present different roles of God and the Jewish People than are presented in the original text. For example, the *Passover Haggadah* focuses on God's role in the Exodus and does not mention Moses at all; while the story from Exodus focuses on partnership between Moses and God. For example, in the original Exodus story God speaks to Moses and acts through the plagues. *Megilat Esther* does not mention God's name at all, but the *Talmud's* comments on *Megilat Esther* speak of God's role in saving the Jews. In the case of *Hanukah*, we have different historical accounts each presenting a different role of God.

Maccabees I does not mention God; it focuses on the military action of Judah and the Maccabees. Maccabees II shows Judah and the Maccabees praying to God, evoking God's name in battle, and thanking God for military victory. God does not actually speak or act. In BT Shabbat, the rabbis focus on God's role in the miracle of the eight days of oil. They deemphasize God's role in the military victory.

The Schneiderman article discusses three models for the question of who is responsible for Jewish redemption and survival: 1) God is responsible, 2) Jews are responsible, 3) God and the Jewish People in partnership are responsible. What are the implications of these different narratives for teaching us about responsibility? What do these texts teach us about who is responsible for the redemption and survival of the Jews in these historical moments? How do these lessons affect our feelings about what it means to be Jewish today? Should we be active or passive? What is our relationship with God? What responsibilities do we have today for taking action for ourselves and for others?

Activities

Total Time: 50 minutes

Note: Break up the activities in a way conducive to the class schedule. Half of the lesson time involves group work that can be completed either inside or outside of class.

Set-Induction- Who is the Hero?

10 minutes - in class

Teacher tells the following story and/or provides a visual version. It is a twist on a common joke. “A guy is sinking in his small boat and the water is up to his knees. God is watching from above. The guy sees a ship off in the distance, but he has no flare to light. He quickly thinks on his feet and constructs a makeshift flare to send up. The captain of a ship in the distance sees his signal. The captain calls in on his radio to the coast guard to tell them there is a man stranded at sea. The stranded man is hoping someone saw his flare, and he prays, “God, please save me.” All of a sudden the man sees a rescue helicopter. The helicopter drops a rope ladder down and the man climbs aboard. He is saved.”

Now ask students, “Who saved the man? In other words, who is the hero of the story?” Give students a moment to write down their answers. Now, students should discuss their answers with a partner. They should compare their answers and defend their answers with a specific example. Bring the class back together. On the board, tally up how many students said the man saved himself? How many think it was the ship captain, the coast guard, God, or a combination.

Activity 1: Introduction and Guidelines

10 minutes

Tell students, that like the story from the set-induction, every narrative has a hero; who the hero is, is often up for interpretation. Even when a narrative is based on historical events, the author chooses to tell the story in a way that implies a hero. Jewish tradition provides us with many narratives about the Jewish People and their survival through trying events. Based on original texts, Rabbinic retelling of the narratives, and modern interpretations, we can infer who the hero of each narrative is, or in other words, “Who is responsible for the survival of the Jewish People?” How we interpret these narratives can influence our ideas about the responsibility we have to actively pursue our own continuity as well as how responsible we are to pursue other causes in the world.

Explain the following to the class: This activity will culminate in a talk-show style interview. The talk show will discuss the question: “Who is responsible for Jewish

redemption and survival?” The talk show, which will take place in the next class session, will include five presenters: 1) the talk show host, 2) a guest who advocates God is responsible, 3) a guest who advocates the Jewish People are responsible, 4) a guest who advocates that survival is a partnership between God and the Jewish People, and 5) a “psychology expert” who will discuss the effects of the narratives on our Jewish identity today.

Divide the class into four research teams. One team will support the host and psychology expert; the other three teams will support each of the other guests. Pass out the assignment and text source sheets to each team. These resources provide the guidelines for the assignment and copies of some of the source texts they will use.

The teams will be using the Biblical and Apocryphal narratives of *Passover*, *Purim*, and *Hanukah* (*Exodus*, *Megilat Esther*, and *Maccabees I and II*) to support their position. They will also use rabbinic sources including the *Pesach Haggadah*; *Masekhet Megillah* from BT on *Purim* and *Hilchot Purim* from *Mishna Berurah*; *Masekhet Shabbat* from BT on *Hanukah* and *Hilchot Hanukah* from *Mishna Berurah*.

Encourage the teams to postpone choosing a representative to appear on the show until they have finished their research and preparation. You may suggest the following process:

Each group chooses a facilitator. The facilitator assigns 1-2 students (depending on class size) to each text. For each text, students highlight passages that support their team’s position. Once each student/pair has reviewed the text, the facilitator convenes the team. At this point, a member of the team is chosen to be the guest on the talk show. That student, or another, will be the team recorder. At this point, the facilitator guides the team as they prepare their argument by discussing the guiding questions. The guest presenter composes talking points that she or he will use during the talk show.

Activity 2: Preparing for the Talk Show, Part 1

30 minutes

For the Guests’ Research Teams:

Split the class up into their groups. Give the following instructions to the research teams:

Use the following guiding questions to help prepare your argument. Remember that you not only have to find texts in support of your argument; you should also understand the texts that the other guests on the show might use to advance their argument. This is not a formal debate, but as on any talk show, you are there to present a convincing argument with (textual) evidence to support you.

Step 1. (30 minutes)

Assign students to each narrative. Choose a facilitator, a recorder, and a speaker to be the guest on the talk show. (These three positions should also be assigned to a narrative.) Each group is responsible for studying each text of the narrative to ascertain which, if any, texts of that narrative support your position.

For each text, answer the following questions:

- What is the conflict or challenge in the text? What danger do the Jewish People face?
- Who are the named characters in the text (including God)?
- What actions does each of these characters take, if any?
- What is the outcome of the actions taken?
- Is there an obvious hero in this story? If so, who? (Highlight text that supports your opinion.) OR:
- Is there any ambiguity about who is the hero? If so, what are the possible options? (Highlight text that supports your opinion.)
- Compare each text from your narrative. Do the texts tell the story in the same way? Did you come up with different answers to any of the above questions for each text?

For the host's research team:

Tell these students . . . In a sense, you have the most challenging job. Do the best you can to become familiar with all the texts. Your main job is to figure out an engaging angle to this discussion. Think about why this topic is relevant to people today? Why ask this question in the first place?

Choose three texts to study - one from each narrative. For those texts, answer the questions below. Discuss which of these texts might be used for which arguments.

- What is the conflict or challenge in the text? What danger do the Jewish People face?
- Who are the named characters in the text (including God)?
- What actions does each of these characters take, if any?
- What is the outcome of the actions taken?
- Is there an obvious hero in this story? If so, who? OR:
- Is there any ambiguity about who is the hero? If so, what are the possible options?
- Which argument do you think each text supports?

Lesson 2.2b Holiday Narratives, Part II

Activity 1: Preparing for the Talk Show, Part 2

50 minutes

For the Guest's Research Team

Give the following instructions to students:

The facilitator should reconvene the group. Each person/pair should summarize their findings. Draw attention to the text you highlighted in support of your group's argument. As a group, answer the following questions. The recorder should take notes:

Does any single narrative (all texts of that narrative) fully support your argument? If so, which one?

If not, which texts from each narrative support your argument?

Choose 2-3 texts that your presenter will highlight during the talk show.

Do you think another guest might use the same text to support their own argument? If so, what will be your response?

The recorder should type up (or cut and paste) the texts that the presenter will use during the talk show. Email the texts to the host's research team. The presenter should practice what they are going to say on the talk show. Members of the group should give feedback and suggest ways to improve the presentation. Someone from that team will prepare slides that will be projected during the show.

For the host's research team:

Working together, students do the following

Create a title for the show segment. The title should be in the form of a question that gets to the heart of the issue. The title should be catchy and edgy. It should hook the audience.

Prepare a one minute introduction to the show. Explain the question at hand. Explain why you think these three narratives are important when exploring the question.

Prepare three questions that you will ask each guest. The first question should be on the *peshat* level. The second on the *drash* level. The third on a *midrash* level, asking the guest to explain their own interpretation. Make the intro catchy.

Prepare one to two questions that the host will pose to the audience. These questions should ask the audience to relate the issue to their own lives. They should get at the issue of how identifying the hero might affect their identity and sense of responsibility.

Prepare a slide show to be used for the show. The slide show should be very simple. Include: a title slide, slides with the texts from each group, and a slide with the questions that you will be asking the audience.

Activity 2: The Talk Show *Memorable Moment*

50 minutes

In order to make this a memorable experience for students, do your best to take the extra time to be creative and make special arrangements. Here are some suggestions for incorporating technology and multi-media:

Prepare (or have students prepare) a prezzi or power point presentation to use as a backdrop during the show

Project a live twitter feed that will allow students to make ongoing comments

Find some fun background music to play during the show.

If possible, hold this presentation in an auditorium or room large enough to arrange the class in a studio like setting. Arrange four chairs at the front of the room or on the stage. Give each of the guests and the host a microphone or let them share. The guests and host should be encouraged to create a persona and come in costume. They might choose to be a scholar, a rabbi, a grad student, a teacher, a writer, etc. Use a timer to keep the show on pace. The following is a suggested organization to hold the show in 30 minutes:

Introduction by host (2 minutes)

Question #1 (6 minutes: 2 minutes for each guest)

Question #2 (6 minutes: 2 minutes for each guest)

Question #3 (6 minutes: 2 minutes for each guest)

Audience Discussion (10 minutes)

Host closes the show (1 minute)

Following the close of the show, share a few observations about the presenters and the audience participation. Then, ask students to come up with a thoughtful, positive piece of feedback for each of the presenters. Students should write down their feedback on a different slip of paper for each student. Collect the strips of paper into an envelope for each student. You may choose to review the feedback before distributing it to the presenters.

Journal Prompt

In this lesson we learned that history is told through multiple narratives. Embedded in these stories are lessons about God's role and the human role in the redemption and survival of the Jewish People. We talked about the way these interpretations affect our identity and sense of responsibility for ourselves and others in the world today.

What stories about the Holocaust have you heard? Where did you hear them? Survivors, film, or literature? Why might these stories have differed? Think of one or two stories you have heard about the Holocaust. Who was the hero of the story? What message might the story have about our relationship with God? What message might the story have about the responsibility humans and Jews have for taking action? How do you feel about these messages? Is this a message or lesson you would want to teach others?

Lesson 2.3 Hallel and Purim Liturgy

Goals

- Demonstrate that the function of rabbinic and post rabbinic liturgy was to create a spiritual connection to God
- Discover that the function of rabbinic and post-rabbinic liturgy was to insert God at the center of the holiday's narratives using the contemporary concept of God
- Identify some compositional forms of liturgy that are inserted on festivals
- Apply the models of traditional liturgy to creating liturgy for commemorating the Holocaust

Objectives

- Explain the rabbinic laws pertaining to *Hallel*
- Identify the main themes in the psalms of *Hallel* by counting repetition of words
- Compare the Purim narrative in *krovetz l'purim* to the narrative in *Megilat Esther*
- Generate ideas for original Holocaust liturgy

Materials

- Copies of *Hallel* form *Art Scroll siddur*
- Copies of *Krovetz L'Chaim* in resources
- Blank paper
- Colored Pens

Activities

50 minutes with 30 minutes optional extra activity

Activity 1

30 minutes

Tell students that in this activity they will be studying *Hallel*. Tell students that now they are going to examine psalms that make up the *Hallel* service. Assign equal numbers of students to each of the 5 psalms. Tell students they are going to make a homemade word cloud. Students will work independently on this assignment. Indicate whether you want students using the original Hebrew text or the English translation. The instructions for this assignment are:

1. Read through the psalm you have chosen (or been assigned)

2. Choose 3-5 words that you believe most aptly identify the theme of the psalm.
3. Using different highlighter or pen colors, mark each of those words as they appear in the text.
4. Count up the number of times each word appears in the text.
5. Design a word cloud by hand (the type that you might generate from a word cloud program on the computer.) The words that appear most frequently should be bold and larger. The words that appear less frequently should appear milder. Arrange the words in a visually stimulating way. You may choose to design a shape or symbol out of the words.
6. Hang your work on the wall.

Once all students have attached their work to the wall, ask students to walk around and view the art work.

Technology Option: Instead of students making a word cloud by hand, you may give them the option to make a word cloud using a generated program on the Internet. Then go to a word cloud making website such as *Wordle*, *Word It Out*, or *Tagxedo*. The advantage of *Wordle* is that you can do weighted tagging which is helpful for this activity.

If you are using *Wordle*, students should go to: <http://www.wordle.net/advanced>. Choose a design scheme. In the box, students should list the words they chose. After each word, place a colon followed by the number of times it appears in the prayers. Repeat this for each word. For example:

Miracle: 4

Great: 6

Praise: 12

Click on the 'next' button to complete the word cloud. Save the word cloud as a pdf and print.

Activity 2 -Word Cloud Gallery

20 minutes

Hang the students' word clouds on the walls around the room. Ask students to walk around the room and view each other's work. Ask students to think about what themes appear. Gather class back together and discuss what themes appeared.

Activity 3 - Extension

30 minutes

Krovetz l'Purim - Choral Reading

Note to teacher: The *Krovetz L'Purim* is a piece of liturgy that has been taken from *Siddur Kol Yakov: The Complete Art Scroll Siddur*. At the bottom of the pages are footnotes with explanations of the text. You may choose to include these footnotes for students to reference, or you may choose to omit them from student copies in order to give them the opportunity for deeper discovery on their own. This piece of liturgy is very long. It has 15 stanzas. You may want to present only a few stanzas to the class. Alternatively, you can pass out the entire text and only focus on a few stanzas.

Tell students that now they are going to look at a traditional piece of liturgy from the Purim service. This piece of liturgy is called *Krovetz to Purim*. Students may not be familiar with this liturgy because it has been removed from many liberal siddurim.

Background Information: The *Krovetz L'Purim* was written by an anonymous author in the Middle Ages. It is recited in traditional services by the congregation during the *chazzan's* repetition of the *Shemoneh Esrei*. The text includes a retelling of Megilat Esther with God inserted as a major player in the story. The narration, appears poetically in 15 stanzas. Each stanza is recited corresponding to a benediction in the *Shemoneh Esrei*. The theme of each stanza is connected to the line of benediction.

Pass out copies of *Krovetz L'Purim*. Ask students to read the text to themselves. (Remember that you may want to only present an excerpt since the original text is so long.) Tell students the class will now do a choral reading. Ask one student to read the *chazzan's* lines. The rest of the class will read the congregation's stanzas.

Discuss the following questions with students:

- Compare the retelling of the Esther story here to the version in the Megillah (God at center of this narrative; God is not mentioned in Megilat Esther.)
- What might be the purpose of this liturgy? (To refocus attention on God, create a spiritual connection to God)
- What are the connections between the stanzas and the *chazzan's* lines? (thematic)
- What genre of literature is this text? (liturgy, poetry)
- What poetic mechanisms are found in the text? What effects do the form and language of the poem have on the reader and congregation? Lesson 2.4: Rituals on Tisha B'Av

Lesson 2.4: Rituals on Tisha B'Av

Objectives

- Identify the situations in which one is instructed to fast
- Explain the rabbi's reasons for fasting
- Critique the rabbi's reasons for fasting
- Determine if it is appropriate to fast on *Yom Hashoah* by mitigating *halakha* and personal values

Resources

- *Mishneh Torah, Taanit 1:1-5; 5* – all

Activities

50 minutes

Activity 1

25 minutes

Students should study the *Taanit* texts with a partner and answer the following questions:

- Under what circumstances should an individual fast according to the *halacha*?
- Under what circumstances should a community fast?
- What other activities should people refrain from in difficult times?
-
- Have you ever fasted on a holiday?
- What was your experience? How did it change your energy level, emotional state, and frame of mind?
- Do you think fasting is an effective way to create a spiritual mood?

Activity 2

25 minutes

Ask students if they have ever been in Israel during *Yom Hashoah*? If several students have experienced *Yom Hashoah* in Israel, form groups and make someone who has been to Israel on *Yom Hashoah* the leader. Or, have a whole class discussion.

Questions for discussion:

What was done to commemorate the Holocaust on that day? How is that day different than all other days?

(Answers: Places of entertainment closed, two-minute siren sounded, ceremonies at *Yad Vashem* with participants from government and military, special programming on television and radio.)

Ask students who have been to Israel how they felt on that day.

What have you done on *Yom Hashoah* in the past in your own community?

Did you feel differently compared to how they feel on *Yom Hashoah* in America?

Do you think any of the Israeli customs should be enacted in America? Why or why not?

List of Unit Two Resources

See resources section

Lesson 1 Resources

Resource 2.1a	<i>Hanukah Card</i>
Resource 2.1b	Cultural references from the song
Resource 2.1c	Song Lyrics

Lesson 2 Resources

Resource 2.2a	Lesson Resources (Talk Show)
Resource 2.2b	Scheinerman article narratives
Resource 2.2c	Zucker on holiday narratives
Resource 2.2c	Maccabees

Lesson 4 and 5 Resources

Resource 2.4a	<i>Krovetz L'Purim from Artscroll Siddur</i>
Resource 2.5a	Mishneh Torah Ta'anit, Chapter 1

Unit Three: Retelling and Remembering the Holocaust

Essential Questions

How might the rabbinic instructions for observing certain Jewish holidays inform the ways we remember the Holocaust?

What is the proper way for Jews to respond to the Holocaust?

How do we retell the Holocaust when there are so many different stories to tell?

Goals

Examine competing representations of Jews as “sheep to the slaughter” versus resisters and heroes.

Consider the effects of such black and white representations

Interpret the testimony of a survivor for emotional effect

Explore the diversity of Holocaust museums’ approaches to representing the Holocaust and consider universalist and particularist messages about the Holocaust

Experiment with contemporary Holocaust liturgy and ritual

Lesson 3.1: Representations of Jews in Holocaust Films

Objectives

- Use examples of imagery, dialogue, and action from four film clips to describe the competing characterizations of Jews in the Holocaust on a spectrum of weak, passive victims on one end, and as strong, heroic fighters on the other end.
- Explain the dilemmas faced by the characters in each film and why they make different decisions about whether or not to defend themselves and fight
- Describe how viewing various representations of Jews makes them feel

Materials

- Laptops or projector and screen for viewing film clips
- Internet connection to view film clips
- Film Clips Links and Descriptions Page
- DVDs/Bluerays of the films *Defiance* and *Schindler's List*
- Film Scenes Worksheet

Resources

- Film Scenes Worksheet
- Film Clips Links and Descriptions Page

Note

Both films are rated R. Make sure to collect permission slips for students to view the films in advance of class.

Activity One

50 minutes

Part 1: View clips from *Schindler's List*

Tell students the film clips they are about to watch are graphic and might be difficult to watch. Students should feel free to put their heads' down at any time or walk in and out of the room as needed. Assign students to groups for break-out sessions later in the class. Pass out the film scenes worksheet to each student.

Without telling students the title of the film, tell students this first scene takes place in a concentration camp during the Holocaust. Play the first clip. Afterward, ask students to write down any images, dialogue, and actions that stood out to them. Play the same clip again, and ask students to jot down more notes as they watch if they so choose. Once the clip ends, ask students to write a response to the question, "What bothers you about this scene?"

Tell students the next clip takes place during the liquidation of a ghetto, meaning all the Jews in the ghetto are being forced from their homes and sent on trains to concentration camps. Ask students to write

down the images, dialogue, and actions that stand out to them as they watch the clip. When the clip concludes, ask students to write a response to the question, NATALIE: WHAT IS THE QUESTION? IS it, "What bothers you about this scene?"

Part Two: Group discussion

Break students up into their groups and give them ten minutes to discuss the questions on the worksheet under the section, "Discussion Part I."

Part Three: View clips from *Defiance*

Without telling students the title of the film, tell students this first scene takes place in the forest on the Soviet Front where the Germans were fighting against the Soviets. The Jews in the scene are people who have run away from concentration camps and just joined the Partisans, groups of Jews who banded together to fight the German Army. The main speaker is an organizer of the Partisans. Play the third clip. Ask students to jot down more notes as they watch if they so choose. Once the clip ends, ask students to write a response to the question, "What did you notice about the Jews in this film clip? What are they doing and how do they appear?"

Tell students the next clip takes place in a field when the Jewish Partisans launch a surprise attack on the German soldiers. Warn students that this scene is violent. Play the fourth clip. Afterward, ask students to write down any images, dialogue, and actions that stood out to them.

Part Four: Group discussion

Break students up into their groups and give them ten minutes to discuss the questions on the worksheet under the section, "Discussion Part." Activity Two

20 minutes

Ask for 1-2 volunteers to share their answers to the following questions based on their groups' discussions. Make sure each group is represented.

What was your group's average score on the 0-10 passive-active scale for each scene? Give an example of why you gave the rating you did. Were there any major differences in your group answers? If so, what were they?

The last word spoken in the first clip is, "How strange." What did your group find strange about the scene?

At the end of the third clip, the little boy asks about the leader, "Is he Jewish?" What did your group think was the reason for his question?

Was there a consensus among your group about the answer to the question, "If you had to recommend only one of these films to a friend who didn't know much about the Holocaust, which film would you recommend? Why?" If so, what was the consensus, and why? If not, what was your disagreement about?

Lesson 3.2: Holocaust testimony - found poetry

Objectives

- Select a theme of Holocaust experience
- Locate and select a piece of Holocaust testimony or literature that evokes emotion for the audience
- Interpret the central message of a piece of Holocaust testimony
- Compose and design a piece of found poetry that communicate the central message of a piece of testimony
- Assess and give feedback on a classmate's poetry
- Recite poetry clearly and with emotion

Materials

- Internet to the US Holocaust Memorial Museum's personal histories website with transcripts of Holocaust testimony
(<http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/phistories/>)
- And/or: Audio or video recorded Holocaust testimony from another source such as *iwitness.usc.edu*
- Found poetry instructions
- Found poetry rubric

Activities

2 hours divided into 4 activities

Note: The idea for this lesson comes from "Found Poetry - Rose Kaplovitz" from the Shoah Foundation's *iwitness* educational website.

Activity 1

15 minutes

Introduce the topic of testimony to students by explaining: The Jewish people have what we call a "collective memory" informed by our traditional narratives. As we learned in our last lesson, historical events are retold through different narratives which are based on different perspectives and interpretations. Different narratives convey their own messages and teach their own lessons.

When it comes to the Holocaust, we have many different stories that we get from survivor and witness testimony. Each person has their own story to tell. Sometimes stories conflict not because one is true and the other is false, but because individuals experienced different situations in different times and places in different psychological states.

As you create your Holocaust Commemoration you will have to decide how to tell the story of the Holocaust. One way is through sharing testimony – whether recorded or by having a living survivor come to speak. It is important to think about what message you want to communicate. Every story has a message. This next activity gives you the opportunity to search out the meaning and message in a piece of testimony.

Pass out the instructions for the found poetry activity. Review instructions with students. Review the student assessment sheet. Provide students with different sources of Holocaust testimony and literature. Elie Wiesel's *Night* and *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank are two possible sources. Works that are familiar to students are best because they will be skimming for passages.

Activity 2

45 minutes

Using the found poetry instructions, students work independently on the found poetry assignment. This includes choosing a source, composing the poetry, and writing the reflection.

Activity 3

30 minutes

Students should trade poems with a partner who will use the student assessment form to assess their work. Students should meet with their partner to review the assessment sheets together. Based on their partner's suggestions, students should make changes to their poems if they like. Does instructor review/give feedback yet/later?

Activity 4

30 minutes

Have students bring in two copies of their poems. One copy should be hung on the wall for a gallery. When creating the gallery, make different sections for different themes that students chose such as survival, rescue, prayer, or hope. The other copy they will use when reciting the poem to the class. Give students time to walk around the room to view the gallery. Then, have a poetry recital where all or some students present their poetry.

Lesson 3.3: Representing the Holocaust in Museums (Scripted)

Goals

- To demonstrate that Holocaust museums can focus on the particular experience of Jews, on a universal message, or a combination of both
- To explore how the design of a museum, artifacts, stories, location, layout, the name, can all send a message

Objectives

- Explain the difference between a particularist and universalist narrative and rationale for a Holocaust museum
- Reflect on personal beliefs about the purpose of a Holocaust museum
- Create a museum mission statement and exhibit design based on a particular rationale for a Holocaust museum

Background reading for teacher

Flanzbaum, *The Americanization of the Holocaust*.

Rosenfeld, Alvin. 'The Americanization of the Holocaust', *Commentary* 99 (6): 35-40.

Tyndall, Andrea. "Memory, Authenticity, and Replication of the *Shoah* in Museums: Defensive Tools of the Nation."

Optional assigned reading for all students: From article by Tyndall listed above: pages 115-121.

Materials

- List of Holocaust Museum Websites
- Internet Access

Time

60 minutes with optional 90 minute

Set Induction

5 minutes

Teacher instructs students to think of a museum they have been to that they would consider an excellent museum. Ask students to close their eyes. Say the following, "Take yourself back to that museum in your mind. What did you see? What did you read? What did you listen to? What did you touch? What did you smell or taste (if anything)? What emotions did you feel?" Ask students to write down a description of what they just recalled. Then pose the following two questions: "What was the main message or lesson you walked away with? What about your experience led you to that conclusion?" Call on 3-4 students to share their answers to these two questions.

Activity 1

20 minutes

Draw a vertical line down the middle of the board. In one column write the word 'universal' and in the other write 'particular'. Ask the class to define each word. Write the definition(s) in each column. The dictionary definition of 'universal' is

"of, pertaining to, or characteristic of all or the whole; applicable everywhere or in all cases; affecting, concerning, or involving all." The dictionary definition of 'particular' is

"of or pertaining to a single or specific person, thing, group, class, occasion; distinguished or different from others or from the ordinary; noteworthy; marked; unusual."

Now ask students "What is the particularly Jewish significant of the Holocaust and what is the universal significance of the Holocaust?" Summarize their answers in notes in each column.

Now ask students "If you use the particularist lens what would the purpose of the museum be? If you use the universalist lens what would the purpose of the museum be?" Your chart might include the following:

Particular	Universal
<u>Significance:</u>	<u>Significance:</u>
Jews were the majority of victims	Many groups were victims (Homosexuals, mentally and physically disabled, Roma, Sintis, Jehovah's Witnesses)
For a long time Jews have faced anti-Semitism – and they still do	Genocide occurs in many times and places
	Many groups through history have faced hatred and oppression
<u>Purpose:</u>	<u>Purpose:</u>
To honor and commemorate the loss of Jewish life	To honor and commemorate the loss of life of all the victim groups of the Holocaust
To teach about Jewish life and culture that was lost	To teach about all the life and culture that was lost
To tell the stories of Jewish survivors and Jews who didn't survive	To tell the stories of survivors and those who didn't survive, from many groups
To prevent anti-Semitism	To prevent hatred, prejudice, and genocide

Now ask students to work with a partner. Tell students to work with a partner for the next few minutes. Tell students “With your partner, come up with 1-2 exhibits or activities, that a museum could use to fulfill the purposes listed on the board. Think of things you have seen in a museum that you think were done well or come up with your own ideas. You can use original artifacts, replications, visuals, or multi-media presentations. Write your ideas down on a piece of paper. Once you have come up with your list with your partner, join another pair and compare your lists. As a group, come up with one list, taking out the duplicates.” Keep the list of purposes for a museum on the board. Once the groups have their lists, go around the room and ask a representative from each group to share one of their ideas. Ask them to indicate which purpose it serves. Keep going around the room until all the ideas have been shared.

<u>Particular Purpose:</u>	<u>Exhibits</u>	<u>Universal Purpose:</u>	<u>Exhibits</u>
To honor and commemorate the loss of Jewish life	A list of names of those who perished, a voice saying <i>Kaddish</i> , a list of names of communities that perished	To honor and commemorate the loss of life of all the victim groups of the Holocaust	A list of names of those who perished, photographs of those who perished
To teach about Jewish life and culture that was lost	Photographs and artifacts from the Jewish community of cities and villages before the war, such as synagogues, Jewish ritual	To teach about all the life and culture that was lost	Photographs, artifacts from Roma and Sinti life before the war. Or memoirs of Jehovah's witnesses.

	objects		
To tell the stories of Jewish survivors and Jews who didn't survive	Play video or audio testimony, show journal entries	To tell the stories of survivors and those who didn't survive, from many groups	Play testimony of survivors
To prevent anti-Semitism	Teach a mini-class to Jewish students about how to recognize anti-Semitism around them	To prevent hatred, prejudice, and genocide	Educational materials about prejudice and hate, exhibit about Martin Luther King Jr. or other civil rights leaders; exhibits about other genocides such as Rwandan or Armenian genocides

Activity 2

35 minutes

Students will need access to the Internet for this activity. Students will work in pairs, and each pair will be assigned a Holocaust museum for which they will analyze the mission statement, exhibits, and educational materials using information from its website. See list of suggested museum websites.

On a scale from 1 to 10, 1 being purely particularistic and 10 being purely universalistic, how would you rate the philosophy and approach of this museum? Provide evidence for your determination using at least one example from each of the following:

- Name of Museum:
- Mission Statement:
- Major Exhibits and Experience
- Educational Materials available

Activity 3 - Extension

90 minutes

Using the scale from activity two (1 = particularistic, 10= universalistic) ask students to identify what their approach would be to designing a Holocaust museum. Then, form groups of 3-5 students with students who identified similarly on the scale. The assignment is for students to create a proposal for a new Holocaust museum. Their proposal must include the following:

- Name of the Museum
- A mission statement written in 2-5 sentences
- A visual logo or graphic that communicates the mission
- A written description or visual design for one exhibit in the museum that serves the mission of the museum

Lesson 3.4: Holocaust liturgy and rituals

Objectives

- Explain how the *Night Words Liturgy* is similar and different to traditional Jewish liturgy
- Describe personal emotional response to a Holocaust liturgy
- Discuss how imagery, sound, and music create mood and evoke emotion

Materials

- *Night Words- A Liturgy on the Holocaust* compiled by David G. Roskies
- Background Reading for Teacher: Introduction to *Night Words*, pages 1-12

Activities

Two 50 minutes activities

Activity 2 is a *memorable moment*

Activity 1

50 minutes

Introduce *Night Words* to the class. This piece was written by David G. Roskies as a contemporary ritual/liturgy to deal with the emotional and theological challenges of the Holocaust through drama, poetry, song, and symbolism. Assign each of the following pieces to a different group to read and study. The recommended scenes are: *Kavanah*: Invocation; *Halitsah*: *Ritual of the Shoes*; *K'riah*: Reading of the Scroll; and *Hallel*. You may choose different scenes or allow students to choose scenes.

Assign character parts to members of the class. Some students will read more than one part in the scene. Give students time to meet with the people in their scene. They should read through the scene once and identify the following:

- What other moments from Jewish history or the Jewish story are invoked?
- What is the theme(s) of this piece?
- In what ways is this similar and/or different to traditional Jewish liturgy from other holidays?
- What emotions do you think the writer is trying to invoke?

Activity 2

50 minutes

In preparation for this activity, groups should choose a 3-5 minute scene from the piece they studied to perform for the class. For the performance, you may want to find a larger space for this activity such as the auditorium or multi-purpose room. Create a space that will serve as the stage. All audience members (classmates) should have a notepad with them. As the audience members view each scene, they should make note of words that create strong images, evoke strong emotion, or trigger specific thoughts or memories. On a page in the notebook students draw a line down the page. One column is to note the moment or passage they are commenting on. The second column is for recording any thoughts, emotions, or questions. The class performs the scenes in the order that they appear in the liturgy. Audience members take notes in the style described above. Following the performance, invite students to share some of their notes.

Lesson 3.5: Holocaust Creative Innovations Presentation

Objectives

- Explain the rationale, perspective, and message of a piece (such as museum exhibit, prayer, poem, video) they create in memory of the Holocaust

Materials

- Students' creative work

Prior to class

As part of the authentic assessment, students create a form of Holocaust *retelling or remembering* such as a poem, song, museum type exhibit, video, prayer, new ritual, story, or speech, that they propose be included in the Holocaust Remembrance Week activities in their school or congregation. In this culminating lesson of the curriculum, students will bring their creative pieces in memory of the Holocaust to class.

Activities

50 minutes (or more depending on number of students in class)

Presentations

50 minutes

In class, each student will take a turn presenting his or her creative piece. They each have up to five minutes to present the piece and explain the following:

What was their inspiration for this piece?

What aspect(s) of their piece is drawn from Jewish tradition and how?

What aspect(s) of their piece do they consider personal innovation?

Next, the presenter is to ask the class, "How does this piece make you feel or what effect does it have on you? The presenter should call on 1-3 students to answer the question.

Journal

In their journals, students should write about what was most challenging about the creative innovation project. Would they like to see their work shared with the community? Why or why not? What is one thing they learned about themselves from doing this project?

List of Unit Three Resources

See Resources Section

Lesson 1 Resources

Resource 3.1a Film scenes worksheet

Resource 3.1b Film Lesson Clips

Lesson 2 Resources

Resource 3.2a Found poetry instructions

Resource 3.2b Found poetry peer assessment

Lesson 3 Resources

Resource 3.3a Tyndall, A. (2004). "Memory, Authenticity, and Replication of the Shoah in Museums: Defensive Tools of the Nation."

Resource 3.3b Museum Assignment

Lesson 4 Resources

Resource 3.4a Night Words – 1st 12 pages of the Intro

Annotated Bibliographic Selections

Unit One

Aaron Dorfman's article: "Responding to Genocide: Jewish perspectives on the responsibility to protect." found on *My Jewish Learning's* website.

This article discusses Jewish teachings on the responsibility for Jews to protect and preserve life. Dorfman expands the commandment to "remember the stranger" because we were strangers in Egypt to the idea that Jews have the responsibility to fight genocide because of our experiences in the Holocaust.

Unit Two

Schneiderman, Amy. "Exodus, Esther, and the Maccabees in Conversation: 'They Tried to Kill Us; We Survived; Let's Eat.'" CCAR, Spring 2013.

This article discusses the multiplicity of narrative found in the Exodus, story of Esther, and story of the Maccabees. Schneiderman identifies and compares multiple perspectives on the role of God and humans in Jewish redemption found both within each text and between the texts.

Unit Three

"Found Poetry - Rose Kaplovitz" from the Shoah Foundation's *iwitness* educational website.

I got the basic concept of taking a piece of testimony and using for a found poetry exercise from the above activity. I first encountered "found poetry" when reviewing this activity, developed by Gail on the iwitness website. The activity asks learners to study a piece of testimony by Rose Kaplovitz, a Holocaust survivor, and create a piece of found poetry in response to it. I thought this was an excellent activity for getting students to see a story through the narrator's voice.

***Night Words - A Liturgy on the Holocaust* compiled by David G. Roskies**

Night Words is a modern liturgical script for Holocaust remembrance that includes poetry, dramatization, and unique rituals. In lesson 3.4 students reenact parts of this liturgical to explore possibilities for personal liturgical and ritual interpretations of Holocaust remembrance.

Edited with intro and commentary by Saul Touster, *A Survivor's Haggadah*, Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 2000.

“A Survivor’s Haggadah’ written, designed, and illustrated by Yosef Dov Sheinson with Woodcuts by Miklos Adler, both having been among the She’erith Hapletah, the Remnant that Escaped.. Originally published in Munich 1946 for the first Passover after liberation and printed by the US Army of Occupation, here presented in a facsimile edition an English translation.” (From the inscription on the title page of the book.)

Articles for rationale

Simone Schweber, “Holocaust Fatigue”

“Schweber warns of the phenomenon, ‘Holocaust Fatigue,’... explaining that by the time Jewish students reach middle school and high school, many of them have learned about the Holocaust repeatedly, often receiving the same messages with each lesson. She emphasizes that if educators are going to teach older Jewish students about the Holocaust, they must be challenged to think more deeply and through new points of view.” (Davidowitz Capstone, “Holocaust Education in Jewish Day Schools”, 2012) This curriculum guide is intended to follow Scheber’s advice by teaching the Holocaust through the lenses of theology, narrative, and identity.

Bloomberg, Jon. “Defining the Uniqueness of Holocaust Teaching in the Jewish School”

“Bloomberg identifies two goals specific to Jewish students: 1) ‘strengthen Jewish identity,’ and 2) ‘clarify what it means to be a Jew in the post-Holocaust world.’ According to Bloomberg, in order to address Jewish identity, educators must deal with the issue of resistance or lack of resistance in a balanced and intricate manner.” Bloomberg’s idea about the uniqueness of teaching the Holocaust specifically to Jewish students is a foundation of this curriculum guide. The guide humbly attempts to address Bloomberg’s goals, listed above, for teaching the Holocaust to Jewish students. The issue of resistance versus lack of resistance of Jews in the Holocaust and the issue of faith, which Bloomberg identifies as essential, are addressed in several lessons.” (Davidowitz Capstone, “Holocaust Education in Jewish Day Schools, 2012.)

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Curriculum Resources

Unit One Resources

Lesson 1 Resources

- Resource 1.1a Cartoon Strip Template
- Resource 1.1b “The Five Steps to Active Listening”

Lesson 2 Resources

- Resource 1.2a Thoughts on Remembering the Holocaust
- Resource 1.2b Discussion on Remembering the Holocaust

Lesson 3 Resources

- Resource 1.3a Holocaust Questionnaire
- Resource 1.3b Biographies Packet
- Resource 1.3c Definitions of Terms

Lesson 4 Resources

- Resource 1.4a “The Perspective of Early Rabbinic Judaism” by Bokser*
- Resource 1.4b “The Relationship of Two Mitzvot...” by Shapiro*
- Resource 1.4c Mishna Pesachim Chapter 10
- Resource 1.4d Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Hametz Umatzah 7:1 with notes
AND
Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Kriyah Sh'ma 1:1-3 with notes

* Indicates background reading for educator

How to Actively Listen

62,715 views

Edited 12 weeks ago

Studies show that many people absorb less than half of what they hear when they are being spoken to. This communication skills deficit may be caused by the common characteristics of passive listening, such as inattention, distraction and/or the process of forming a response. It is possible to improve on the amount of information you retain during verbal interaction by practicing a form of self-awareness called active listening. Follow these steps for how to actively listen.

Steps

1 Prepare mentally. This requires that you clear your mind and dedicate your focus to taking in as much as you can of what is being said to you. Prepare for active listening in the following ways:

- Tell yourself that you are going to pay attention, and then make the conscious effort to focus solely on the speaker and block out any background noise or other distractions.
- Get rid of any distractions that may stand in your way of paying full attention. This means closing off any other conversations you are having and stopping any activities you are doing.
- Clear your mind of any preconceived ideas or emotions pertaining to what you think the speaker might say. It is important to approach active listening with an open mind, and to wait to form opinions until you have heard what the speaker has to say.

2 Pay attention. Active listening involves focusing not only on verbal communication skills, but also on body language cues, in order to get a thorough understanding of the speaker's message. To be attentive, employ the following techniques:

- Maintain a physical stance that promotes successful communication. Face and lean towards the person speaking to you. Open your posture, as opposed to crossing your arms.
- Make eye contact with the speaker.
- Take note of the speaker's body language. This will give you clues into the meaning, feeling and purpose behind what the speaker is saying.
- Focus on the message behind the words, rather than the words themselves. Your goal is to understand what the speaker is trying to communicate to you, regardless of how effective the speaker is at articulating the message. Discard judgment and pay close attention to the verbal and physical clues you are receiving.
- Consider both what the speaker is thinking and what the speaker is feeling.
- Practice empathy. Empathy is the act of feeling what the speaker is feeling. Attempt to identify with the speaker, so that you fully understand the depth of what is being said to you. You don't have to agree, but you should be able to recognize the speaker's full intention.

How to Actively Listen: 5 Steps (with Pictures) - wikiHow

- Avoid formulating a response while you are listening. Wait until the speaker is finished before you devote your mental energy to what you want to say. If the speaker signals to you for an acknowledgement of your understanding during the speech, it is okay to respond with a simple comment or question to show that you are paying attention.

3 Allow the speaker to communicate without any interruption, until the speaker concludes.

4 **Provide feedback.** Do so with honesty, and with respect for the speaker. Focus on the speaker's message and avoid adding new ideas.

- Acknowledge to the speaker that you are paying attention. Nod your head, smile and give other physical encouragements when it is appropriate. Additionally, provide verbal cues of encouragement to the speaker, such as, "go on" and "I see."
- When the speaker concludes, respond with your interpretation of what was said. It is a good idea to take a moment of silent consideration as you formulate your response. Your response should be a concise paraphrase, or summation, of what the speaker said, as you understood it. Phrases like, "this is what I heard" and "I think this is what you meant" are commonly used when paraphrasing.
- Allow the speaker to further clarify if you misjudged the meaning of the communication.
- Ask questions if you feel that you need more information. Actively listen as the speaker provides explanation.

5 Repeat the feedback process until you and the speaker are satisfied that the message was amply conveyed.

We could really use your help!

Yes I can Yes I can Yes I can Yes I can

Tips

- You may develop your mental focus when practicing active listening by repeating your speaker's exact words in your head as they are spoken

to you.

Sources and Citations

- <http://www.pickthebrain.com/blog/powerful-guide-to-active-listening/>
- <http://www.mindtools.com/CommSkill/ActiveListening.htm>
- <http://www.taftcollege.edu/lrc/class/assignments/actlisten.html>

Article Info

Categories: Speaking and Listening Skills

Recent edits by: Jeff, Lutherus, Teresa

In other languages:

Español: Cómo escuchar activamente, Italiano: Come Ascoltare

Attivamente, Português: Como Escutar Ativamente

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Thoughts on Remembering the Holocaust

The following texts are messages from Holocaust survivors, rabbis, teachers, and students.

Text A: “The first lesson is the importance of *Zachor*, of remembrance itself. For as we remember the six million Jewish victims of the Shoah – defamed, demonized and dehumanized, as prologue or justification for genocide – we have to understand that the mass murder of six million Jews and millions of non-Jews is not a matter of abstract statistics. For unto each person there is a name – unto each person, there is an identity. Each person is a universe. As our sages tell us: “whoever saves a single life, it is as if he or she has saved an entire universe.” Just as whoever has killed a single person, it is as if they have killed an entire universe. And so the abiding imperative – that we are each, wherever we are, the guarantors of each other's destiny.”

- Irwin Cotler [Irwin Cotler, born 1940, a Jewish former member of the Canadian Parliament and law professor, an expert on international law and human rights.]

Text B: “Fiction cannot recite the numbing numbers, but it can be that witness, that memory. A storyteller can attempt to tell the human tale, can make a galaxy out of the chaos, can point to the fact that some people survived even as most people died. And can remind us that the swallows still sing around the smokestacks.”

– Jane Yolen [Jane Yolen, born 1939, a Jewish American award winning author, author of *The Devil's Arithmetic*, a Holocaust Novella.]

Text C: “Memory is what shapes us. Memory is what teaches us. We must understand that is where our redemption is.”

– Estelle Laughlin, Holocaust survivor (from www.ushmm.org)

Text D: “But is remembrance enough? What does one do with the memory of agony and suffering? Memory has its own language, its own texture, its own secret melody, its own archeology and its own limitations: it too can be wounded, stolen and shamed; but it is up to us to rescue it and save it from becoming cheap, banal, and sterile. To remember means to lend an ethical dimension to all endeavors and aspirations.”

- Elie Wiesel, Holocaust Remembrance Day address, 2003

Text E: “How does one mourn for six million people who died? How many candles does one light? How many prayers does one recite? Do we know how to remember the victims, their solitude, their helplessness? They left us without a trace, and we are their trace. We tell these stories because perhaps we know that not to listen, not to want to know, would lead you to indifference, and indifference is never an answer. Whoever hates, hates everybody. Whoever kills, kills more than his victims.... this fiery memory remains and we, you and I, you and all of us, now are its very privileged custodians.”

- Elie Wiesel, Holocaust Remembrance Day address, 2001

Text F: “We know that repressing memory, willed forgetting, is perhaps the greatest danger we face as a species. Because we’ve been spared, we know that despair is a choice, and remembering is a choice, but if we want to remain fully human, we have no choice, but to remember and confront the past, to learn, and to act on what we’ve learned.”

- Steven Spielberg [Born 1946, Jewish American filmmaker, director of *Schindler’s List*, and Founder of the USC Shoah Foundation]

(<http://sfi.usc.edu/news/2014/01/steven-spielberg-says>)

Discussion Questions on Remembering the Holocaust

Text:

1. According to this text, why should we remember the Holocaust?
2. Do you agree with the author? Why or why not? Delve deep.
3. In your opinion, what are other reasons it is important to remember the Holocaust?
4. In your opinion, what does it mean to “remember the Holocaust?” What activities are involved in remembering? How do you think the author of this text would answer the questions, “What does it mean to remember the Holocaust? In other words, what activities should we do to remember the Holocaust?”

Holocaust Questionnaire

Name _____

Date _____

Instructions: Please check off any of the following ways you have learned about the Holocaust:

() Films – If so, which films and when?

() Novels - If so, which ones and when?

() Memoirs , biographies, or autobiographies – If so, which ones and when?

() In class at school? If so, which classes and when?

() Testimony from survivors (in person or on video) – If so, who and when?

() Museum visits – If so, which museums and when?

() Visiting a concentration camp – If so, when and where and when?

() Yom Hashoah Ceremony – If so, where and when?

Instructions:

1. Put a star next to 1 of the experiences you feel had the greatest impact on you.
2. In your journal, please explain why you chose this experience and what the impact was on you, both at that time, and how it continues to affect you today.

Joseph Goebbels

How would you categorize this person?

Excerpts from the entry on “Joseph Goebbels” on *Wikipedia.org*.

“Goebbels was a German politician and Reich Minister of Propaganda in Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1945. As one of Adolf Hitler’s closest associates and most devoted followers, he was known for his zealous orations and deep and virulent anti-Semitism, which led to him strongly supporting the extermination of the Jews when the Nazi leadership developed their ‘Final Solution’.”

“Goebbels came to power in 1933 after Hitler was appointed chancellor; within six weeks Hitler arranged his appointment as Propaganda Minister. One of Goebbels’ first acts was to organize the burning of “decadent” books. Under Goebbels’ leadership, the Propaganda Ministry quickly gained and exerted controlling supervision over the news media, arts and information in Germany.”

“From the beginning of his tenure, Goebbels organized actions against German Jews, commencing with a one-day boycott of Jewish businessmen, doctors and lawyers on 1 April 1933. These actions eventually led to the outright violence of *Kristallnacht* (Night of Broken Glass) on the night of 9-10 November 1938, an open and unrestrained pogrom unleashed by the Nazis across Germany in which synagogues were burned, Jewish-owned businesses trashed, Jews assaulted (many killed) and thousands of them arrested and incarcerated in concentration camps.”

“By the beginning of 1945, with the Soviets on the Oder and the Western Allies preparing to cross the Rhine, Goebbels could no longer disguise the fact that defeat was inevitable.”

“At the end of the war, after Hitler’s suicide, Goebbels followed suit and took his own life along with his wife and children.”

Alfred Flatow

How would you categorize this person?

Excerpt from (*Famous People, Things, and Events - famous101.com*)

“Another athlete who makes the list, Flatow was a gymnast, who participated in 1896 Olympics, in Athens. It was this Olympics, where he won 3 gold medals and a silver one. He was an integral part of the German team, which successfully won gold in both horizontal and parallel, team events. In 1933, he fled to the Netherlands. Little did he know that the Netherlands would also succumb to the Nazi power. After the occupation of the Netherlands, German forces deported him to a concentration camp, where he died at the age of 73. In modern-day Berlin, there is a lane, near the Olympic Stadium, named Flatowallee, which translates to Flatow Lane. In addition, there exists a Flatow-Sporthalle (sports hall) at Berlin-Kreuzberg with a celebratory inscription.

Branko Lustig

How would you categorize this person?

Excerpts from the entry on “Branko Lustig” on *Wikipedia.org*

“Branko Lustig is a prominent Croatian film producer. He is the only person born in Croatia to have won two Academy Awards.”

“Lustig was born in Osijek, Croatia, to a Croatian Jewish family. During World War II, as a child he was imprisoned for two years in Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen. Most members of his family perished in the death camps throughout Europe, including his grandmother who was killed in the gas chamber, while his father was killed in Čakovec by Hungarians on March 15, 1945. Lustig’s mother survived the Holocaust and was reunited with him after the war. On the day of the liberation Lustig weighed only 66 pounds. Lustig credited his survival in Auschwitz to a German officer that, coincidentally, was from the same Osijek suburb and knew Lustig’s father. He overheard Lustig crying in Croatian and asked him who his father was.”

“Lustig began his film career in 1955 as an assistant director at Jadran Film, a state-owned Zagreb-based film production company. In 1956 he worked as a unit production manager on Branko Bauer’s World War II drama *Ne okreći se sine*, winner of three Golden Arena awards at the 1956 Pula Film Festival. Lustig was the location manager for *Fiddler on the Roof* (film) (1971). In the 1980s Lustig worked on the miniseries *The Winds of War* (1983) and its sequel *War and Remembrance* (1988). He moved to the United States in 1988.”

“Lustig received his first Oscar in 1993 for the production of *Schindler’s List*, a film based on the novel of Thomas Keneally (which is, in turn, based on the true-life story of a German manufacturer who saved hundreds of Jews during World War II). He received his second Oscar for the epic movie *Gladiator* about a struggle for power in Imperial Rome, in 2001. Other major Hollywood films that Lustig has worked on as a producer or executive producer include *The Peacemaker* (1997), *Hannibal* (2001), and *Black Hawk Down* (2001). In 2008, Lustig helped establish an independent production company Six Point Films to produce ‘meaningful, thought-provoking independent films’”.

Sir Nicholas George Winton

How would you categorize this person?

Excerpts from the entry on “Sir Nicholas George Winton” on *Wikipedia.org*

“Sir Nicholas George Winton is a British humanitarian who organized the rescue of 669, mostly Jewish, children from Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia on the eve of the Second World War, in an operation later known as the Czech Kinder transport. Winton found homes for the children and arranged for their safe passage to Britain. The British press has dubbed him the “British Schindler”.^[7] On 28 October 2014 he was awarded the highest honor of the Czech Republic, the Order of the White Lion, by Czech President Miloš Zeman.”

“Shortly before Christmas 1938, Winton was planning to travel to Switzerland for a skiing holiday. He decided instead to visit Prague and help his friend Martin Blake, who had called to ask him to assist in Jewish welfare work. Winton single-handedly established an organization to aid children from Jewish families at risk from the Nazis. He set up his office at a dining room table in his hotel in Wenceslas Square. In November 1938, following the Kristallnacht in Nazi-ruled Germany, the House of Commons approved a measure to allow the entry into Britain of refugees younger than 17, provided they had a place to stay and a warranty of £50 was deposited for their eventual return to their own country.”

“Winton kept quiet about his humanitarian exploits for many years, until his wife Grete found a detailed scrapbook in their attic in 1988. It contained lists of the children, including their parents' names, and the names and addresses of the families that took them in. By sending letters to these addresses, 80 of “Winton’s children” were found in Britain. The world found out about his work in 1988 during an episode of the BBC television program *That’s Life!* when he was invited as a member of the audience. At one point Winton’s scrapbook was shown, and his achievements were explained. The host of the program, Esther Rantzen, asked whether any in the audience owed their lives to Winton, and, if so, to stand - more than two dozen people surrounding Winton rose and applauded.”

Tuvia Bielsk

How would you categorize this person?

Excerpts from the entry on “Tuvia Bielski” on *Wikipedia.org*

“Tuvia Bielski was the leader of the partisan group, the Bielski partisans, who were situated in the Naliboki forest in pre-war Poland (now Western Belarus) during World War II.”

“Tuvia grew up in the only Polish Jewish family in Stankiewicze. The small village in Eastern Poland (now Western Belarus) is located between towns of Lida and Navahrudak, both of which housed Jewish ghettos during World War II. Tuvia was the son of David and Beila Bielski, who had twelve children: ten boys and two girls. Tuvia was the third eldest. His brothers Asael, Alexander (“Zus”) and Aron were later to become members of his partisan group.”

“When Operation Barbarossa broke out, Tuvia, Zus, and Asael were called up by their army units to fight against the Nazi German occupiers. Tuvia recalls: “Suddenly about fifty planes (*Luftwaffe*) flew over the town dropping incendiary bombs. In a very few minutes the entire place was on fire. The commander called us in, ordered us to leave the burning town and regroup in a forest about five kilometers from there. After the units disbanded, the Bielski brothers fled to Stankiewicze, where their parents lived. In early July 1941, a German army unit arrived in Stankiewicze and Jewish residents were moved to a ghetto in Nowogródek. The four Bielski brothers managed to flee to the nearby forest after their parents and other family members were killed in the ghetto in August 1941.”

“During World War II, Tuvia Bielski led a group of Jewish refugees, which saved more than 1,200 Jews by hiding them in forests. Although always hunted by Nazis, Bielski’s group continued to grow. They lived in the forests for over two years, and in their camp, they built a school, a hospital, and a nursery. As leader of the Bielski partisans, his aim was not to attack railroads and roads that the German Nazis were using as supply routes, although there were some such attacks, but to save Jews, who were under persecution from the Nazis during the Holocaust.”

Categories of People From the Holocaust

Perpetrator: “a person who perpetrates, or commits, an illegal, criminal, or evil act.”

Survivor: “A person who continues to function or continue to live in spite of opposition or hardship.”

Victim: “A person who suffers from a destructive or injurious action or agency.”

Resister: “To withstand, strive against, or oppose.”

*Above definitions are from *Dictionary.com*.

Righteous Among the Nations

The term *Righteous Among the Nations* was created by Yad Vashem to identify and honor non-Jews from around the world who risked their own lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. The main activities of these people including 1) helping Jews escape from ghettos, camps, and Nazi occupied territories, 2) creating false documents and identities to help Jews escape, 3) Saving children, 4) Hiding Jews in their homes and on their property.

(Yad Vashem Holocaust Online Resource Center

<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/righteous/about.asp>, 2014)

reinforced by cymbals and drums and accompanied by the noise of all these instruments of deception. It seems to me that a banquet easily turns into a mere exhibition of drunkenness. The Apostle warned: "Laying aside the works of darkness, put on the armor of light. Let us walk becomingly as in the day, not occupying ourselves in revelry and drunkenness, not in debauchery and wantonness" (Rom. 13:12-13).

... In general, we must completely eliminate every such base sight or sound—in a word, everything immodest that strikes the senses (for this is an abuse of the sense)—if we would avoid pleasures that merely fascinate the eye or ear, and enslave. Truly, *the devious spells of syncopated tunes and of the plaintive rhythm of Carian music corrupt morals by their sensual and affected style, and insidiously inflame the passions.* . . .

It is fitting to bless the Maker of all things before we partake of food; so too, at a feast, when we enjoy His created gifts, it is only right that we sing psalms to Him. In fact, a psalm sung in unison is a blessing, and it is an act of self-restraint. . . . *Even among the ancient Greeks, there was a song called the skolon which they used to sing after the manner of the Hebrew psalm at drinking parties and over their after-dinner cups. All sang together with one voice, and sometimes they passed these toasts of song along in turn; those more musical than the rest sang to the accompaniment of the lyre.*

Yet, let no passionate love songs be permitted there; let our songs be hymns to God. . . . We may indeed retain chaste harmonies, but not so those tearful songs which are too florid in the overdramatic modulation of the voice they require. These last must be proscribed and repudiated by those who would retain virility of mind, for their sentimentality and ribaldry degenerate the soul. *There is nothing in common between restrained, chaste tunes and the licentiousness of intemperance. Therefore, overcolorful melodies are to be left to shameless carousals, and to the honeyed and garish music of the courtesan.*⁶⁶

Thus the effort of the Mishnah to distinguish between banquets and the Passover celebration follows a pattern shared by religious writers. Those with philosophical interests, such as Philo, make the distinction in philosophical terms.⁶⁷ The Mishnah does so indirectly, by changing elements of the banquet, providing them with new and distinct meaning, and dissociating the Passover rite from inappropriate symposiac practices. This task became critically important as the Mishnah, reflecting the ideology of early rabbinic Judaism, presented the Passover ritual without the paschal lamb but, nevertheless, as a continuation of the earlier protocol.⁶⁸

6

THE PERSPECTIVE OF EARLY RABBINIC JUDAISM

ALTHOUGH THE MISHNAH TRIES to de-emphasize the discontinuity with the past, its account of the Passover rite is influenced by the later concerns and world view of early rabbinic Judaism. This influence can be seen in two ways. First, the Mishnah changes various pre-70 aspects of the celebration, dissociating elements from the temple cult and providing extra-temple practices with a new significance. Second, it enriches the rite with items not attested in earlier sources, or revises old elements to the point where they take on a distinct, vital role. In earlier chapters I have analyzed the recasting of pre-70 elements of the ritual. I have also noted that the fixed etiquette for passover found in Mishnah and Tosefta Pesahim 10 reflects the tendency of early rabbinic Judaism to standardize and mandate practices that previously had been left up to the individual. In the present chapter I point to the additions and totally transformed features of the celebration that are shaped by the rabbinic world view.

BROADENED IMPORTANCE OF INTELLECTUAL EXCHANGE

During the period of early rabbinic Judaism, intellectual discussion became a central activity incumbent upon everyone. The Bible, for example, explains the meaning of Passover and its rituals through the literary device of parental instructions to a child. As seen in Exodus 12:26, the parent responds to a child's questions concerning the details of the evening rite and, in Exodus 13:14, also the dedication or redemption of the firstborn humans and animals. Exodus 13:8 shows the parent, on his own initiative, explaining the requirement to eat unleavened bread for seven days. These verses may provide not only the rationale for the elements of the holiday but also a prescriptive model that a child and parent should follow—the child should ask a question and the parent

should supply an answer. The Mishnah assumes this understanding, but rephrases the biblical prescription so as to extend the paradigm beyond a parent-child discussion.¹ Mishnah 10:4 thus reads:

- A. [They] poured for him the second cup—
- B.1. and here the child asks,
- B.2. and if the child lacks intelligence, his father instructs him.
- C. How is this night different from all the [other] nights?
- D.1. For on all the [other] nights we dip once, this night twice.
- D.2. For on all the [other] nights we eat leavened and unleavened bread, this night we eat only unleavened.
- D.3. For on all the [other] nights we eat meat roasted, steamed, or cooked [in a liquid = boiled], this night only [or "all of it"] roasted.
- E. According to the child's intelligence, his father instructs him.
- F. [He] starts [reading] with the disgrace [section of the Bible] and ends with the glory;
- G. and [he] expounds [the biblical section] from, "A Wandering Aramean was my father," until he finishes the entire portion.²

According to clause B.2, the parent may open the discussion without the child's prompting. The Mishnah thus does not strictly follow the paradigm of Exodus 12:26. Nor is the rendition in the Mishnah based on Exodus 13:8, for that verse does not deal with the evening rite. To be sure, rabbinic circles elsewhere rely on both of these verses along with Exodus 13:14 to formulate several questions that typify different types of children and to supply appropriate answers by a parent. But the formulation of the dialogue does not necessarily indicate that its perspective is fixed by the Bible, for one of the questions and answers employs Deuteronomy 6:20 which does not even deal with Passover!³

In contrast, Mishnah 10:4 is obviously not unrelated to the biblical prescription. As was seen in chapter 4, the Mishnah suggests appropriate questions applicable now to the evening ritual without the paschal sacrifice, and it thereby indicates that the old pedagogic device is still viable. The Mishnah therefore shapes the biblical material to fit its own interests. This tendency is further confirmed by the choice of the three questions in clause D, concerning bitter herbs, unleavened bread, and roasted meat: these are also the three items on which Gamaliel focuses attention and through which he de-emphasizes the unique role of the passover sacrifice.

The language of Mishnah 10:4 enables us to see how rabbinic issues became prominent. The words "lacks intelligence" or "has intelligence" are regularly used as the criterion to exclude or include an individual, especially a child, from

a provision of a law, whether a privilege, responsibility, or liability. If a person is physically and mentally able to do something, he or she can be held responsible to do it. Similarly, if a person can understand the import of an action, he or she can be required to have the proper intent.

Mishnah Baba Meš'ia' 7.6 shows a typical usage of "intelligence":

- A. A man extracts terms [in return for an agreement not to exercise the right to eat fruit from the field in which he is working] for himself, for his adult son and daughter, for his adult bondman and bondwoman, for his wife—because they have intelligence (MPNY ŠYŠ BHN D'T).
- B. But a man does not extract terms for his minor son and daughter, nor for his minor bondman and bondwoman, and not for his animal—because they lack intelligence (MPMY Š'YN BHN D'T).⁴

At times the term "intelligence" applies to a specific procedure, as in Mishnah Sukkah 3:15 concerning the laws of Sukkot:

- And every minor who knows how to shake [the *lulav*] (ŠYŠ BW D'T LN'NY') is liable as to *lulav*.

Tosefta Hagigah 1:2 presents eleven definitions tailored to different laws:

- [A minor who] knows how to shake, is liable as to *lulav*; [who] knows how to wrap [around a garment] is liable as to fringes; [who] knows how to speak, his father instructs him [in] (BYW MLMDW) Shema', and Torah, and the holy tongue [= Hebrew] [who] knows how to slaughter, his slaughterer is valid; [who] is able to eat . . . an olive's amount of roasted meat, they slaughter the passover sacrifice for him.⁵

The format of Mishnah Pesahim 10:4 of a parent instructing a child is also found elsewhere in connection with teaching a child about the Torah and Judaism. The passage cited earlier from Tosefta Hagigah 1:2 provides one example of this usage.⁶ In all of these references, the texts refer to a person who either knows and understands or does not know and understand the matter under discussion.

The Mishnah therefore reflects the rabbinic concern that parents teach their children what they should know.⁷ The biblical model for the pedagogic dialogue is thus adapted to the standard rabbinic formulation that is designed to determine a child's involvement. Considering the Mishnah's choice of this standard twofold typology, it is not surprising that the Mishnah does not use the well-known typology of four kinds of children each with a different character or level of intelligence.⁸

In demonstrating that the device of a question remains a viable educational

tool and religious ritual, the Mishnah determines when during the rite the child "asks the question" and therefore adapts the pedagogic device to its own purposes.⁹

In Tosefta 10:11–12, one can actually see the biblical model juxtaposed to and subsumed under a different model. One also finds the emphasis on the study of the *halakhot*, another central rabbinic concern.

A. After [eating from] the passover offering they do not end [with] *afiqmon* [alt., *afiqmon*]. . . .

B. A person is obligated to engage himself in the [study of the] *halakhot* of Passover all night.

even with [only] his son,
even with [only] himself,
even with [only] his student.

C. Case concerning (M'SH B-): Rabban Gamaliel and the elders were reclining in the house of Bailos the son of Zonin in Lod.

D. and [they] were engaged in the *halakhot* of Passover all night, until the cock's call.

[They] raised up [the table] from in front of them,

and [they] stirred and went along to the house of study.¹⁰

Clause B refers to the situation mentioned in the Bible, of a parent and child, and to a rabbinic setting, that of a master and student. Though clauses C–D illustrate the latter academic-rabbinic perspective, they do not deal with its specific case. Since they thus cannot have been generated merely to serve as an example, one should assume that they originally circulated as a separate teaching.¹¹ The compiler, however, uses the Gamaliel story because it fits his purpose to exemplify the issue with a case of studying *halakhot*, or the "laws." This contrasts with the more famous variant story incorporated into the Passover haggadah, in which the sages spend the whole night "talking about the exodus from Egypt," a subject with wider interest than "laws."¹² Since the haggadah is a liturgical text aimed at popular audiences this famous story fits its context.¹³ In contrast, the formulation in the Tosefta accords with tannaic usage. The Mishnah and the Tosefta regularly speak of the laws that govern a holiday. For example, according to Tosefta Megillah 3:5, prior to Passover, "They ask concerning the laws of Passover" (SW'LYN HLKWT HPSH. . . . SW'LYN BHLKWT [London MS = HLKWT] HPSH).¹⁴

A text in Mekilta *Pisḥa*, number 18, provides an insightful view of the Passover gathering from the perspective of the rabbinic social world. Based on Deuteronomy 6:20—"What mean these exhortations, laws, and norms"—the passage appears in the context of the child's question in Exodus 13:14:

A. "What mean these exhortations, laws, and norms," etc.

B. R. Eliezer says, "From where can you say that if there was a group (HBWRH) of sages or of students, they are required to engage themselves in the [study of the] *halakhot* of Pesah until midnight?"

C. It is for this that it says, "What mean these exhortations, laws," etc.¹⁵

Here we find not a parent-child discussion, as illustrated in the biblical text, but a "fraternity" of sages and students studying the laws of Passover.

Finally, the reference to "the house of study," BYT HMDRS, in clause D of the Tosefta, likewise fits the rabbinic background. The Tosefta projects not only the situation of an individual's home, with a parent and child, but also of a rabbinic gathering.¹⁶

The biblical device of a child's inquiry is thus expanded in Mishnah 10:4 into a ritual for all Jews, assuming that even an adult may be the one to open the discussion. The Mishnah supplies three questions on the three things Gamaliel considered essential and employs its standard terminology to lay out the requirement, especially in regard to a parent's responsibility toward his child. The Tosefta goes further in freeing the question from its biblical parameters, and even reflects a specific rabbinic concern for *halakhot* and the rabbinic social group.

How does the Tosefta's extension relate to the charge in Mishnah 10:1 that all Jews should be involved? It is not necessarily inconsistent, because if everyone should be included then the ritual is not just for lay people. Moreover, the sages believe that they provided a model for all Jews to emulate: all should act as students of the Torah and, in this instance, should be engaged in the study of Passover. The Tosefta also reflects a tendency in early rabbinic Judaism to focus attention on the social forms of the rabbinic group. It is therefore important to note that the Mishnah lacks these overt references to contemporary social institutions. Mentioning them might work against the impression of timelessness the Mishnah seeks to create, which in turn serves its purpose of showing that the present Passover rite continues the pre-70 structures.

EXPONDING THE BIBLE

As prescribed in Mishnah 10:4F–G and cited earlier, the reading and exposition of the Bible is in accord with the rabbinic emphasis on these activities. Specifically, one starts reading from a section reflecting the "disgrace" or "shame" of Israel and ends with a section reflecting its "praise"; then one expounds (DRS) the biblical section that begins, "A wandering Aramean was

my father" (Deut. 26:5). As several scholars have noted, the reading and exposition constitute two requirements.¹⁷ It would not be surprising if people had recited and discussed the biblical narrative in pre-70 days. Indeed, the prescriptions in Exodus 12:26, 13:8, and 13:14 as well as in Deuteronomy 6:20 call for such a retelling of the exodus, and the Bible also presents several historical reviews that trace the Israelites' origins and God's redemptive intervention. These include Deuteronomy 4:37–38, 6:21–24, 26:5–10; Joshua 24:2–14; and Nehemiah 9:6–37,¹⁸ which adds an account of the Sinaitic revelation. In addition, as was seen in chapter 2, numerous biblical and postbiblical books recount this period of history, and several treat the exodus experience in particular. Deuteronomy 26:5ff. was an apt choice for special focus since this text was formulaic in nature and was commonly known. Its popularity stemmed from its original use as part of the "first-fruits" ceremony, when people annually brought their first fruits of the harvest to the sanctuary.¹⁹

The exposition of a scriptural passage, though, is something relatively new and differs from a simple retelling or embellishing of a biblical account. In Qumranite writings, in Philo's description of the Therapeutae, and in his allegorical interpretations of Scripture, one finds the first extant examples of expositions that are distinct from the biblical text. In rabbinic Judaism these expositions, and the study and interpretation they required, took on central importance. Philo and rabbinic and Qumran expounders all had a similar need to replace an inaccessible cult, in particular to find a substitute for the cult's role in providing a religious experience and divine instruction. Unable to use the traditionally defined institutions of the biblical world, they turned to the study of Scripture as one way to provide a new basis for their systems. All of them, however, perceived the act of study and exegesis differently. Philo endeavored to find the deeper spiritual dimension of the Bible. Qumran writers believed that their group had access to a key which enabled them to uncover the plain sense of the Bible. The rabbis, in contrast to both of these, had a notion of "oral Torah," and searched the Scriptures to discover parts of a second revelation. Study became the highest form of piety and a ritual in its own right.²⁰ The Mishnah's requirement to expound the formulaic account of Jewish history, set out in Deuteronomy 26:5ff., reflects this new dimension of study and distinct type of encounter with the biblical text.²¹

EXTENDING THE MEANING OF REDEMPTION

The redemption motif of the Passover celebration is made applicable to the Jews of the post-70 era by the liturgical text attributed to Aqiva in Mishnah

10:6E. Aqiva is in dispute with Tarfon concerning the blessing that follows the first portion of Hallel.

D. R. Tarfon says, ". . . Who has redeemed us and redeemed our ancestors from Egypt and brought us to this night" [some texts add: "to eat thereon unleavened bread and bitter herbs"]—and [he] does not seal [with the concluding formula].

E. I. R. Aqiva says, [One adds to the blessing:] "Thus O LORD, our God and God of our ancestors, bring us in peace to the approaching festivals which are coming to meet us, happy in the building of Your city [some texts add: "joyous in Your service"]. [so as] to eat from the passover and festive offerings whose blood will reach the wall of Your altar with favor.

E.2. and let us thank You for our redemption.

E.3. Praised art Thou, O LORD, who redeemed [K and P MSS. redeems] Israel."²²

Tarfon speaks of the past redemption and, according to some readings, mentions the unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Aqiva, in contrast, refers to an ever-recurring redemption that applies not only to the ancient Israelites but also to the current generation, explicit in clause E.2, and possibly in clause E.3, if the Kaufmann and Parma manuscripts preserve the original reading. He also mentions in E.1 the cult and the passover sacrifice, and, in passing, the "building of Your city," that is, rebuilding Jerusalem.

Aqiva draws on the message in the Bible where, as S. S. Loewenstamm has demonstrated, the exodus event inherently carries the promise of future redemption.²³ This promise is interpreted in diverse ways. Jubilees, for example, asserts that whoever participates in the passover sacrifice will experience a year free from the plague.²⁴ Aqiva revises the message to Jews to conform with the loss of their temple. By mentioning the notion of an ongoing redemption at the point when people finish singing God's praises in acknowledgement of past redemption, Aqiva provides Jews with a firm foundation of hope for future redemption and strengthens their plea for divine assistance.²⁵ But his message is still based on the old religious structures. Not only does it speak of the future only in terms of a continual present (God redeemed and is redeeming) but it also refers only by implication to the changed situation in expressing hope for the reestablishment of "your city" so that Jews will be able to eat from the passover and festive offerings. This posture sharply contrasts with the amoraic expansive treatment of the theme of redemption. The postmishnaic masters, openly dealing with the disparity between the rite with its message of redemption and the current social and political situation under Roman and Iranian rule, either reinterpret redemption or else speak of experiencing it in the future.

Overall, then, although the Mishnah is informed by current realities, it does not make redemption a central theme. Indeed, considering the situation under Roman and Iranian rule, focus on the present lack of redemption would be counterproductive to the Mishnah's design to portray current practices in a timeless manner, as if they had existed in pre-70 days.²⁶

ESTABLISHMENT OF FIXED BLESSINGS

The Mishnah requires seven different blessings to accompany key parts of the celebration; the Tosefta mentions five of these and provides actual blessing formulas for the last two:

- 1-2. Mishnah 10:2 and Tosefta 10:2, blessing over the day; blessing over the wine.
3. Mishnah 10:6 and Tosefta 10:9, blessing of 'redemption,' following the first part of Hallel.
4. Mishnah 10:7A, blessing over food.
5. Mishnah 10:7B, blessing over the song, *birkat hashir*, at the conclusion of Hallel.
- 6-7. Mishnah 10:9 and Tosefta 10:13, blessing over the passover offering, *birkat hapesaḥ*; blessing over the festive offering, *birkat hazevaḥ*.

Recitation of a blessing in association with a religious act serves either to prepare one for a religious experience or to interpret that emotional encounter in a specific way. In particular, for those without the temple, the saying of a blessing became an important way to ensure that religious acts would involve an experience of the divine. In rabbinic Judaism, these blessings became an institution required of every Jew, designed to sensitize people to the presence of God in the world. It was only natural that the Passover eve celebration would include a series of blessings: people would have welcomed reassurance that the rite still provided an effective way of relating to God and fulfilling the requirement to participate in the Passover event.²⁷

SUMMARY

Four characteristic aspects of early rabbinic Judaism can be identified in the Mishnah, none of which would have been central in the pre-70 sacrificial meal. The first is the intellectual discussion of the celebration which is geared to all Jewry and therefore is freed from its biblical structure. This intellectual discussion is designed to make the adults participate in the event and understand its significance and is no longer solely a means of educating children. This accords

with the presence of additional educational features aimed at all the participants, including (a) Gamaliel's requirement to mention the passover lamb, unleavened bread, and bitter herbs and therefore to concentrate on them as the three central components of the rite, and (b) the anonymous symbolic interpretation of each of the three items.

Second, the form of the discussion includes not only retelling the events but also expounding a classic text that reviews the mythic history in which God redeems and provides for Israel. This requirement to expound accords with the rising importance of midrash, the "searching out" of Scripture. The present and the past illuminate each other, enabling the participants to relate more fully to the exodus experience and to see it as paradigmatic of their own situation.

Third, the explicit mention of redemption reminds people both of the present reality without the temple cult and of the hope for a change. This theme, however, is not extensively developed, and the aspirations for the future are channeled into a liturgical composition, a process characteristic of rabbinic Judaism in general.

Fourth, the prescribed recitation of seven blessings ensures that people see the celebration as a religious rite and become sensitive to its divine dimension. The very need to emphasize this matter is characteristic of rabbinic Judaism, which has tried to impart a new meaning to the world of mundane experience through the system of blessings.

שמועה מפי בעה"ז; דאמר רבי יוחנן משום רבי שמעון בן יוחי: כל ת"ח שאומרים דבר שמועה מפי בעלים הוה, שפתחתי דובבות [רש"י]: נעות] בקבר.

Presenting the Rav's teachings is a daunting responsibility. I close with two phrases from the *tefillah* of הקנה בן זכור: "נעות] בקבר."

"שלא תאריע חקלה על ידי... וישמחו בני חברי."

David Shapiro
Brookline, Massachusetts
Elul 5764
September 2004

Chapter 1

The Relationship of Two *Mitzvot* to Each Other: The Annual *Mitzvah* of "Sippur Yetzi'at Mitzrayim" and the Daily *Mitzvah* of "Zechirat Yetzi'at Mitzrayim"

Our goal will be to define each of these two *mitzvot*, and to understand each in light of the other.

A.

One way to focus the issue is to look at the night of the 15th of Nisan – the first night of Pesach – and to ask why both *mitzvot* are necessary on that night. Why can't we satisfy the requirement of *ve-higadelta le-vincha* (or, according to the Rambam, *Zachor et ha-yom ha-zeh asher yatzatem mi-Mitzrayim*) by reciting, as we do each evening, the third *parashah* of *keri'at shema*? Why did the Torah superimpose the *mitzvah* of *sippur be-lil tet-vaav* onto the nightly *mitzvah* of *le-ma an itzkeor et yom tzeititha mei-eretz Mitzrayim kol yimei chayecha*?

Another way to focus the issue is to look at the *Haggadah shel Pesach* and to ask why the Mishnah from *Berachot* 12b is included. Isn't it, ostensibly, irrelevant to the theme of *sippur yetzi'at Mitzrayim*?

Our sources for the Rav's contributions to this discussion are drawn from:

- (1) The first three pages of the opening *shiur* in *Shiurim le-Zecher Abba Mari*, vol. 1.
- (2) "Be-Igvan Sippur Yetzi'at Mitzrayim," *Shiurim le-Zecher Abba Mari*, vol. 2 (particularly pp. 152–53).
- (3) The Rav's essay, "The Nine Aspects of the Haggadah," in *The Yeshiva University Haggadah* (S.O.Y., 1985), pp. 7–13 [Reprinted in Joseph Epstein, *Shiurei ha-Rav* (Ktav, 1994), pp. 33–45].
- (4) *Nor'ot ha-Rav*, vol. 4 (1997; ed. B. David Schreiber), pp. 182–85.

⁴ See the Maharsha's interpretation of *Berachot* 28b. See also *Teshuvot Chataam Sofer, Orach Chayim* #208.

- (6) The edition of the *Haggadah* entitled *Si'ah ha-Gnif*, prepared by the Rav's grandson Rabbi Yitzchak Lichtenstein (particularly pp. 33–38).
- (7) The tape of a *shur* delivered by Rabbi Yonason Sacks of Passaic, N.J. entitled "Zechûras Yetzi'as Mitzrayim."¹
- (8) Shlomo H. Pick, *Mo'adei HaRav* (Ramat Gan, 2003), pp. 139–45.

B.

Let's begin – as the Rav ז"ל would – with the Rambam's formulation of our two *mitzvoth*:

רמב"ם, הלכות קריאת שמע – פרק א
הלכה א
 פעמים בכל יום קוראין ק"ש בערב ובבוקר, שנאמר "ובשכרך ובקומך" (דברים ו:ז) בשעה שדרך בני אדם שוכבין וזה הוא לילה, ובשעה שדרך בני אדם עומדין זה הוא יום.

הלכה ב
 ומה הוא קורא שלשה פרשיות אלו הן: שמע והיה אם שמע ראמר, ומקרימין לקרות פרשת שמע מפני שיש בה יחוד השם ואהבתו ותלמודו שהיו העיקר והגדול שהכל תלוי בו, ואחריה והיה אם שמע שיש בה צווי על (זכירת) שאר כל המצות, ואחד כך פרשת ציצית שהם היא יש בה צווי וזכירת כל המצות.

הלכה ג
 אע"פ שאין מצות ציצית נוהגת בלילה קוראין אותה בלילה מפני שיש בה זכרון ציצית מצרים ומצוה להזכיר יציאת מצרים כיום ובלילה שנאמר "למען תזכור את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים כל ימי חיך" (דברים טו:ג). וקריאת פרשיות אלו על סדר זה היא הנקראת קריאת שמע.

Thus the daily *mitzva* of *zechirah*.

¹ I refer to the first tape (#401) in a set of six tapes that was marketed by Keren Achvah (316 Howard Ave., Passaic, N.J. 07055; 732-473-0684) under the collective title *Me'adeus le-Cherim: Insights into The Pesach Seder and Haggadah*.

רמב"ם, הלכות חמץ ומצה – פרק י
הלכה א
 מצות עשה של חורה לספר בנסים ונפלאות שנעשו לאבותינו במצרים לליל חמשה עשר בניסן שנאמר "זכור את היום הזה אשר יצאתם מצרים" (שמות י"ג:ג) כמו שנאמר "זכור את יום השבת" (שמות כ"ח). ומנין שכליל חמשה עשר? תלמוד לומר: "והגדת לבנך כיום הזה לאמר בעבור זה" – בשעה שיש מצה ומרור מנוחים לפניך.²
 ואף על פי שאין לו בן, אפילו חכמים גדולים חייבים לספר יציאת מצרים וכל המאריך בדברים שאירעו ושהיו הר"י זה משובח.

הלכה ב
 מצוה להודיע לבנים ואפילו לא שאלו שנאמר והגדת לבנך, לפי דעתו של בן אביו מלמדו, כיצד אם היה קטן או טיפש אומר לו בני כלתו היינו עבדים כמו שפסח זו או כמו עבד זה במצרים ובלילה הזה פדה אותנו הקב"ה ויצאיא לחירות, ואם היה הבן גדול חכם מודיעו מה שאירע לנו במצרים ונסים שנעשו לנו ע"י משה רבינו הכל לפי דעתו של בן.

Take note of the fact that the Rambam derives the daily *mitzva* of *zechirah* from *Devarim* 16:3 ("Le-mo'an tizkor...") and the annual *mitzva* of *sippur* on Pesach from *Shemot* 13:3 ("Zachor et hayom ha-zeh..."). The former is consonant with the view of Ben Zoma in the Mishnah in *Berachot* 12b:

מזכירין יציאת מצרים בלילות. אמר רבי אלעזר בן עזריה: הרי אני כבן שבעים שנה, ולא זכיתי שתאמר יציאת מצרים בלילות עד שדרשה בן זומא. שנאמר: למען תזכור את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים כל ימי חיך. ימי חיך – הימים, כל ימי חיך – הלילות...;

² The Rav ז"ל used to comment that the qualifying phrase in the first line

can be understood as modifying either the first line or

בנסים ונפלאות שנעשו לאבותינו במצרים.
 The fact that the Rambam derives the *mitzva* of *sippur* from and that he continues with suggests that he intended the latter of the two options. In fact, the Rav noted, in the Rambam's text of the *Haggadah* (at the end of *Hilchot Chametz u-Matzah*) there is no mention of any of the miracles which occurred at *keri'at yam suf* seven days later. His *Haggadah* includes neither the *midrashim* of Rabi Yosi ha-Gelili, Rabi Eliezer, and Rabi Akiva (from *Mehilta* on *Parshat Bechallah*) nor "Dapirni."

Similarly, it is forbidden to eat on Pesach evening from slightly before the time of *Minchah*, in order that one will approach eating matzah with appetite. However, one may eat some fruit or vegetables, but should not fill up on them.

The Sages of the former generations would starve themselves on Pesach eve so that they would eat matzah with appetite, and thus hold the mitzvot as dear. In contrast, on the eve of Sabbaths or other festivals, one may continue eating until darkness.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. It is a positive commandment of the Torah to relate the miracles and wonders wrought for our ancestors in Egypt on the night of the fifteenth of Nisan, as [Exodus 13:3] states: "Remember this day,

Similarly, it is forbidden to eat -- a meal with matzah (even matzah kneaded with wine, which is not included in the prohibition mentioned above) on Pesach evening from slightly before the time of *Minchah* -- The Sages defined this time as nine hours after the beginning of the day. (The time of *Minchah* is nine and a half hours after the beginning of the day.)

This time is also calculated according to "seasonal hours." (See Commentary, Halachah 1:8.) Thus, if dawn was at 5:09 AM and three stars appear at 6:45 PM, nine hours would be 3:21 PM.

in order that one will approach eating matzah with appetite. However, one may eat some fruit or vegetables -- or other similar foods that do not satiate one's appetite but should not fill up on them -- for then, one will not eat the matzah with relish.

The Sages of the former generations would starve themselves on Pesach eve -- *Pesachim* 108a relates that Rav Sheshet would fast the entire day even though he was not a firstborn.

so that they would eat matzah with appetite, and thus hold the mitzvot as dear. In contrast -- greater leniency applies on the eve of Sabbaths or other festivals -- The Rambam's statements require some explanation. In *Hilchot Yom Tov* 6:16, the Rambam states:

It is proper for a person not to dine on the day before a festival from the time of *Minchah* onward, as on the day before the Sabbath.

The latter phrase is a reference to *Hilchot Shabbat* 30:4, which states: A person may eat and drink [on Friday] until nightfall. Nevertheless, as part of the honor given to the Shabbat, a person should refrain from scheduling a meal from the time of *Minchah* onward.

זמן אסור לאכול ערב הפסח מקדם המנחה במעט. כדי שיענינו לאכילת מצה בתאוה.

אבל אוכל הוא מעט פרות או דקוה, ולא ימלא קיפו מנו.

וחכמים הראשונים היו מרעיבין עצמן ערב הפסח, כדי לאכל מצה בתאוה, ורקו מצות חביבות עליו.

אבל בשאר ערבי שבתות או ערבי ימים טובים -- אוכל והולך עד שחוקשו.

פֶּרֶק שֶׁבִיעִי

א מצות עשה של הורה לספר הנסים ונפלאות שנעשו לאבותינו במצרים בליל המשעשע בניסן. שנאמר:

Thus, on the day before the Sabbath and other festivals, a person should not schedule an important meal. However, he may partake of a casual meal and continue eating. On Pesach, even the latter is forbidden.

one may continue eating until darkness. -- at which time one is required to cease eating. However, a person who desires to continue eating may cover his food with a cloth, recite Kiddush, and return to his meal, as explained in *Hilchot Shabbat* 29:12.

Commentary, Halachah 1

It is a positive commandment of the Torah -- *Sefer HaMitzvot* (positive commandment 157), *Sefer HaChinuch* (mitzvah 21)

to relate -- *Hilchot Kri'at Shema* 1:3 mentions that it is a mitzvah to recall the Exodus from Egypt twice daily. The Rambam makes no further mention of that mitzvah in the *Mishneh Torah*, nor does he mention it in *Sefer HaMitzvot*. There is a basic difference between these two obligations. Throughout the year, a brief recollection is all that is required. On Pesach night, we must elaborate, relating the entire story of the Exodus.

the miracles and wonders wrought for our ancestors in Egypt on the night -- In *Sefer HaMitzvot* (*ibid.*), the Rambam states "the beginning of the night," implying that we should begin telling the story of the Exodus in the first portion of the night.

of the fifteenth of Nisan -- the night of the plague of the firstborn, when Pharaoh gave the Jews permission to leave Egypt.

as [Exodus 13:3] states: "Remember this day -- the fifteenth of Nisan

on which you left Egypt," just as [Exodus 20:8] states: "Remember the Sabbath day."

From where [is it derived that this mitzvah is to be fulfilled on] the night of the fifteenth? The Torah teaches [Exodus 13:8]: "And you shall tell your son on that day, saying: 'It is because of this...'" [implying that the mitzvah is to be fulfilled] when matzah and maror are placed before you.

[The mitzvah applies] even though one does not have a son. Even great Sages are obligated to tell about the Exodus from Egypt. Whoever elaborates concerning the events which occurred and took place is worthy of praise.

2. It is a mitzvah to inform one's sons even though they do not ask, as [Exodus 13:8] states: "You shall tell your son."

on which you left Egypt" – implying that we are commanded to commemorate the day of the Exodus.
just as [Exodus 20:8] states: "Remember the Sabbath day." – This addition is a quote from the *Mechiliah* and *Shemot Rabbah*. Nevertheless, the commentators have questioned its necessity. Some explain that the word *וְכִר* does not follow the grammatical form usually used for commandments, and hence the comparison with the Sabbath is valuable.

Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 21, explains that *Shemot Rabbah* states that the remembrance of the Sabbath is *נִרְמָזָה בְּרִישָׁתָא*, "a commemoration of the work of creation." The remembrance of the exodus, it continues, must also emphasize the wonders and miracles that God performed.

What is the common point between the Sabbath and the exodus? Both emphasize how God is above nature and, hence, can change nature according to His will. This quality is also reflected in our service. At the very beginning of *Hilchot Shabbat*, the Rambam emphasizes how the observance of the Sabbath is connected with a positive mitzvah: rest. A Jew steps beyond his weekday activities and devotes his energies to spiritual activities bond with God.

Similarly, the recollection of the exodus from Egypt must take us beyond our everyday activities to the extent that as stated in Halachah 7:6 "He presents himself as if he, himself, is leaving the slavery of Egypt."

From where [is it derived that this mitzvah is to be fulfilled on] the night of the fifteenth? The Torah teaches [Exodus 13:8]: "And you shall tell your son on that day – relating the story of the Exodus

saying: 'It is because of this...'" – The *Mechiliah* interprets this as a reference to matzah and maror. Thus, the verse is [implying that the mitzvah] – of relating the story of the exile [is to be fulfilled] when matzah and maror are placed before you – i.e., on the night

"וְכִר אֶת הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָצְאֶתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם,"
כְּמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "וְכִר אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת."

וּמִנֵּי שְׁבִיל מְשֹׁה־עֶשֶׂר? תִּלְמוּד לומר:
"וְהַיּוֹם לְכִרָּה יוֹם הַיּוֹם לְאֹמֶר בְּבִבְרוּתָהּ" – בְּשִׁעָה שְׁלֹשׁ מִצְוֵה וּמִדּוּר
מְבֻחִים לְפָנֶיהָ.

וְאֵי-עַל-פִּי שְׂאִין לוֹ כּוּן.

אִפְלוּ תְּבַמְּתִים גְּדוּלִים –

תְּבַמְּתִים לְסִפְרָה בִּיציאת מצרים.

וְלֵךְ הַמֵּאֲרִיף פְּרָבְרִים שְׂאֵרְעוּ וְשִׁהִיוּ – הַרְיָ זֶה מְשִׁבָּת.

– לְפִי רַעְיוֹ שֶׁל בֶּן אָבִיו מְלֻמְדוֹ.

– לְפִי רַעְיוֹ שֶׁל בֶּן אָבִיו מְלֻמְדוֹ.

of the fifteenth of Nisan, when it is a mitzvah to eat matzah, as explained in Halachah 6:1.

[The mitzvah applies] even though one does not have a son – This clause is necessary because from the expression "and you shall tell your son," one might imply that the mitzvah only applies to a person with children.

Even great Sages are obligated to tell about the Exodus from Egypt. – to quote the Haggadah: "Even if we are all wise, all men of understanding, all Sages, all knowledgeable about the Torah, it is a mitzvah incumbent upon us to relate the Exodus from Egypt." Many commentators explain that the story the Haggadah quotes concerning Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Yehoshua, and the other Sages is brought to demonstrate and prove this point.

Whoever elaborates concerning the events which occurred and took place is worthy of praise – *Sefer Hamitzvot* (ibid.) praises: "Whoever adds further statements and elaborates more on the greatness of what God did for us and the wickedness and violence with which the Egyptians treated us, and how God took His revenge upon them..."

Commentary, Halachah 2

It is a mitzvah to inform one's sons even though they do not ask, as [Exodus 13:8] states: "You shall tell your son." – Though Exodus 13:14 states: "And it shall come to pass that your son will ask you:..." the verse quoted demonstrates that the father's explanations need not necessarily come in response to his son's questions (*Mechiliah* of *Rashbi*).

Mishnah 3

When they had brought¹ before him² he dips³ lettuce⁴ before he reaches the breaking of the bread.⁵ They brought before him⁶ unleavened bread, lettuce, fruit-spice sauce,⁷ and two cooked dishes,⁸ although the fruit-spice is not obligatory.⁹ R. Eliezer bar Zadok says, It is obligatory.¹⁰ And when the Temple existed they used to bring before him the bones of the Pass-over offering.¹¹

1. *Vegetables* (according to רש"י and רשב"א) the food (according to ר"י). Some texts add *greens and lettuce*. 2. The participant at the table. 3. Into vinegar or salt water. 4. Or other vegetable into a condiment and eats it. 5. 'bread sauce'—a bread condiment which was bitter. Only the vegetable (referred to as *קרפס* in the instructions in the *תורת הטהרה*) may be eaten until the proper time for eating the *מצה*. *מצה* actually means *appetiser, salad, dessert*, and some render this phrase *until he comes to the bitter herbs*. 6. *i.e.*, the celebrant. 7. Finely ground fruit, nut and spices mixed with wine, used as a sauce for neutralising the bitter taste of the *קרור*. 8. An egg to symbolise the *לחם מרים* and meat (roasted bone) in token of the *מרים*. 9. Literally *commandment, i.e.*, a ritual obligation. No benediction is recited over the *מרים* because it is secondary to the *קרור*. 10. The *מרים* is symbolic in remembrance of the mortar which the Israelites used for building in Egypt. 11. *i.e.*, the whole roasted carcass of the *מרים* was served up.

Mishnah 4

They poured out for him the second cup.¹ And here² the child asks his father, and if the child has insufficient understanding³ his father instructs⁴ him: *Wherefore⁵ is this night different from all other nights, because on all other nights we may eat both leavened and unleavened bread but on this night only unleavened bread? Because⁶ on all other nights we may eat any kind of herbs, but on this*

the man brought from outside. 7 Literally *hands*. 8 To eat of the *מרים*.

CHAPTER 10

Mishnah 1

When every eve of Passover is close to the *Minchah Service*,¹ one may not eat until it becomes dark,² and even a poor person in Israel may not eat until he reclines,³ and they give him⁴ not less than four cups of wine⁵ even though he⁶ is supported from the charity-food.⁷

1. Or the *Evening Sacrifice, i.e.*, *מנחה קטנה*. About half an hour before, *i.e.*, at the beginning of the tenth hour (3.0 p.m.) (*Numbers* 28, 8. See 5^a). 2. So as to enjoy fully the eating of the *מצה*. 3. On a couch at the table. 4. The guardians of the poor. 5. Or *her*. 6. Corresponding to the four terms *אין יושב, ואלא יפחוהו, ואלא יתענה, ואלא יתענה* used in the story of the redemption (*Exodus* 6, 6, 7). 7. He must still get wine for four cups. 8. Or *Poor-Dish, תבואה, tray, pot*, in which food was collected from the public for the poor.

Mishnah 2

When the first cup had been filled up,¹ the School of Shammai say, He recites the Benediction over the day² and then he recites the Benediction over the wine;³ but the School of Hillel say, He recites the Benediction over the wine and after that he recites the Benediction over the day.⁴

1. Literally *they poured out for him the first cup*. Here begins a description of the *Service* which is essentially as we practise it nowadays. 2. *i.e.*, *ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פני תבואה*. 3. *ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו, מלך העולם, בורא פני תבואה, מלך העולם, בורא פני תבואה*. 4. Their view is accepted. 5. Compare *ברכות* 8^a. Concerning the sanctity of the Festival.

* *קוג, mix, i.e.*, mingle with water and spices.

Unit Two Resources

Lesson 1 Resources

Resource 2.1a	Hanukah Card
Resource 2.1b	Cultural references from the song
Resource 2.1c	Song Lyrics

Lesson 2 & 3 Resource

Resource 2.2a	Lesson Resources (Talk Show)
Resource 2.2b	Scheinerman article narratives
Resource 2.2c	Zucker on holiday narratives
Resource 2.2c	Maccabees

Lesson 4 Resource

Resource 2.4a	Copy of Krovetz L'Purim
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Lesson 5 Resource

Resource 2.5a	Mishneh Torah Ta'anit, Chapter 1
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- Indicates background reading for educator

Chanukah is pretty similar to
all Jewish holidays.

They tried to kill us,
we survived,
let's eat!



Cultural References from the song, “They Tried to Kill Us...” by Sean Altman

The Ten Commandments is a 1956 epic film produced and directed by Cecil B. DeMille that dramatized the biblical story of the Exodus, in which the Hebrew-born Moses, an adopted Egyptian prince, becomes the deliverer of the Hebrew slaves. It starred **Charlton Heston** in the lead role as Moses, **Yul Brynner** as his adoptive brother, Pharaoh Ramses II.

(From Wikipedia)

The **Viet Cong** were guerilla members of the Vietnamese Communist movement. The American Armed Forces fought against the Viet Cong during the Vietnam War from 1959-1975.

(Adapted from Merriam-Webster Dictionary online.)

Louis Farrakhan Muhammad, Sr. (born 1933) is the leader of the mainly African-American religious movement the Nation of Islam (NOI). The Southern Poverty Law Center describes Farrakhan as an anti-Semite. Many of Farrakhan's comments have been deemed antisemitic by the Anti-Defamation League.

In 2012, the Simon Wiesenthal Center included some of Farrakhan's comments on its list of the Top 10 anti-Semitic slurs of that year. Christopher Hitchens once recounted a meeting of the Nation of Islam he attended in 1985 where Farrakhan said to a cheering audience "and remember jews, when God puts you in the oven, it's forever." Nathan Pearlmutter, then Chair of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), referred to Farrakhan as the new "Black Hitler" and Village Voice journalist Nat Hentoff also characterized the Nation of Islam leader as a "Black Hitler" while a guest on a New York radio talk-show.

(From Wikipedia)

Ferkakt A Yiddish word whose literal translation is “over-cooked.” It is used commonly to mean “gone bad, gone awry, messed up.”

Song Lyrics

“They Tried to Kill Us...”

by Sean Altman & Rob Tannenbaum

We were slaves to pharaoh in Egypt
The year was 1492
Hitler had just invaded Poland
Madonna had just become a Jew
Moses was found on the Potomac
Then he marched with Martin Luther King
He came back to free us from our bondage
~~'Cause S&M has never been our thing~~

They tried to kill us, we survived, let's eat
They tried to kill us, we were faster on our feet
So they chase us to the border
There's a parting of the water
Tried to kill us, we survived, let's eat

Then the Pharaoh, who looked like Yul Brynner
Heard the Jews were trying to escape
Charlton Heston came right down from the mountain
He said, "Pharaoh, you're a damn dirty ape"
The menorah was almost out of oil
Farrakhan was planning Kristalnacht
The gefitile fish was nearing extinction
It looked like Moses and his flock were fehrkakt

They tried to kill us, we survived, let's eat
They tried to kill us, we were faster on our feet
And we knew how to resist

'Cause we'd rented Schindler's List
Tried to kill us, we survived, let's eat

The 10 Egyptian plagues

1. Blood
 2. Locusts
 3. Boils
 4. Dandruff
 5. Acne
 6. Backne
 7. Indigestion
 8. Sciatica
 9. Cataracts
 10. Sickle cell anemia
- We fled on foot, there was no time to tarry
Leavening the bread would take too long
All we had was egg foo yung and matzah
While battling the fearsome Viet Cong

And so tonight, we gather to remember
The ancient Hebrews who paid the price
We have a Seder, each year in December
To commemorate our savior, Jesus Christ

They tried to kill us, we survived, let's eat
They tried to kill us, we were faster on our feet
So we never did succumb to the annual pogrom
Tried to kill us, we survived, let's eat

They tried to kill us, we survived, let's eat
They tried to kill us, we were faster on our feet
So come on, blow the shofar
'Cause they haven't nailed us so far
Tried to kill us, we survived,

Resources for Lesson 2.2

Talk Show Assignment

Introduction: Every narrative has a hero; who the hero is, is often up for interpretation. Even when a narrative is based on historical events, the author chooses to tell the story in a way that implies a hero. Jewish tradition provides us with many narratives about the Jewish People and their survival through trying events. We have many original texts that tell the story of the Jewish People: TaNaKh, documents written by chroniclers, Rabbinic retelling of the narratives, and modern interpretations. From each of these stories we can infer who the hero of each narrative is, or in other words, “Who is responsible for the survival of the Jewish People?” How we interpret these narratives can influence our ideas about the responsibility we have to actively pursue our own continuity as well as how responsible where are to pursue other causes in the world.

The Assignment: This activity will culminate in a talk-show style interview about the question of who is responsible for the redemption and survival of the Jewish People. The talk show, which will take place in the next class session, will include four presenters: 1) talk show host, 2) a guest who advocates God is responsible, 3) a guest who advocates the Jewish People are responsible, and 4) a guest who advocates that survival is a partnership between God and the Jewish People.

You have been assigned to a research team to help prepare one of the following four parties:

- 1) The host
- 2) Guest advocating God is responsible
- 3) Guest advocating the Jewish People are responsible
- 4) Guest advocating survival is a partnership between God and the Jewish People

Please refer to the handout for suggested passages and copies of helpful texts.

How to Prepare for the Talk Show

For the Guests' Research Teams:

Use the following guiding questions to help prepare your argument. Remember that you not only have to find texts in support of your argument; you should also understand the texts that the other guests on the show might use to advance their argument. This is not a formal debate, but as on any talk show, you are there to present a convincing argument with (textual) evidence to support you.

Step 1. (30 minutes)

Assign students to each narrative. Choose a facilitator, a recorder, and a speaker to be the guest on the talk show. (These three positions should also be assigned to a narrative.) Each group is responsible for studying each text of the narrative to ascertain which, if any, texts of that narrative support your position.

For each text, answer the following questions:

- What is the conflict or challenge in the text? What danger do the Jewish People face?
- Who are the named characters in the text (including God)?
- What actions does each of these characters take, if any?
- What is the outcome of the actions taken?
- Is there an obvious hero in this story? If so, who? (Highlight text that supports your opinion.) OR:
- Is there any ambiguity about who is the hero? If so, what are the possible options? (Highlight text that supports your opinion.)
- Compare each text from your narrative. Do the texts tell the story in the same way? Did you come up with different answers to any of the above questions for each text?

Step 2. (20-30 minutes)

The facilitator should reconvene the group. Each person/pair should summarize their findings. Draw attention to the text you highlighted in support of your group's argument. As a group, answer the following questions. The recorder should take notes:

- Does any single narrative (all texts of that narrative) fully support your argument? If so, which one?
- If not, which texts from each narrative support your argument?

- Choose 2-3 texts that your presenter will highlight during the talk show.
- Do you think another guest might use the same text to support their own argument? If so, what will be your response?

Step 3. (10-15 minutes)

The recorder should type up (or cut and paste) the texts that the presenter will use during the talk show. Email the texts to the host's research team. The presenter should practice what they are going to say on the talk show. Members of the group should give feedback and suggest ways to improve the presentation. Someone from that team will prepare slides that will be projected during the show.

Resource

How to Prepare for the Talk Show

For the host's research team:

In a sense, you have the most challenging job. Do the best you can to become familiar with all the texts. Your main job is to figure out an engaging angle to this discussion. Think about why this topic is relevant to people today? Why ask this question in the first place?

Step 1. (30 minutes)

Choose three texts to study - one from each narrative. For those texts, answer the questions below. Discuss which of these texts might be used for which arguments.

- What is the conflict or challenge in the text? What danger do the Jewish People face?
- Who are the named characters in the text (including God)?
- What actions does each of these characters take, if any?
- What is the outcome of the actions taken?
- Is there an obvious hero in this story? If so, who? OR:
- Is there any ambiguity about who is the hero? If so, what are the possible options?
- Which argument do you think each text supports?

Step 2. (30 minutes)

- Create a title for the show segment. The title should be in the form of a question that gets to the heart of the issue. The title should be catchy and edgy. It should hook the audience.
- Prepare a one minute introduction to the show. Explain the question at hand. Explain why you think these three narratives are important when exploring the question.
- Prepare three questions that you will ask each guest. The first question should be on the peshat level. The second on the drash level. The third on a midrash level, asking the guest to explain their own interpretation. Make the intro catchy.
- Prepare one to two questions that the host will pose to the audience. These questions should ask the audience to relate the issue to their own lives. They should get at the issue of how identifying the hero might affect their identity and sense of responsibility.

Step 3. (10 -15 minutes)

Prepare a slide show to be used for the show. The slide show should be very simple. Include: a title slide, slides with the texts from each group, and a slide with the questions that you will be asking the audience.

Holiday Narratives Source Texts

PASSOVER NARRATIVE - Passover Haggadah – Maggid section

Exodus 1:8-15:22

Suggested passages: 4:1, 10; 14: 11-12; 14:15-17, 21-22; 14:28-29; 15:1-4;

Babylonian Talmud, Sotah 36b-37a

The rabbis discuss a “behind the scenes” look at the moment when the Israelites are standing at the Sea of Reeds:

At that time Moses was engaged for a long while in prayer, so the Holy One Blessed be God said to him, ‘My beloved ones are drowning in the sea and you prolong prayer before Me?!’

Moses replied to God, ‘Lord of the Universe, what else is there in my power to do?’

God replied to him, ‘Tell the Israelites to go forward. And you lift up your rod and hold out your arm...’ [Exodus 14:115-16]. For that reason Judah was worthy to be made the ruling power in Israel, as it is said: ‘Judah became God’s sanctuary, Israel his dominion’ [Psalm 114:2]. Why did Judah become God’s sanctuary and Israel his dominion? ‘Because the sea saw (him) and fled’ [Psalm 114:3].

ESTHER NARRATIVE - Book of Esther

Suggested passages: Esther 4:1-5; 7:1-6; 9:5;

HANUKKAH NARRATIVE - Maccabees I

Suggested passages: 2:33-38; 2:39-41; 7:39-50;

Maccabees II

Suggested passages: 1:10-17; 15:25-27, 30, 33, 35-36

BT Shabbat 21b

What is the reason for Chanukah? For our Rabbis taught: On the 25th of Kislev begin the days of Chanukah, which are 8, during which lamentation for the dead and fasting are forbidden. For when the Greeks entered the Temple, they defiled all the oils in it, and when the Hasmonean dynasty prevailed against and defeated them, they (the Hasmoneans) searched and found only one cruse of oil which

possessed the seal of the High Priest, but which contained sufficient oil for only one day's lighting; yet a miracle occurred there and they lit (the lamp) for 8 days.

Narratives of the Jewish People as told on _____ (Holiday)

This is a suggested template for students to use on their computer or on a class wiki or other memory-sharing online space.

	<u>Narrative Text</u> <u>#1</u>	<u>Narrative Text</u> <u>#2</u>	<u>Narrative Text</u> <u>#3</u>
Source of text:			
Biblical/Apocryphal/Rabbinic?			
What was the problem or challenge faced by the Jewish People?			
What was the Jewish People's role?			
What was God's role?			
Who is the hero?			
What is the story telling us about...			
The Jewish People's relationship with God?			
The responsibilities and obligations of the Jewish People?			
How does this narrative affect your personal sense of connection with, and responsibility to identify the Jewish people, non-Jews, and God?			

Another rabbi ordained quite recently, Sarah Bassin, distills the essence of her rabbinic thesis as she analyzes humor in the Book of Esther. Her concerns over that book's violence joins hands with similar concerns in the articles by colleagues who've written in these, and other, pages before: Amy Scheinerman, David Zucker, and Yossi Feintuch. All four authors see Esther as a complex character, someone who must control what she reveals to others. This awareness, in turn, echoes in Yakov Azriel's poem "The Marrano Woman." Azriel is new to these pages, and it's nice that we're able to include Adam Fisher's review of his recent book of poetry as well.

We are also happy to include five additional biblical text studies: on Jacob, Esav, Jonah, Jeremiah, and the *Akeidah*—by our teacher Norman Cohen, Ed Treister, Moshe Reiss, Mark Dov Shapiro, and Ian Silverman respectively. All the texts focused upon in these articles figure prominently in Torah study groups and synagogue services. These studies of ancient texts are joined by a contribution dealing with modern Hebrew texts under our innovative new *Maayanot* (Primary Sources) rubric: "*We Have Not Reached God*," an Essay by Chava Pinchas-Cohen on Two Poems by Admiel Kosman," featuring translation, notes, and commentary by another of our teachers, Stanley Nash.

Amidst this issue's bevy of rabbinic authors, lay leader Claire Gorfinkel reminds us that living, often suffering people matter as much as revered texts. She examines the way in which individual privacy needs to be respected while building caring communities.

Claire dedicates her piece to Rabbi Carole Meyers, *z"l*, with whom I was privileged to study on a weekly basis for several years. Carole had a truly special way of supporting inquiry while maintaining relationships, a keen mind and a searching spirit, and a smile that spread from her face into surrounding space. These qualities displayed themselves within the CCAR as within congregational, community, and study-group circles. Let me take the editor's liberty of dedicating this issue of the *CCAR Journal* to Carole.

Susan Laemmler, Editor

Exodus, Esther, and the Maccabees in Conversation: "They Tried to Kill Us; We Survived; Let's Eat"

Amy Scheinerman

Perfect vacuums don't exist—even in the deep reaches of space. Texts are not written in a vacuum any more than their authors live hermetically sealed lives apart from society and all other literature. Every text bears the marks of external influence. Certainly texts are shaped by their author's worldview and personality, but also by other texts. They may bear evidence of influence of another text, allude to another text, or be in conversation with another text, responding to issues it raises.

Contemporary literature is replete with examples of texts whose appreciation depends on the reader's familiarity with an earlier text. John Steinbeck's *East of Eden* (1952) is not fully comprehensible without knowledge of the Eden story in Genesis (chapter 2) that so deeply influenced Steinbeck. *East of Eden* is replete with signs¹ pointing to the biblical account of the first family. In Steinberg's novel, Eden is transferred to Salinas Valley, in northern California.

Poststructuralist Julie Kristeva coined the term "intertextuality" in 1966 to describe an author's borrowing and transformation of a prior text or a reader's recognizing or referencing one text while reading another. As David Blumenthal wrote in a review of Daniel Boyarin's *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*, "The Bible, including the Torah, is no exception; hence, it is a severely gapped text—repetitive, self-contradictory, and ambiguous."² Boyarin

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scious citations of earlier discourse, both biblical and midrashic. Deuteronomy, Psalms,³ and Prophets⁴ frequently reference the Exodus. Clearly, the authors knew some form of the story and it informed their thinking and writing. Judy Klitsner, in *Subversive Sequels*,⁵ examines biblical stories that not only reflect earlier stories, but also subtly undermine them.

My purpose is to explore a case of biblical intertextuality, in which the Book of Esther is in conversation with the story of the Exodus, undermining and overturning the fundamental premise of Exodus (chapters 1 through 15) concerning the nature and source of redemption. The Books of the Maccabees enter the conversation, aware of the perspectives of Exodus and Esther. The Sages, inheritors of this lively conversation, then work out a Rabbinic perspective on redemption and Jewish agency in the world.

We are all familiar with the old saw that Jewish holidays have the same theme: "They tried to kill us; we survived; let's eat." This refrain applies to Chanukah, Purim, and Pesach. We celebrate them in that calendric order, but historically, their stories are written in the opposite order. The Book of Exodus was set down in writing by the end of the sixth century B.C.E. The story of the Exodus is our foundational myth, explaining our national origin, purpose, and trajectory as a people. The story of the Exodus informs everything that comes afterward. Its message of redemption becomes the central theme of Jewish prayer and longing, its story the paradigm for future redemption. The author of Esther (written in the fourth or third century B.C.E.) surely knew the story of the Exodus intimately. I hold that the author of the Book of Esther offers a radically different and undermining message concerning redemption, expressing fundamental disagreement with the central message of the Exodus tale. In the fullness of time, the story of Chanukah, as filtered through the apocryphal Books of the Maccabees and the Rabbis' Talmudic perspective, sought to reconcile these antithetical views. My examination will be along the lines of literary motifs and themes, as well as character and plot details.

The Exodus narrative and the Book of Esther have much in common. Both the Exodus and Esther take place in foreign lands. Neither Egypt nor Persia is a location Jews associate with good memories. Exodus, Daniel, and Esther make clear that Egypt and Persia are dangerous places for Jews.⁶ In both locals, the Jews are a

then officially initiates a genocidal plan that terrorizes the Jewish population.⁷ In Exodus we are told that the Jews lived as honored guests, the extended family of Joseph, for many years, until "A new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph" (Exod. 1:8), meaning he did not remember or recognize the good Joseph had done for Egypt. In Esther, the Jews live more or less comfortably in Persia until the king's prime minister, Haman, turns against them because Mordecai refuses to recognize Haman in the manner Haman demands. Both Pharaoh and Haman argue that the Jews are a dangerous cancer in the midst of the body politic, a fifth column that cannot be trusted:

[Pharaoh] said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are much too numerous for us. Let us deal shrewdly with them, so that they may not increase; otherwise in the event of war they may join our enemies in fighting against us and rise from the ground." (Exod. 1:9-10)

Haman then said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people, scattered and dispersed among the other peoples in all the provinces of your realm, whose laws are different from those of any other people and who do not obey the king's laws; and it is not in Your Majesty's interest to tolerate them." (Esther 3:8)

The suggestion in both cases is that given half a chance, the Jews will rebel and overthrow the throne or join those with a similar aim. In Exodus 1:10, Pharaoh explicitly articulates the fear that the Israelites will grow numerous and form a fifth column. Haman (Esther 3:8) hints at the very same thing: These people could turn against us and seize power or minimally side with our enemies. Such a danger must be eradicated; the foreigners that present such a danger must be eliminated. In each case a plan is initiated by royal edict:

The king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, saying, "When you deliver the Hebrew women, look at the birthstool: if it is a boy, kill him; if it is a girl, let her live." . . . Then Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, "Every boy that is born you shall throw into the Nile, but let every girl live." (Exod. 1:15-16)

On the thirteenth day of the first month . . . The issues were ordered in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king's signet. Accordingly, written instructions were dispatched by couriers to all the king's provinces to destroy, massacre, and exterminate all the Jews, young and old, children and women. (Esther 3:12-13)

Both Pharaoh and King Ahasuerus authorize genocide.⁸ The pharaoh of Egypt commands the midwives Shiphrah and Puah to kill all the Hebrew baby boys as soon as they emerge from the womb. King Ahasuerus signs Haman's decree authorizing a far more extensive genocide: the people of Persia are to murder all the Jews—"young and old, children and women"—on the fourteenth of Adar. Esther evokes the genocide of Exodus, taken to a higher level; where the Egyptians seek to kill the baby boys and thereby slow down the birthrate of the Hebrews, and possibly eventually destroy them, the Persian edict seeks to kill the entire population at once. For both communities, the situation is dire.

In both stories, a hero arises from amidst the people. The Jewish identity of both is disguised; both masquerade as royalty. Moses, born to Jochebed and Amram, is secreted for three months and then sent floating down the Nile in a reed basket with no markings to identify him. Under his sister Miriam's watchful eye, he floats into the path of the compassionate daughter of Pharaoh, whom the Rabbis honor with the name Batya ("daughter of God"). Moses is adopted by Pharaoh's daughter (Exod. 2:6-10) and raised in the palace of the Pharaoh himself, the very man planning the genocide of Moses and his people, the Hebrews. He is a prince of Egypt, though he is a Hebrew and not an Egyptian. Esther's story has many parallels. Esther is adopted and raised by her uncle Mordecai. She enters the king's palace to participate in a beauty contest, but conceals her Jewish identity at Mordecai's behest. In the harem, preparing for her audience with the king, Hegai, guardian of the women, supervises Esther. Hegai takes a particular liking to Esther and takes exceptionally good care of her (Esther 2:8-9). King Ahasuerus chooses her as his queen, never knowing that she is a Jew. Esther lives in the palace with the very man who set his seal on a decree to annihilate her and her people, the Jews. Esther is the queen of Persia though she is a Jew and not a Persian.⁹

Both Moses, prince of Egypt, and Esther, queen of Persia, become members of the royal family, their Jewish identity a secret.

Each is poised to act on behalf of his or her people. Both express extreme reluctance to assume their roles. Moses protests to God that he lacks both speaking skills and credibility with the people.

But Moses spoke up and said, "What if they do not believe me and do not listen to me, but say: The Lord did not appear to you?" . . . But Moses said to the Lord, "Please, O Lord, I have never been a man of words, either in times past or now that You have spoken to Your servant; I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." (Exod. 4:1, 10)

Moses fears failure and the wrath of his people. Esther fears failure and death at the hands of an angry king. Esther protests to Mordecai that she cannot initiate a visit to the king because such an act is against palace protocol and might result in her death (Esther 4:11). God does not permit Moses to escape from his mission, but reassures him that he will enjoy assistance from his brother, Aaron, as well as divine backup. Mordecai merely tells Esther she has no choice: If she doesn't risk her life, she'll surely lose it anyway. There is no divine backup for her: the risk is total, and herein the story of Esther takes its first major departure from the Exodus.

In the Exodus story, Moses is God's mouthpiece, proclaiming to Pharaoh what God instructs him to say. God is the planner. Moses helps to carry out the plan. Esther, however, conceives the scheme to seduce King Ahasuerus in order to save her people. Although Mordecai urges her to act, as God urged Moses, the scheme is hers, and she speaks her own words. She is not a prophet, but she is unquestionably a hero of epic proportion; her ingenuity and courage save the Jews.

In both stories, the enemies of the Jews die in great numbers, yet there are no casualties among the Jews. Exodus reports:

The waters turned back and covered the chariots and the horsemen—Pharaoh's entire army that followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites had marched through the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. (Exod. 14:28-29)

We do not know how many Egyptians died that day; Esther, however, explicitly enumerates the Persians who died—again without a single Jew reported being injured:

And so, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month—that is, the month of Adar—when the king's command and decree were to be executed, the very day on which the enemies of the Jews had expected to get them in their power, the opposite happened, and the Jews got their enemies in their power. Throughout the provinces of King Ahasuerus, the Jews mustered in their cities to attack those who sought their hurt; and no one could withstand them, for the fear of them had fallen upon all the peoples . . . So the Jews struck at their enemies with the sword, slaying and destroying; they wreaked their will upon their enemies. In the fortress of Shushan the Jews killed a total of five hundred men . . . the Jews in Shushan mustered again on the fourteenth day of Adar and slew three hundred men in Shushan, but they did not lay hands on the spoil. The rest of the Jews, those in the king's provinces, likewise mustered and fought for their lives. They disposed of their enemies, killing seventy-five thousand of their foes; but they did not lay hands on the spoil. (Esther 9:1-2, 5, 15-16)

If we're keeping a tally, the total is 75,811, including Haman and his ten sons (Esther 9:10-17). It is in this aspect of the stories that we begin to see clearly what separates them: God battles for the Israelites at the Reed Sea, as acknowledged in *Shirat HaYam*, which describes God as a warrior and deliverer.

Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the Lord. They said:

I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously;

Horse and driver He has hurled into the sea.

The Lord is my strength and might;

He is become my deliverance.

This is my God and I will enshrine Him;

The God of my father, and I will exalt Him.

The Lord, the Warrior—

Lord is His name!

Pharaoh's chariots and his army

He has cast into the sea;

And the pick of his officers

Are drowned in the sea of Reeds. (Exod. 15:1-4)

The powerless Israelites witness God's might, but do not share in God's agency or glory. They are the passive recipients of God's redemptive power.

The Jews of Persia, however, battle for themselves. The text is most explicit on this point:

So the Jews struck at their enemies with the sword, slaying and destroying; they wreaked their will upon their enemies. (Esther 9:5)

The Jews of Persia have will, agency, and power. They do not appeal to God. They neither wait for, nor depend on, God to fight their battle and save them. The Jews of Persia defend themselves, vanquish their enemies, and are their own deliverers.

With so much in common, the stories differ in their most central tenet: the nature of redemption. Who has the power to bring redemption to those who are in grave danger and drastic need? The story of the Exodus sets the baseline, the paradigm: Only God can redeem. God, who is creator and sovereign, is the sole redeemer in the universe. Pharaoh can enslave, but only God can liberate. Pharaoh can instigate genocide, but only God can save the Hebrews. Esther responds to this unilateral claim by asserting that Jews are not only capable of effecting their own salvation, but even more: Ultimately, they are responsible for their own redemption. They cannot rely solely on God. They must act shrewdly and forcefully on their own behalf.¹⁰

For the Exodus, redemption comes by God's hand, according to God's schedule. Israel remains in slavery four centuries¹¹ until God chooses to redeem them and bring them in freedom to Mount Sinai, there to enter into a covenant with God. Israel is entirely passive throughout the redemption and until they reach Mount Sinai. Moses is a mouthpiece and helps organize the people to march out of Egypt at the prescribed hour, but Moses does not bring redemption. Only God does.¹²

In the Book of Esther, in contrast, God is not mentioned. Not once. Mordecai tells Esther she is her people's only hope, and instructs her to go to the king. Esther, recognizing the risk, is frightened, but she overcomes her fear to conceive a clever plan to use her feminine wiles to bewitch the king. Her plan succeeds brilliantly. She secures the king's attention and affection toward the end of entrapping Haman and overturning the decree concerning the Jews. While Esther does not succeed at the latter—because decrees bearing the seal of the king are insoluble—she secures

an additional decree authorizing the Jews to defend themselves against attackers, which they do handily.

Both stories recount immense death and disaster. The Ten Plagues wreak havoc on Egypt, the tenth bringing about countless deaths. Pharaoh's horsemen and charioteers drown in the Reed Sea. Moses holds his arm out over the sea (Exod. 14:26) but we are to know that it is primarily God's *yad ingdolah* (great hand) (Exod. 14:31) that ultimately accounts for the deaths of Israel's enemies. The Book of Esther ends with the massacre of Persians who attack their Jewish neighbors. Remarkably, only Persians die in the fierce and bloody hand-to-hand combat—not a single Jew is reported to have been killed. These Jews have the power to defend themselves, not only with their heads (Esther's wits and Mordecai's grit) but also with brute force: their hands brandish the weapons.

What is at stake? Just about everything. What does redemption mean? Do we wait for God to save us? Do we exert our own agency and fight for ourselves? What can and should we expect from God? What should and can we expect of ourselves? Esther offers a corrective to the God-centered redemption of Exodus that envisions the nation entirely passive. The Jewish nation may have arisen from slavery, but Jews are no longer in bondage and possessed of a slave mentality, needing someone else to battle for them. They are clever, they conceive plans on their own, they operate as a unified community,¹³ and they fight their enemies with their own hands.

The dates of Passover and Purim may also provide a clue. Exodus instructs the Hebrew slaves concerning animals they are to slaughter and whose blood will mark the lintels and doorposts of their homes when the tenth plague arrives. The instructions also include an admonition to sacrifice paschal lambs each year in commemoration:

Your lamb shall be without blemish, a yearling male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. You shall keep watch over it until the fourteenth day of this month [Nisan] and all the assembled congregation of the Israelites shall slaughter it at twilight. They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they are to eat it. They shall eat the flesh that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs. (Exod. 12:5-7)

The lambs are sacrificed at the end of the fourteenth day of Nisan, at twilight.¹⁴ The following day, the fifteenth day of Nisan, is the first day of the festival of Passover. Esther tells us that the Jews in the cities of the Provinces fought their enemies on the thirteenth of Adar, and rested and celebrated on the fourteenth day (Esther 9:17). But the Jews of Shushan fought on both the thirteenth and fourteenth and rested and celebrated on the fifteenth (Esther 9:18). Purim is celebrated yearly on the fourteenth of Adar except in walled cities, where it is celebrated on the fifteenth. It is curious that Purim precedes Passover by one month and one day, as if its message of Jewish activism is meant to overshadow the coming festival of Passover, lest Passover deliver a message of utter passivity and inactivity in the face of danger to the community.

The third festival in the "They tried to kill us; we survived; let's eat" trioka is Chanukah. The Maccabean Revolt against Antiochus IV Epiphanes in the second century B.C.E. was an attempt by a segment of the Jewish population to wrest control of the Land of Israel from the Hellenists of Syria who controlled the country, reestablish Jewish sovereignty, and replace the Hellenized priesthood with priests "untainted" by Hellenism. The Maccabees did not wait for God to save them. They initiated a revolt against their Greek overlords. Many who took up the fight took up arms, fled to the hills, and hid in caves and grottoes, engaging in guerilla warfare with the Hellenistic occupiers. The Book of I Maccabees from the Apocrypha tells us that the king's troops in Jerusalem learned of the revolt and prepared to attack the Jewish rebels on Shabbat:

And they [the king's officers] said to them, "Enough of this! Come out and do what the king commands, and you will live." But they said, "We will not come out, nor will we do what the king commands and so profane the Sabbath day." Then the enemy hastened to attack them. But they did not answer them or hurl a stone at them or block up their hiding places, for they said, "Let us all die in our innocence; heaven and earth testify for us that you are killing us unjustly." So [the Syrian king's soldiers] attacked [the Jewish rebels] on the Sabbath, and they died, with their wives and children and cattle, to the number of a thousand people. (I Macc. 2:33-38)

Mattathias's followers suffered devastating losses because they refused to fight on Shabbat. We are not told, however, that

Mattathias pleaded with God to protect the Jews from their enemies. Rather:

When Mattathias and his friends learned of it, they mourned for them deeply. And each said to his neighbor: "If we all do as our brethren have done and refuse to fight with the Gentiles for our lives and our ordinances, they will quickly destroy us from the earth." So they made this decision that day: "Let us fight against every man who comes to attack us on the Sabbath day; let us not all die as our brethren died in their hiding places." (I Macc. 2:39-41)

Mattathias does not look to heaven to fight his battle. His model is more akin to the human-agency model of Esther, rather than the God-centered model of Exodus. The Maccabees arrive at their own decisions and take decisive action; they do not expect miracles from heaven to save them from their enemies, though they will credit heaven after the fact.

Both I Maccabees and II Maccabees strongly hint at this linkage with Purim particularly in connection with Nicanor, the Syrian-Seleucid general who died in the battle of Bet Horon in 161 B.C.E.

Now Nicanor went out from Jerusalem and encamped in Beth-Horon, and the Syrian army joined him. And Judas encamped in Adasa with three thousand men. Then Judas prayed and said, "When the messengers from the king spoke blasphemy, thy angel went forth and struck down one hundred and eighty-five thousand of the Assyrians. So also crush this army before us today; let the rest learn that Nicanor has spoken wickedly against thy sanctuary, and judge him according to this wickedness." So the armies met in battle on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar. The army of Nicanor was crushed, and he himself was the first to fall in the battle. When his army saw that Nicanor had fallen, they threw down their arms and fled. The Jews pursued them a day's journey, from Adasa as far as Gazara, and as they followed kept sounding the battle call on the trumpets. And the men came out of all the villages of Judea round about, and they outflanked the enemy and drove them back to their pursuers, so that they all fell by the sword; not even one of them was left. Then the Jews seized the spoils and the plunder, and they cut off Nicanor's head and the right hand that he had so arrogantly stretched out, and brought them and displayed them just outside Jerusalem. The people rejoiced greatly and celebrated that day as a day of great

gladness. And they decreed that this day should be celebrated each year on the thirteenth day of Adar. (I Macc. 7:39-50)

Nicanor and his men advanced with trumps and battle songs; and Judas and his men met the enemy in battle with invocation to God and prayers. So, fighting with their hands and praying to God in their hearts, they laid low no less than thirty-five thousand men, and were greatly gladdened by God's manifestation . . . And the man who was ever in body and soul the defender of his fellow citizens, the man who maintained his youthful good will toward his countrymen, ordered them to cut off Nicanor's head and arm and carry them to Jerusalem . . . and he cut out the tongue of the ungodly Nicanor and said that he would give it piecemeal to the birds and hang up these rewards of his follow opposite the sanctuary . . . And he hung Nicanor's head from the citadel, a clear and conspicuous sign to every one of the help of the Lord. And they decreed by public vote never to let this day go unobserved, but to celebrate the thirteenth day of the twelfth month—which is called Adar in the Aramaic language—the day before Mordecai's day. (II Macc. 15:25-27, 30, 33, 35-36)

As in the Book of Esther, both accounts in the Books of the Maccabees catalogue the numbers of the enemy who fell in battle. Both accounts record the death and dismemberment of the general Nicanor. I Maccabees claims that Nicanor was the first to fall in battle and that his head was hung out in Jerusalem; we are reminded that Haman was the first enemy of the Jews of Persia to die and his impaled body was hung in Shushan for all to see (Esther 7:9-10). The date recorded in both accounts for the victory is the thirteenth of Adar, just one day before Purim. The author of II Maccabees, putatively Jason of Cyrene, even specifies that it precede "Mordecai's day" by one day (II Macc. 15:36). The people's celebration is accompanied by a decree that this date should be celebrated yearly, much as we find in Esther (9:20-23, 31).

Both I and II Maccabees mention God. In Adasa, Judas prays to God and attributes their victories thus far to God's inspiration. He speaks figuratively of an angel who defeated 185,000 Syrian soldiers, but he does not expect God to fight the battle. He knows that victory depends on the courage and fortitude of his fighters. For the author of II Maccabees it is sufficient to say that Judas invokes

God and prays, without recording the words he uses. For both authors, God is inspiration, not warrior.

With the Books of the Maccabees, we find a balance between the God-centered and God-only redemption of Exodus, and the humanly fought and wrought redemption of Esther. The Rabbis will go further and work out a partnership between God and Israel.

Chanukah and the War of the Maccabees are mentioned only in passing in a few *mishnayot*.¹⁵ Their primary treatment in the Gemara is found in *BT Shabbat* 21b. The discussion begins with the requirement to light lamps and instruction concerning how that obligation should be fulfilled. Here we find a famous disagreement between the schools of Hillel and Shammai concerning counting up or counting down the days, the connection between the lamps and the bullocks sacrificed on Sukkot, and consideration of the danger of placing Chanukah lamps by a window. When the Rabbis finally come to recounting the reason for Chanukah, they tell us only this about its historical underpinnings:

What is the reason for Chanukah? For our Rabbis taught: On the 25th of Kislev begin the days of Chanukah, which are eight, during which lamentation for the dead and fasting are forbidden. For when the Greeks entered the Temple, they defiled all the oils in it, and when the Hasmonean dynasty prevailed against and defeated them, they [the Hasmoneans] searched and found only one cruse of oil which possessed the seal of the High Priest, but which contained sufficient oil for only one day's lighting; yet a miracle occurred there and they lit [the lamp] for eight days. The following year these days were appointed a Festival with the recitation of Hallel and thanksgiving. (*BT Shabbat* 21b)

If one presumes that the Rabbis had at their disposal both I and II Maccabees,¹⁶ they may have been walking a fine line between lauding the victory of the Maccabees (as expressed in II Maccabees) and warning against their excesses and abuse of power. One could also argue that the Rabbis' explication of Chanukah derives from their reading of II Maccabees, in particular the second letter in the first chapter:

Those in Jerusalem and those in Judea and the senate and Judas, To Aristobulus, who is of the family of the anointed priests, teacher of Ptolemy the king, and to the Jews in Egypt, greeting, and good health.

Having been saved by God out of grave dangers we thank Him greatly for taking our side against the king. For He drove out those who fought against the holy city. For when the leader reached Persia with a force that seemed irresistible, they were cut to pieces in the temple of Nanea by a deception employed by the priests of Nanea. For under pretext of intending to marry her, Antiochus came to the place together with his friends, to secure most of its treasures as a dowry. When the priests of the temple of Nanea had set out the treasures and Antiochus had come with a few men inside the wall of the sacred precinct, they closed the temple as soon as he entered it. Opening the secret door in the ceiling, they threw stones and struck down the leader and his men, and dismembered them and cut off their heads and threw them to the people outside. Blessed in every way be our God, who has brought judgment upon those who have behaved impiously. (*II Macc.* 1:10-17)

If the account in *BT Shabbat* 21b is influenced by, or modeled on, the second letter (*II Macc.* 1:10-17), we might conclude that the Rabbis meant to affirm the Maccabees. Yet if they had I Maccabees at their disposal, why did they not include more of the history of the war to evict the Hellenists and the Hellenistic priests? This would have served as a stronger endorsement of the Maccabees and promoted Jewish agency in the world.

Did the Rabbis intend to erase memory of the War of the Maccabees because the facts of history would suggest that God does not fight our wars for redemption and we must fight them ourselves? The emphasis on the "miracle" of the cruse of oil seems to suggest that the miracle is the hand of God. Perhaps the Rabbis seek to eclipse the memory of the war because the Hasmoneans, having claimed to be the true heirs to the Davidic throne and the Priesthood, combined the offices of king and High Priest. They proved themselves as corrupt as their predecessors within only a few generations. It is not necessarily the case that the Rabbis want to suggest that only God fights Israel's wars, and only God alone and unaided works salvation for Israel. Their treatment of Chanukah might be read as a polemic against the Hasmoneans.¹⁷

In fact, the Babylonian Talmud does not speak in one voice about redemption. A variety of opinions are expressed concerning whether redemption is worked solely by God or not.

The Sages of Babylonia live in *galut* (exile) and yearn for *g'ulah* (redemption). The Talmud records a conversation about the merits and dangers of living in the Land of Israel during the time of the writing of the *Bavli*. We are presented with a teaching that, "One should always live in the Land of Israel, even in a town the majority of whose inhabitant are idolaters, but no one should live outside the Land of Israel, even in a town whose majority are Jews, for whoever lives in the Land of Israel is considered to have a God, while whoever lives outside the Land of Israel is considered as one who has no God" (BT *K'tubot* 110b–111a). This might strike us as a most peculiar thing for Sages living outside the Land of Israel to teach. Not surprisingly, it is not the only opinion expressed:

R. Zeira was evading Rav Yehudah because he [R. Zeira] wanted to go up to the Land of Israel, but Rav Yehudah had expressed [the opinion]: Whoever goes up from Babylon to the Land of Israel transgresses a positive commandment, for it says in Scripture, *They shall be carried to Babylon, and there shall they be, until the day that I remember them, says the Lord* (Jeremiah 27:22). And R. Zeira [how does he explain that text]? That text is written [to refer] to the vessels of service [for the Temple in Jerusalem]. And Rav Yehudah [what is his response]? Another text is written: *I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles, and by the hinds of the field [that you neither awaken nor stir up love until it please]* (Song of Songs 2:7). [The Rabbis interpret Song of Songs as speaking of the love relationship between God and Israel. Rav Yehudah understands this verse to say that Jews should not attempt to rebuild the Land of Israel, or even move there, until it pleases God to end their Exile in Babylonia.] And R. Zeira [what is his response]? That [Song of Songs 2:7] implies that Israel shall not go up by a wall [i.e., all at the same time, en masse]. This, in turn, implies that individuals *may* go up to the Land of Israel]. Rav Yehudah [how does he respond]? [There is] another [instance of] *I adjure you* written in Scripture [he refers to Song of Songs 3:5 and applies it to individuals just as he applied Song of Songs 2:7 to the Jewish people as a whole]. And R. Zeira [how does he respond]? That text is required for [an explanation] like that of R. Yose ben R. Chanina who said: What was the purpose of those three adjurations? [There is a third instance of *I adjure you* in Song of Songs 5:8.] One—that Israel shall not go up like a wall [i.e., en masse, hence leaving open the possibility for individuals to go up to the Land of Israel]. Two—through it the Holy One blessed be God adjured Israel not to rebel against the nations of the world.

Three—through it the Holy One blessed be God adjured the idolaters not to oppress Israel overmuch. (BT *K'tubot* 110b–111a)

R. Zeira, while justifying the decision of an individual to move to the Land of Israel, conveys the teaching of R. Yose b. R. Chanina that God promulgated three rules for Israel in the aftermath of the Destruction of the Second Temple that have come to be understood this way:

1. The people may not move to the Land of Israel as a national movement, but individuals may move there for their individual spiritual fulfillment.
2. Israel is forbidden to rebel against the nations, which means they cannot recapture the Land by force. Rather they must accept their punishment and remain in *galut* until God—and God alone—brings them back to the Land.
3. The nations are forbidden from persecuting Jews excessively.

In light of reading Esther as an intertextual response to the Exodus, R. Yose's formulation sounds like a "throwback" to the earlier model of redemption: redemption comes from God's hand alone, at a time determined by God alone, through a means facilitated by God alone.

Anti-Zionists, and particularly Neturei Karta, hold to R. Yose's rules. Every Shabbat in *Musaf*, when they recite *u'mipnei chato'einu galinu mei'artzeinu* ("because of our sins we were exiled from our Land"), they understand it to forbid the hastening of the coming of the Messiah. Until God chooses to forgive Israel, Jews must remain in *galut* and are forbidden from actively working toward a third Jewish commonwealth, a goal that will be achieved only by the Messiah in God's time. Therefore, any attempt by Jews to build a Jewish State, or even hasten the coming of the Messiah, is a violation of God's will. Even more, violation of the three rules is tantamount to rebellion against God.

The Chatam Sofer (Rabbi Moses Sofer, 1762–1839), ideologue of the Chareidi Movement, expanded this thinking and concretized it as a broad overarching principle of Jewish life. He chose the rallying cry of the Chareidim: *chadash asur mim haTorah b'chol makom u'v'chol z'man* ("Anything new is forbidden by Torah in any place and at any time"). Sofer lifted this phrase from

Mishnah Orlah 3:9¹⁸ out of context. The Talmud refers to agricultural laws of the new grain crop and says nothing about new ideas or behaviors, let alone the establishment of a third Jewish commonwealth. Armed with this anti-modernity, anti-change battle cry, and a narrow interpretation of the rules in BT *K'itbot* 111a, the Chatam Sofer fueled Jewish inaction much like that described in Exodus when the Israelites were enslaved in Egypt.

The Babylonian Talmud is vast and multi-vocal, and as we might expect, it contains a wide spectrum of views. Torah reports that as the Israelites stood on the shores of the roiling Reed Sea, the Egyptians advanced against them. The Israelites, terrified and sure they would die, said to Moses:

"Was it for want of graves in Egypt that you brought us to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, taking us out of Egypt? Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, saying, 'Let us be, and we will serve the Egyptians, for it is better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness?'" (Exod. 14:11-12)

Moses responds by telling the people they have nothing to fear. God will save them:

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry out to Me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. And you lift up your rod and hold out your arm over the sea and split it, so that the Israelites may march into the sea on dry ground. And I will stiffen the hearts of the Egyptians so that they go in after them . . . Then Moses held out his arm over the sea and the Lord drove back the sea with a strong east wind all that night, and turned the sea into dry ground. The waters split, and the Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. (Exod. 14:15-17, 21-22)

Who parts the Reed Sea? Is it Moses who lifts his rod and holds it out over the water? Or is it God? The text is murky here. We could certainly argue that God wants the people to believe Moses has a hand (literally) in parting the Sea, but that would call into question a traditional interpretation of God's anger at the incident at Kadesh, where Moses strikes the rock twice (Num. 20:11). One common interpretation holds that God's anger is provoked

because Moses makes it appear *he* brings forth the water, rather than God.¹⁹

Standing at the shore of the Reed Sea, we are positioned at the threshold of the master narrative's paradigmatic moment of redemption. At this pivotal moment, Torah itself is ambiguous concerning who works the greatest miracle of all, the miracle that once and for all saves the Israelites from the Egyptians. The Rabbis are keenly aware of this ambiguity. Not only do they *not* rush headlong to plug the dike and assure us that it was God alone, and Moses played no significant role in the drama, they pry the hole open further. In BT *Sotah* 36b-37a (echoed in *Sh'mot Rabbah* 21:8) we find a discussion of what happened "behind the scenes" of Torah, just before the waters parted. R. Meir describes the tribes competing with one another to descend into the Sea.²⁰ R. Yehudah disagrees and says that precisely the opposite happened: No tribe wanted to enter the Sea first, so Nachshon ben Aminadab²¹ jumps into the water. The churning waters pull him down and he begins to drown. Presumably, others follow him and are drowning, as well. R. Yehudah continues:

At that time Moses was engaged for a long while in prayer, so the Holy One Blessed be God said to him, "My beloved ones are drowning in the sea and you prolong prayer before Me?!"

Moses replied to God, "Lord of the Universe, what else is there in my power to do?"

God replied to him, *Tell the Israelites to go forward. And you lift up your rod and hold out your arm etc.* (Exodus 14:15-16). For that reason Judah was worthy to be made the ruling power in Israel, as it is said: *Judah became God's sanctuary, Israel his dominion* (Psalms 114:2). *Why did Judah become God's sanctuary and Israel his dominion? Because the sea saw [him] and fled* (Psalms 114:3). (BT *Sotah* 37a)

The purpose of R. Yehudah's interpretation is to establish the legitimacy of Judah's preeminence among the tribes of Israel. In the course of doing so, however, R. Yehudah renders Moses' role more explicit: Moses asks God what else can he do besides pray, and God tells him precisely what to do, affirming that Moses has power to at least partner with God to split the Reed Sea.

The midrash in *BT Sotah* depicts a partnership between God and humanity. Redemption comes about when we work in concert with the Divine. This seems a fitting place for the conversation to rest.

An examination of literary themes and motifs, as well as character and plot details, in *Exodus* and the Book of *Esther*, reveals that the two stories have much in common. So much, in fact, that I would hold that the author of *Esther* is keenly aware of the *Exodus* story and attempting to rewrite a portion of its theology: the claim that redemption is entirely dependent upon God and that Israel is the passive beneficiary of God's salvation. In fact, *Esther* makes a strong case for human action in the absence of God's intervention. Redemption is not restricted to God's domain: The Jewish people are responsible for themselves and to some degree, their fate. It is a radical attempt to subvert the *Exodus* message about redemption. While it is not surprising that the author of *Esther* knew the *Exodus* story, it is significant that *Esther* is in conversation with *Exodus* and expresses a starkly and adamantly oppositional view concerning so fundamental an issue.

Exodus and *Esther* exemplify the two poles of redemption: completely God-dependent and completely independent of God's intervention. The Books of the Maccabees join the conversation by straddling the line: God's power is acknowledged but not relied upon, except in the sense of seeking support and approval from God. Yet God receives credit after the fact.

The Talmudic Sages "reread" the *Exodus* in midrash and aggadah. The Rabbis, who experience God as more distant than their ancestors, express views that waver between the two poles, but largely seek a comfortable median position: They claim human partnership with God in the redemption from Egypt, but warn against future efforts to hasten the coming of the Messiah. In their account of Chanukah, it is possible that the tale about the cruise of oil is intended to both attribute the victory to God and at the same time signal their approval of the Maccabees' efforts.

In the modern age, the Rabbis' ambivalence has spawned two diametrically opposed views of the Messianic Age. The Chareidim, relying on an interpretation of *BT K'tubot* 110b–111a, conclude that Jews may make no effort whatsoever to promote their own redemption or resurrect the Third Jewish Commonwealth. On the other end, liberal Jews have embraced the notion that Jews can and should enter history as God's partners in bringing redemption

closer and have applied this understanding to peoples and situations outside the Jewish domain.

For most of the Jewish world, our efforts toward redemption, inspired by God's vision, are sacred. God's contributions to our endeavors are divine. The goal is still redemption, but we need not be passive victims of the vicissitudes of life and world events; God grants us agency to forge our own destiny and pursue the future that our tradition tells us is paramount: redemption for ourselves and for the world. "They tried to kill us; we survived; let's eat."

Notes

1. In the sense that Ferdinand de Saussure used the term in his explanation of semiotics: words, images, names, etc., that stand for something or evoke another text.
2. David Blumenthal, review of *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*, by Daniel Boyarin, *CCAR Journal* (Summer/Fall 1997): 81–83.
3. For example: Pss. 77:16–21, 78:12–16, 105:23–38, 114.
4. For example: Hosea 13:4–6; Isa. 43:16–17, 50:2; Mic. 6:4.
5. Judy Klitsner, *Subversive Sequels* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2009).
6. The complex reality of history is likely otherwise. II Kings 25:26 and Jeremiah 43:5–7 note that Judeans took refuge in Egypt following the destruction of Judah in 597 B.C.E. and the ensuing assassination of Gedaliah. The less nuanced stories of Exodus, Daniel, and *Esther* reflect an ethos that Israelites/Jews are safest in their own land and at risk in foreign lands.
7. Haman conceives, plans, and oversees the implementation of the genocidal plan to kill the Jews of Persia. He convinces the king of its political value and adds financial enticement. However, it is only with the king's acquiescence, and in turning over the signet ring to Haman, that Haman can set the plan into action. See *Esther* 3:5–11.
8. The term "genocide" was coined by Raphael Lemkin (1900–1959) following the Holocaust. In 1948, the United Nations approved the *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, defining genocide: "Genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: a. Killing members of the group; b. Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; c. Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; d. Imposing measures intended to prevent

births within the group; e. Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group." Experts agree that the defining characteristic of "genocide" is the intent to destroy all, or part, of a particular and defined group of people. It is, perhaps, anachronistic to apply the term "genocide" to an event (and particularly an event described in literature) that occurred long before the term came into existence to describe modern events. However, it seems applicable under the assumption that phenomena occur in history and in the human imagination even before precise descriptive terms are coined for them.

9. The parallel between Moses and Esther is not complete. When Moses approaches Pharaoh, he does so as an outside agitator, having shed his Egyptian identity and assumed the identity of a Hebrew. When Esther approaches Ahasuerus, she does so as an insider, still pretending to be a Persian. It could be argued that Mordecai is the "outside agitator" of Esther, but since it is Esther's carefully considered plan that results in the salvation of the Jews, I credit her with the role parallel to that of Moses.

10. There are other readings. In a private communication, Rabbi Howard Apothaker shared a different view: "The saving of Moses, for the Exodus story, is the first act of redemption, and explicitly so. His salvation from the water is balanced on the other end of the tale by the Egyptians drowning in the water. Moses, the central figure in salvation, was saved completely by human planning and human agency. Now it is true that the rest of the story sets up God as the only hero; but that is because it is one God—YHWH—against another—Pharaoh. The story in Esther is not God vs. God, but the second-in-command—Hamán—vs. the person who will become the second-in-command—Mordecai." I would respond that the salvation of Moses from the Nile and the salvation of the Israelites at the Reed Sea neatly bracket the story, but the thrust of the story, taken in its entirety, is God's redemption of Israel with "a strong hand and an outstretched arm." If we read Esther as the story of battle between two seconds-in-command, this does not obscure the distinction between the God-centered Exodus redemption and redemption through human agency in Esther.

11. Genesis 15:13-14 records that slavery in Egypt will last 400 years. Exodus 12:40 calculates the length of time Israel was in Egypt as 430 years.

12. To reinforce this idea, traditional formulations of the Haggadah mention Moses but once, lest one mistakenly think that Moses affected redemption for the Jewish people.

13. In this regard, the account of the Wilderness wandering records many acts of dissension and numerous rebellions.

14. See also Lev. 23:4; Num. 9:1-5, 28:16.

15. *Bikurim* 1:6; *Rosh HaShanah* 1:3; *Taanit* 2:10; *M'gillah* 3:4, 3:6; *Mo-aid Katan* 3:9; *Bava Kama* 6:6.

16. It is likely that the Rabbis had access to a version of I and II Maccabees on two counts. First, their account of the restoration of the sacrifices appears to be taken from I Maccabees 4:50 and II Maccabees 10:3. Second, Gerson Cohen argues that the tale of Hannah and Her Seven Sons, found in II Maccabees 7, served to craft a Rabbinic model of martyrdom, evidence of which is found in *Eichah Rabbah* 1:16, no. 50; *Gittin* 57b; *P'sikta Rabbati* 43:180; and *Seder Eliyahu Rabbah* 30:151. Gerson Cohen, "Hannah and Her Seven Sons," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 7:1270-1271.

17. Gedalyahu Alon argues that it is most definitely not a polemic against the Hasmoneans in "Did the Jewish People and Its Sages Cause the Hasmoneans to Be Forgotten?" in *Jews, Judaism and the Classical World* (Jerusalem: Magnus Press, 1977): 1-17.

18. [That which is doubt] as [whether it is] *orlah* is prohibited in the Land of Israel but permitted in Syria. Outside the Land one may go down and purchase [from a non-Jew], provided one has not seen him gathering it. If a vineyard is planted with greens, and the greens are sold outside of it, these are prohibited in the Land of Israel but permitted in Syria. Outside the Land, one may go down and gather ["mixed seeds" of the vineyard] provided one does not gather with [one's own hand]. "New produce" is prohibited by the Torah in all places; and *orlah* is a halachah; and "mixed seeds" is one of the enactments of the scribes. *Mishnah Orlah* 3:9.

19. Num. 20:9-11.

20. R. Meir's argument, backed up by Psalm 68:28 and Deuteronomy 33:12, is offered in order to explain a geographic anomaly related to the site of the Temple in Jerusalem. The Temple in Jerusalem was built on land within the territory of the tribe of Judah, with the exception of a small stretch of land upon which the Holy of Holies stood that belonged to the tribe of Benjamin. Hence the Holy of Holies stood on Benjamin's land, and the rest of the Temple stood on Judah's land.

21. R. Yehudah responds to R. Meir's explication of the location of the Temple by telling us that Nachshon ben Aminadab, the head of the tribe of Judah, entered the water first, thereby earning the tribe of Judah preeminence among the tribes of Israel.

Esther, Exodus, Purim, and Passover

David J. Zucker

At first glance, there do not seem to be close connections between the book of Esther and the Exodus, much less between Purim and Passover. A close reading of *M'gillat Esther*, however, allows for these links¹ and may reflect the intent of the author of Esther.

In the Book of Esther, the dénouement, when Haman's villainy is exposed (when the light is shone on his nefarious plan), occurs on the evening of the full moon of the early spring month, the fifteenth day of Nisan in the Hebrew calendar, the date people generally associate with Passover. This detail may not be accidental, but rather a subtle nuance purposefully, but quietly woven into the narrative. A casual reading of Esther might bypass those overlapping facts. This article suggests that one way to interpret the book of Esther is that its author intended readers to make conscious connections between Esther and the Exodus, between Purim and Passover.

The biblical text in Esther states exactly when the plans to attack the Jewish community were conceived. The narrative explains that Haman and his henchmen arrange their equivalent of an ancient pogrom during the month of Nisan, for it was then that the die was cast, the "*pur*"—which means 'the lot'—was cast before Haman (Esther 3:7). A short while later, "on the thirteenth day of the first month [Nisan]" the decree was issued, that in about a year's time, on a date certain, that "all the Jews" were to be massacred and their goods plundered (Esther 3:12, 13). That very day (the thirteenth of Nisan), as a sign of his great distress, Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes. That same day he informs

Esther about the decree, and she comes up with the plan that will bring Haman's downfall. As part of her strategy, she commands Mordecai and all the Jews of Shushan to partake in a three-day fast. Esther and her maidens shall also observe this fast (Esther 4:16–17). (In principle, this might mean a twenty-six-hour fast, one hour of the first day, the thirteenth, all of the fourteenth, and then an hour of the fifteenth).² "On the third day [the fifteenth of Nisan], Esther put on royal apparel and stood in the inner court of the king's palace." She then invites the King and Haman to a banquet that very day (Esther 5:1, 4).

This means that on the fourteenth day of Nisan, going into the fifteenth, the Jews are fasting instead of appropriately feasting and celebrating the first night of Passover, as dictated by Jewish tradition. This point is noted by the midrash collection, the *Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer*. When Esther commanded Mordecai to begin a three-day fast beginning that very day, the midrash explains:

These (days) were the thirteenth, the fourteenth, and the fifteenth of Nisan. Mordecai said to her: Is not the third day (of the fast) the day of Passover? She said to him: You are an elder in Israel. If there is no Israel, wherefore is Passover? Mordecai hearkened to her words, and he agreed with her.³

In this midrash, Esther appropriately (but contrary to the established biblical and Rabbinic norms of feminine behavior) challenges Mordecai's response, and depending on how one reads the tone of her voice, perhaps reprimands Mordecai who is her family member (and according to several Rabbinic texts, possibly her husband)⁴ and elder.⁵ Mordecai both demurs and defers to her, something that is quite extraordinary. Esther's actions reflect a Rabbinic tradition that Miriam also challenged a decision made by her father Amram (or perhaps she reprimanded him).⁶

On some level, the text of *M'gillat Esther* takes elements of the early Exodus story and with beneficence aforethought turns them upside down. Instead of the Jews celebrating the miracle of Passover and feasting on roasted meat (Exod. 12:5–11), they are anxiously mourning and fasting. There are other ironic contrasts between these two events. In the Book of Exodus, Pharaoh has numerous warnings with repeated calamities urging him to reverse his stand; in the Book of Esther, Haman is completely taken in and

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הלל ה' Halil

Hallel is recited after the Shemoneh Esrei on Festivals (with the exception of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Purim) and on Chanukah and Rosh Chodesh. (Some congregations also recite it following the Maariv Shemoneh Esrei on Seder nights.) On Rosh Chodesh and the last six days of Pesach, two paragraphs (as indicated in the text) are omitted. [Those who wear tefillin on Chol...

HaMoed remove them at this point before reciting Hallel.] The chazzan recites the blessing. The congregation, after responding Amen, repeats it, and continues with the first psalm. Regarding the blessing for one praying alone, see Laws §37.

Blessed are You HASHEM, our God, King of the universe, Who has sanctified us with His commandments and has commanded us to read the Hallel. (Cong.—Amen.)

Psaln 113

Halleluyah! Give praise, you servants of HASHEM: * praise the Name of HASHEM! Blessed be the Name of HASHEM, from this time and forever. From the rising of the sun to its setting, HASHEM's Name is praised. High above all nations is HASHEM, above the heavens is His glory. Who is like HASHEM, our God, Who is enthroned on high — yet designs to look upon the heaven and the earth? * Chazzan— He raises the needy from the dust, from the trash heaps of His people. He transforms the barren wife * into a glad mother of children. Halleluyah!

Psaln 114

When Israel went out of Egypt, * Jacob's household from a people of alien tongue* — Judah became His sanctuary, * Israel His dominions. The sea saw and fled: the Jordan turned backward. The mountains skipped like rams, * the hills like young lambs. Chazzan— What ails you, O sea, that you flee? O Jordan, that you turn backward? * O mountains, that you skip

Heavens; but if we welcome His proximity, He lovingly involves Himself in every phase of our lives (R' A.C. Feuer).

To seat them with nobles. God does not merely lift the poor and needy out of degradation; He also elevates them to the highest ranks of nobility.

He transforms the barren wife. The Creator exercises complete control over nature. This control is vividly demonstrated when God suddenly transforms a barren woman into a mother (Radak).

When Israel went out of Egypt. This second chapter of Hallel continues the theme of the first chapter, which praises God for raising up the needy and destitute. Israel was thus elevated when they left Egypt and risked their lives by entering the sea at God's command.

Jacob's household from a people of alien tongue. Even the Jews who were forced to communicate with the Egyptians in the

הלל ה' Halil

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יהוה אמתה יהוה אלקינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצותיו, וצונו לקרוא את ההלל. (Cong.—Amen.)

תתלים קצ

הללויה הללו עבדי יהוה, הללו את שם יהוה. יהי שם יהוה מברך, מעתה ועד עולם. ממזרח שקמת עד מבוא, מהלל שם יהוה. גם על כל גוים יהוה, על השמים כבודו. מי ביהוה אלקינו, המגביהו לשבת. המלשפילי לאות, בשמים ובארץ. * מקימי מעפר דל, מאשפת גרים אביו. להושיבי עם נדיבים, עם נדיבי עמו. מושיבי עקרות הבית. אם הבנים שמחה, הללויה.

תתלים קצ

בצאת ישראל ממצרים, בית יעקב מצם לעז. היתה הנהרה לקדשו, ישראל משולותיו. הים ראה נטו, הירדן יסב לאחור. הקרים רקדו כאילים, * גבעות כבני צאן. * מה לך הים פי תנוס, הירדן תסב לאחור. * הקרים תרקדו

Halil

The prophets ordained that the six psalms of Hallel (literally, praise) be recited on each Festival, and to commemorate times of national deliverance from peril. Moreover, before David returned and incorporated these psalms into the Book of Psalms, Hallel was already known to the nation. Moses and Israel recited it after being saved from the Egyptians at the sea; Joshua, after defeating the Kings of Canaan; Deborah and Barak, after defeating Sisera; Hezekiah, after defeating Sennacherib; Chananyah, Mishael and Azariah, after being saved from the wicked Nebuchadnezzar; and Mordechai and Esther, after the defeat of the wicked Haman (Pesachim 117a).

These psalms were singled out as the unit of praise because they contain five fundamental themes of Jewish faith: the Exodus, the Splitting of the Sea, the Giving of the Torah at Sinai, the future Resurrection of the dead, and the coming of the Messiah (ibid. 118a).

Hallel is omitted on Rosh Hashanah and Yom

Kippur because they are days of judgment and it is inappropriate to sing joyful praises on days when our very survival is being weighed on the scales of judgment. It is omitted on Purim, because, despite the miracle of the day, the Jewish people remained in exile as servants of Ahasuerus, and thus the deliverance was only partial. On Chanukah, however, not only was the military victory more complete, the Hallel also commemorates the miracle of the lights, which marked the renewal of the Temple.

הללויה הללו עבדי יהוה — Halleluyah! Give praise, you servants of HASHEM! Only after their liberation from Pharaoh's bondage could the Jews be considered the servants of HASHEM, because they no longer vowed allegiance to any ruler.

יהי שם יהוה מברך, מעתה ועד עולם — Yet designs to look (lit. bends down low to see) upon the heaven and the earth? This is the challenging and exciting aspect of God's relationship to man: as we act towards God, so does He react to us. If we ignore His presence, He withdraws high above the

like rams? O hills, like young lambs? Before the Lord's Presence — did I, the earth, tremble — before the presence of the God of Jacob, Who turns the rock into a pond of water, * the flint into a flowing fountain.

An abridged version of Hallel is recited on the last six days of Pesach* and on Rosh Chodesh.* On these days, omit the following paragraph and continue with 'HASHEM Who has remembered

Psalms 115:1-11

לא לנו Not for our sake, * HASHEM, not for our sake, but for Your Name's sake give glory, * for Your kindness and for Your truth! Why should the nations say, 'Where is their God now?' Our God is in the heavens; whatever He pleases, He does! Their idols are silver and gold, the handiwork of man. They have a mouth, but cannot speak; * they have eyes, but cannot see. They have ears, but cannot hear; they have a nose, but cannot smell. Their hands — they cannot feel; their feet — they cannot walk; they cannot utter a sound from their throat. Those who make them should become like them, whoever trusts in them! Chazan— O Israel, trust in HASHEM, * — their help and their shield is He! * House of Aaron, trust in HASHEM; their help and their shield is He! You who fear HASHEM, trust in HASHEM; their help and their shield is He!

Psalms 115:12-18

יהוה HASHEM Who has remembered us will bless* — He will bless the House of Israel; He will bless the House of Aaron; He will bless those who fear HASHEM, the small as well as the great. May HASHEM increase upon you, upon you and upon your children! * You are blessed of HASHEM, maker of heaven and earth. Chazan— As for the heavens — the heavens are HASHEM's, but the earth He has given

began to scoff, 'Where is their God?' We pray that God will intervene again in the affairs of man, not for our sake, but for His.

לא לנו ... כי לשאול בך רבדו HASHEM ... but for Your Name's sake give glory. We beg You to redeem us, but not because we are personally worthy, nor because of the merit of our forefathers (lyun Tefillah). Rather we urgently strive to protect Your glorious Name, so that no one can deny Your mastery and dominion (Kadok).

They have a mouth, but cannot speak. These illustrations emphasize the complete impotence of man-made idols, which even lack the senses that every ordinary man possesses.

O Israel, trust in HASHEM. The psalm now contrasts the Children of Israel, who trust in God alone, with those described in the previous verse, who trust in the lifeless and helpless idols (Ibn Ezra).

The Psalmist speaks of three kinds of Jews, each with a different motive for serving God. Some Jews cling to God simply because they feel

כאילים, גבעות פבני צאן. מלפני ארון קולי ארץ, מלפני אלוה יצקב. החפכי הצור אגם מים, * חלמשי למעינו מים.

An abridged version of Hallel is recited on the last six days of Pesach* and on Rosh Chodesh.* On these days, omit the following paragraph and continue with 'HASHEM Who has remembered

לא לנו יהוה לא לנו, פי לשמוך תן פבור, * על חסדך על אמתך. למה יאמרו הגוים, איה נא אלהיהם. נאלהינו בשמים, כל אשר חפץ עשה. עצביהם כסף וזהב. מעשה ידי אדם. פה להם ולא ידברו, עיניהם להם ולא יראו. אזנים להם ולא ישמעו, אף להם ולא יריחו. ידיהם ולא ימשו, רגליהם ולא יתקכו, לא יהיו בגרונם. כמותם יהיו עשייהם, כל אשר בטח פהם. * ישאל כלטח ביהוה, * עולם ומגנם הוא. יהוה יהוה יהוה, * בית אהרן בטחו ביהוה, * עולם ומגנם הוא.

חללים סטובי-בי

יהוה זכרנו יברך, * יברך את בית ישאל, יברך את בית אהרן. יברך וראי יהוה, הקטנים עם הגדלים. יסף יהוה עליכם, עליכם ועל פניהם. ברובים אהם לידוה, עשה שמם וארץ. * השמים שמם ליהוה, והארץ נתן

recited on Rosh Chodesh because it is neither a Festival nor a day on which a miracle occurred (Arachin 10b).

Nevertheless, the custom developed — first in Babylonia and later in Eretz Yisrael — to recite an abridged version on Rosh Chodesh (Taanis 28b). The commentators explain that Hallel alludes to the kingship of David and, as noted in the commentary to Kiddush Levanah (p. 612), Rosh Chodesh recalls the renewal of the Davidic dynasty. Nevertheless, in order to demonstrate that the Hallel of Rosh Chodesh is not of the same status as that of Festivals, an abridged version is recited.

In the abridged form, the first eleven verses of both Psalms 115 (לא לנו) and Psalm 116 (מחללים) are omitted. The reason these two half-psalms were chosen to be skipped is that their general themes are repeated in their second halves (הי חסדך אלהים) so nothing essential is lost by their omission (Elihai Rabbah).

לא לנו — Not for our sake. The preceding psalm depicts the awe inspired by God's miracles. Here the Psalmist describes the aftermath of that inspiration. Although Israel remained imbued with faith, our oppressors soon

Who turns the rock into a pond of water. When the Jews thirsted for water in the wilderness, God instructed Moses (Exodus 17:6), 'You shall smite the rock and water shall come out of it, so that the people may drink.'

Abridged Hallel/

Pesach and Rosh Chodesh

The Talmud (Arachin 10b) teaches that a holiday day with a musaf offering different from that of the day before is cause for the recitation of the full Hallel. Each new offering is a dedication of a new spiritual manifestation, which is commemorated through Hallel. On Succos, therefore, when each of the eight days is commemorated through Hallel, there is a different musaf offering (see p. 682), the full Hallel is recited each day. On the other hand, the musaf offering on Passover is identical every day; consequently, only the 'abridged' or 'short' Hallel is recited on the last six days.

Another reason the shorter version of Hallel is recited during the latter days of Pesach is that the Jewish people did not attain their full level of awareness until they accepted the Torah on Succos. To signify this incompleteness without Hallel, we abbreviate Hallel (Sif'lah). The prophets did not ordain that Hallel be

to mankind. * Neither the dead can praise God, * nor any who descend into silence; but we will bless God from this time and forever. Halleluyah!

On Rosh Chodesh and on the last six days of Pesach, omit the following paragraph and continue with 'How can I repay ...' Psalm 116:1-11

אהבהמי I love Him, * for HASHEM hears my voice, my supplications. As He has inclined His ear to me, so in my days shall I call. The pains of death * encircled me; the confines of the grave have found me; trouble and sorrow I would find. Then I would invoke the Name of HASHEM: 'Please HASHEM, save my soul.' Gracious is HASHEM and righteous, our God is merciful. HASHEM protects the simple; I was brought low, but He saved me. Return, my soul, to your rest; * for HASHEM has been kind to you. For You have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling. Chazan— I shall walk before HASHEM in the lands of the living. * I have kept faith although I say: 'I suffer exceedingly.' I said in my haste: 'All mankind is deceitful. *'

Psalms 116:12-19

מה אשוב How can I repay HASHEM * for all His kindness to me? I will raise the cup of salvations * and the Name of HASHEM I will invoke. My vows to HASHEM I will pay, * in the presence, now, of His entire people. Difficult in the eyes of HASHEM is the death of His devout ones. Please, HASHEM — for I am Your servant, I am Your servant, son of Your handmaid * — You have released my bonds.

description of the exile, when Israel is encircled by violent enemies who seek to kill them (Abarbanel).

שוב רצני לצרורי Rest. When misery and persecution upset me, I told my soul that it would find peace and comfort only if it would return to God (Radak). אנתרף לפני ה' אנתרעתי I shall walk before HASHEM in the lands of the living. How I yearn to return to Eretz Yisrael where the very air makes men healthy and robust and the holy atmosphere grants the mind renewed vitality and alertness! (Radak). Eretz Yisrael is identified as the land of the living because the dead are destined to be resurrected there. This is why the Patriarchs and the righteous of all generations yearned to be buried there. אי אקורעו כנפתי כל ימיו אבי All mankind is deceitful. This bitter comment was originally uttered by David when the people of Zif betrayed his hiding place to King Saul [see I Samuel 23:19-29] (Rashi). It is also a reference to the bleak, dismal exile [for the exile discourages the Jews and leads them to the hasty, premature conclusion that all the prophets

לכני אדם. לא המתים יהללוהו, ולא כל יודי דומה. נאנחנו נברך ה', מעתה ועד עולם, הללנוהו.

On Rosh Chodesh and on the last six days of Pesach, omit the following paragraph and continue with 'How can I repay ...' תהלים קטז:א-יא

מה אשוב ליהוה, כל תגמוליהו עלי. כוס לשונות אשא, ובקשם יהוה אקרא. גדרי ליהוה אשלים, וגדה נא לכל עמו. יקר בעיני יהוה, המותה לחסדיו. אנה יהוה כי אני עבדך, אנה עבדך, פן אמתך. פתחת למוסרי.

תהלים קטז:ב-כ

יהוה כי אני עבדך, אנה עבדך, פן אמתך. פתחת למוסרי.

Abarbanel explains that the Psalmist foresaw but Israel would suffer from attrition in exile and they would fear eventual extinction. Therefore, he offers the assurance that, at the advent of Messiah, their numbers will increase dramatically.

As for the earth He has given to mankind. Since the heavens remain under God's firm control, all celestial bodies are forced to act in accordance with His will without freedom of choice. On earth, however, man was granted the freedom to decree his own actions and beliefs (Maharitz). Many commentators explain this verse homiletically. Man need not perfect heaven because it is already dedicated to the holiness of God. But the earth is man's province. We are bidden to perfect it and transform its material nature into something spiritual. Indeed, we were created to make the earth heavenly.

Neither the dead can praise God. The people who fail to recognize God's omnipotence and influence over the world resemble the dead, who are insensitive to all external stimuli and who are oblivious to reality (Aznarish Figo). However, the souls of the

The pains of death. This is an apt

Chazzan— To You I will sacrifice thanksgiving offerings, and the name of HASHEM I will invoke. My vows to HASHEM I will pay, in the presence, now, of His entire people. In the courtyards of the House of HASHEM, in your midst, O Jerusalem, Halleluyah!

Congregation, then chazzan:

Psalms 117

הללו את יהוה, * כל גוים, שבְּחִוּהוּ בְּלֵב הָאֲמִיּוֹת. * פִּי גִבֵר עֲלִינוּ חֲסֵדוֹ, וְאִמְתַּת יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, הַלְלִנְהוּ.

Each of the following four verses is recited aloud by the chazzan. After each verse, the congregation responds, 'Give thanks to HASHEM for He is good'; His kindness endures forever, and then recites the succeeding verse.

On Succos, the Four Species are waved. See page 631.

Psalms 118

הודו וְאָמְרוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב, * יֵאמְרוּ וְאָמְרוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב, * יֵאמְרוּ וְאָמְרוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב, * יֵאמְרוּ וְאָמְרוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב, *

Let Israel say: Let the House of Aaron say: Let those who fear HASHEM say:

מִן הַמִּצָּר * קָרָאתִי יְהוָה, עָנְנִי בְּמִרְקַב יָהּ. יְהוָה לִי לֹא אִירָא מִתּוֹ יֵצֵאָה לִי אֲדָם. יְהוָה לִי בְּעוֹרֵי, * וְאִנִּי אֲרָא בְיָהוּדָה, מִבְּטָח בְּגֵדֵיכֶם. בְּלִי גוֹיִם סָבְבֻנִי, בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמִלֵּם. סְבוּנִי כְּבָרִים וְעֲבֹדוּ כֹּחֲצִים, בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמִלֵּם. יְהוָה רִחֲמֵנִי לְנֶפֶל, וְיִהְיֶה עֲזָרוֹנִי. עֲזֵי הַמֶּרְחַת יְהוָה, וְהִדֵּי לִי לִשְׁמֵעָה קוֹל רִנָּה וְשׁוּעָה בְּאָהָלֵי צְרִיקִים, * יָמִינוּ יְהוָה עֲשֵׂה קוֹל. יִמְחַד

redemption from the straits of exile and oppression.

הֵלֵךְ בְּיָרֵךְ. HASHEM is with me, through my helpers. I have many helpers, but I place confidence in them only because HASHEM is with them. If my helpers were not granted strength by God, their assistance would be futile (Ibn Ezra; Radak).

It is better to take refuge in HASHEM than to rely on man. וְהָיָה מִן הַכֹּהֵן מְשֻׁבָּבִים, denotes absolute confidence even though no guarantees have been given; וְהָיָה מִן הַכֹּהֵן, however, presupposes a promise of protection. The Psalmist says that it is far better to put one's trust in God's protection.

even without a pledge from Him, than to rely on the most profuse assurances of human beings (K Bachya; Vilna Geon).

You pushed me hard that I might fall, but HASHEM assisted me. In the preceding verses, the Psalmist speaks of his enemy indirectly; now, however, he addresses the foe directly.

The sound of rejoicing and salvation is in the tents of the righteous. When HASHEM's right hand does valiantly for the sake of His chosen people, then the righteous will respond by filling their tents with sounds of rejoicing over this salvation (Radak).

לְךָ אֲזַבֵּחַ וְזָבַח תּוֹדָה, וְנִשְׁבַּח יְהוָה אֱמֹנָה. גִּבְרֵי יְהוָה אֲשַׁלֵּם, וְגֵדְהָ אֲנִי לְכָל עַמּוֹ. בְּחִצְרוֹת בֵּית יְהוָה, בְּתוֹכְךָ יִרְשָׁעִים הַלְלוּנָהּ.

Congregation, then chazzan:

Psalms 137

הללו את יהוה, * כל גוים, שבְּחִוּהוּ בְּלֵב הָאֲמִיּוֹת. * פִּי גִבֵר עֲלִינוּ חֲסֵדוֹ, וְאִמְתַּת יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, הַלְלִנְהוּ.

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On Succos, the Four Species are waved. See page 631.

הודו וְאָמְרוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב, * יֵאמְרוּ וְאָמְרוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב, * יֵאמְרוּ וְאָמְרוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב, * יֵאמְרוּ וְאָמְרוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב, *

מִן הַמִּצָּר * קָרָאתִי יְהוָה, עָנְנִי בְּמִרְקַב יָהּ. יְהוָה לִי לֹא אִירָא מִתּוֹ יֵצֵאָה לִי אֲדָם. יְהוָה לִי בְּעוֹרֵי, * וְאִנִּי אֲרָא בְיָהוּדָה, מִבְּטָח בְּגֵדֵיכֶם. בְּלִי גוֹיִם סָבְבֻנִי, בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמִלֵּם. סְבוּנִי כְּבָרִים וְעֲבֹדוּ כֹּחֲצִים, בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמִלֵּם. יְהוָה רִחֲמֵנִי לְנֶפֶל, וְיִהְיֶה עֲזָרוֹנִי. עֲזֵי הַמֶּרְחַת יְהוָה, וְהִדֵּי לִי לִשְׁמֵעָה קוֹל רִנָּה וְשׁוּעָה בְּאָהָלֵי צְרִיקִים, * יָמִינוּ יְהוָה עֲשֵׂה קוֹל. יִמְחַד

later serves him only in response to external demands (Sforno).

This psalm, consisting only two verses, is the shortest chapter in all of Scripture. Kadak explains that it is written with the definite article, whereas the others are spelled without it. This teaches us that the nations which will prevail after the advent of the Messiah.

Nations ... the states, whereas the nations, is spelled without it. This teaches us that the nations which will prevail after the advent of the Messiah.

ing Israel with Divine kindness? Israel will merit God's kindness because of the extraordinary service they rendered to Him. Recognizing Israel's distinction, the nations will consider it a privilege to become subservient to God's chosen ones, and will praise Him for His kindness to the Jews (Yanavetz Hadoresh).

Give thanks to HASHEM, for He is good. This is a general expression of thanks to God. No matter what occurs, God is always good and everything He does is for the best, even though this may not be immediately apparent to man (Abarbane).

From the straits. This psalm expresses gratitude and confidence. Just as David himself was catapulted from his personal straits to a reign marked by accomplishment and glory, so too Israel can look forward to Divine

יהוה רוממה, ימין יהוה עשה תיל. לא אמות פי אהיה,
 ואספר מעשי יהי. ישר יטרני יהי, ולמות לא נתבני. פתחו
 לי שערי צדק, אבא בם אנחה יהי. זה השער ליהוה, צדיקים
 יבאו בו. (Each of the following four verses is recited twice.)
 נפתח לי לישועה. אכן מאסו הבונים היתה לראש פנה.
 מאת יהוה היתה היתה זאת, היא נפלאת בעינינו. זה היום עשה
 יהוה, נגילה ונשמחה בו.

The next four lines are recited responsively — chazzan, then congregation.
 On Succos, the Four Species are waved during the next two verses. See page 631.

אָנָּא יהוה הושיעה נָּא.
 אָנָּא יהוה הושיעה נָּא.
 אָנָּא יהוה הצליחה נָּא.
 אָנָּא יהוה הצליחה נָּא.

Each of the following four verses is recited twice:
 On Succos, the Four Species are waved each time the verse is recited. See page 631.

בְּרוּךְ הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה, בְּרַכְנוּכֶם מִבֵּית יְהוָה. אֵל יְהוָה יוֹאֵר
 לֵנוּ, אֲסֵרוּ חַג בְּעַבְתֵּיכֶם, עַד קִרְנוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ. אֵלֵי אִמְתְּךָ,
 יוֹדֵה, אֵלֵהֶי אֲרֹמְמֶנּוּ. הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדוֹ.
 יְהִלְלוּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּלַמְעִשֵׁיךָ, וְחַסְדֵיךָ צְדִיקֵינוּ. עוֹשֵׂי
 רְצוֹנֶךָ. וְכָל עַמֶּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרָגָה יוֹדוּ וַיְבָרְכוּ
 וְיִשְׁבְּחוּ וְיִפְאֲרוּ וְיִרְדְּמוּ וְיִצְרְצְרוּ וְיִקְדְּשׁוּ וְיִמְלִיכוּ אֶת

of the Scriptural part of Hallel — i.e., the nine verses until וְיִמְלִיכוּ — each verse is recited twice.
 This entire psalm, which begins with וְיִשְׁבְּחוּ, Give thanks to HASHEM, follows a pattern, namely, that each new theme is repeated in the next verse or two in the same or slightly different words. Therefore the custom was introduced to follow through on this repetition by repeating each of these verses as well (Rashi to Succah 39a).
 Another reason for repeating each verse is based upon the Talmud (Pesachim 119a) which relates that these verses were recited in a responsive dialogue between Samuel, Jesse, David, and David's brothers when the prophet announced that the young shepherd would be the future king of Israel. To honor these distinguished personages, we repeat each one's statement, as if it were a full chapter.

is raised triumphantly; HASHEM's right hand does valiantly! I shall not die! But I shall live and relate the deeds of God. * God has chastened me exceedingly, but He did not let me die. * Chazzan—Open for me the gates of righteousness, I will enter them and thank God. This is the gate of HASHEM; the righteous shall enter through it. * (Each of the following four verses is recited twice—) I thank You* for You have answered me and become my salvation. The stone the builders despised has become the cornerstone. * This emanated from HASHEM; it is wondrous in our eyes. * This is the day HASHEM has made; let us rejoice and be glad on it.

The next four lines are recited responsively — chazzan, then congregation.
 On Succos, the Four Species are waved during the next two verses. See page 631.

אָנָּא Please, HASHEM, save now!
 אָנָּא Please, HASHEM, save now!
 אָנָּא Please, HASHEM, bring success now!
 אָנָּא Please, HASHEM, bring success now!

Each of the following four verses is recited twice:
 On Succos, the Four Species are waved each time 'Give thanks ...' is recited. See page 631.

בְּרוּךְ Blessed is he who comes in the Name of HASHEM; we bless you from the House of HASHEM. HASHEM is God, He illuminated for us; bind the festival offering with cords until the corners of the Altar. You are my God, and I will thank You; my God, I will exalt You. Give thanks to HASHEM, for He is good; His kindness endures forever.

יְהִלְלוּךָ All Your works shall praise You,* HASHEM our God. And Your devout ones, the righteous,* who do Your will,* and Your entire people, the House of Israel, with glad song will thank, bless, praise, glorify, exalt, extol, sanctify, and proclaim the

Israel is indeed the cornerstone of the world (Radak).
 builders despised has become the cornerstone. This verse refers to David, who was rejected by his own father and brothers (Targum). When the prophet Samuel announced that one of Jesse's sons was to be anointed king, no one even thought of summoning David, who was out with the sheep (see I Samuel 16:4-13).
 Israel too is called פֶּקֶד־אֵל (Genesis 49:24), for Israel is the cornerstone of God's design for the world. The world endures only by virtue of Israel's observance of God's laws, a fact that has influenced all nations to appreciate and accept certain aspects of God's commands. If not for the order and meaning that Israel has brought to the world, it would long ago have sunk into chaos. But the builders, i.e., the rulers of the nations, despised the Jews, claiming that they were parasites who made no contribution to the common good. When the dawn of redemption arrives, however, all nations will realize that

sovereignty of Your Name, our King. Chazzan— For to You it is fitting to give thanks, and unto Your Name it is proper to sing praises, for from This World to the World to Come You are God. Blessed are You HASHEM, the King Who is lauded with praises. (Cong.— Amen.)

On Rosh Chodesh many people recite the following verse after Hallel: Now Abraham was old, well on in years, and HASHEM had blessed Abraham with everything. 1

The chazzan recites Kaddish:

וְהַתְהַלַּל יְהוָה וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא. (Cong.— Amen.) May His great Name grow exalted and sanctified (Cong.— Amen.) in the world that He created as He willed. May He give reign to His kingship in your lifetimes and in your days, and in the lifetimes of the entire Family of Israel, swiftly and soon. Now respond: Amen.

(Cong.— Amen. May His great Name be blessed forever and ever.)

May His great Name be blessed forever and ever.

Blessed, praised, glorified, exalted, extolled, mighty, upraised, and lauded be the Name of the Holy One, Blessed is He (Cong.— Blessed is He) — beyond any blessing and song, praise and consolation that are uttered in the world. Now respond: Amen. (Cong.— Amen.)

During Chanukah (except on the Sabbath or Rosh Chodesh), the Kaddish ends here. At other times Kaddish continues:

(Cong.— Accept our prayers with mercy and favor.)

May the prayers and supplications of the entire Family of Israel be accepted before their Father Who is in Heaven. Now respond: Amen. (Cong.— Amen.)

(Cong.— Blessed be the Name of HASHEM, from this time and forever.)

May there be abundant peace from Heaven, and life, upon us and upon all Israel. Now respond: Amen. (Cong.— Amen.)

(Cong.— My help is from HASHEM, Maker of heaven and earth.)

Take three steps back. Bow left and say, 'He Who makes peace ...'

bow right and say, 'may He ...'; bow forward and say, 'and upon all Israel ...'

Remain standing in place for a few moments, then take three steps forward.

He Who makes peace in His heights, may He make peace upon us, and upon all Israel. Now respond: Amen. (Cong.— Amen.)

The service continues with the Torah reading.

On festivals, Hoshana Rabbah and the Sabbath, turn to page 432. At other times, turn to page 131.

On Seder night the chazzan recites Kiddush (p. 658), followed by וְעָלֵינוּ 'It is our duty' (p. 300).

(1) Genesis 24:1. (2) Psalms 113:2. (3) 121:2.

homiletical interpretation. Yivnesch Yivnesch kindness for God's sake. They serve as an example for the righteous people, who fulfill all the requirements of the Law, and for the masses of Israel, whose goal is to serve God, even though they may not equal the spiritual accomplishments of the devout and the righteous.

וְעָשֵׂה רַחֲמֵינוּ — Who do Your will. In an inspiring

for redemption.

שְׁמֵךְ מְלֻכְנוּ, כִּי לָךְ טוֹב לְהוֹדוֹת וּלְשַׁמְךָ נָא לְמַדְּרֵי, כִּי מְעוֹלָם וְעַד עוֹלָם אָפָה אֵל. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מֶלֶךְ מוֹדֵל בְּחַשְׁבֹּחוֹת. (Cong.— Amen.)

On Rosh Chodesh many people recite the following verse after Hallel:

וְאַבְרָהָם וְזָרָא בְּיָמָיו, וְיֵהוּה בְּרַךְ אֶת אֲבָרָהָם בְּלַיְלָה.

The chazzan recites Kaddish:

וְהַתְהַלַּל יְהוָה וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא. (Cong.— Amen.) וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא. וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא. וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא.

וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא. וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא.

וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא. וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא.

וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא. וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא.

וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא. וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא. וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא. וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא.

During Chanukah (except on the Sabbath or Rosh Chodesh), the Kaddish ends here. At other times, Kaddish continues:

(Cong.— Keep your right and left hand together.)

תְּתַקַּף אֶצְלוֹתְהוֹן וּבְעוֹתְהוֹן דְּכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבָרָהוֹן דְּבַשְׂמַיָּא. וְאַמְרוּ: אָמֵן. (Cong.— Amen.)

וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא. וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא.

וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא. וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא.

וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא. וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא.

וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא. וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא.

וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא. וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא.

On Festivals, Hoshana Rabbah and the Sabbath, turn to page 432. At other times, turn to page 138.

On Seder night the service continues with וְעָלֵינוּ (p. 350).

but is a concluding blessing that sums up the broad theme of Hallel — that Israel and the entire universe will join in praising God. All Your words shall praise You means that in the perfect world of the future, the entire universe, including the vast variety of human beings, will function harmoniously according to God's will.

This is the highest form of praise, for without it all the beautiful spoken and sung words and songs of praise are insincere and meaningless. וְהַתְהַלַּל שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא שְׁמוֹ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא. The word דְּכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל serves God beyond the minimum requirement of the Halachah. The word is derived from דְּכָל, kindness, as if to say that such people do acts of

- א A blossom bloomed from a lulav branch — behold Hadassah stood up to arouse the sleeping.
- ב Her servants hastened Haman, to serve him wine of serpent's poison.
- ג He stood tall through his wealth and toppled through his evil — he built the gallows on which he was hung.
- ד The earth's inhabitants opened their mouths, for Haman's lot became our Purim.
- ה The righteous man was saved from the wicked's hand; the foe was substituted for him.
- ו They undertook to establish Purim, to rejoice in every single year.
- ז You noted the prayer of Mordechai and Esther; Haman and his sons You hung on the gallows.

The following is recited after both Megillah readings.

שׁוֹשַׁנּוֹת יַעֲקֹב The rose of Jacob was cheerful and glad, when they jointly saw Mordechai robbed in royal blue.

You have been their eternal salvation, and their hope throughout generations. To make known that all who hope in You will not be shamed; nor ever be humiliated, those taking refuge in You. Accursed be Haman who sought to destroy me, blessed be Mordechai the Yehudi. Accursed be Zeresh the wife of my terrorizer, blessed be Esther [who sacrificed] for me — and Charvonnah, too, be remembered for good.

After the evening reading, Maariv continues with וְאַתָּה קְדוֹשׁ 'You are the Holy One,' and the Full Kaddish (p. 596), followed by קְבִיעֵי 'It is our duty,' and the Mourner's Kaddish (p. 608). On Saturday evening, Maariv continues with לֵים וְיִמֵי 'May the pleasantness' (p. 594). After the morning reading, Shacharis continues with יְפָרְי 'Praiseworthy' (p. 150).

KROVETZ TO PURIM

Many congregations recite Krovetz during the chazzan's repetition of Shemoneh Esrei on the morning of Purim. See commentary.

The chazzan begins his repetition (p. 98) and continues through גְּבוּרַת. Then all recite:

וְאַתָּה [Mordechai] loved and raised the worthy orphan (Esther).
Then [Mordechai] carried out the mission foreseen by [David] the skilled musician; descended from the lion-like Judah and the wolf-like Benjamin, [Mordechai] was the worthy savior.
The musician [David] exerted himself to allude to him.*
And Mordechai was strengthened by the thousand shields [promised Abraham]

Chazzan concludes the blessing: Blessed are You, HASHEM, shield of Abraham.

קְבִיעֵי מְלִכּוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהָיוּ עִמָּךְ וְהָיוּ עִמָּךְ. Also, the composer's name קְבִיעֵי מְלִכּוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהָיוּ עִמָּךְ and the successive stanzas accentuate words beginning with the order of the aleph-bets. These letters appear in bold type.
The musician ... to allude to him. David, 'the sweet singer of Israel,' would not let the traitor Shimi be harmed because Mordechai was destined to descend from him (II Samuel 19:23, Megillah 12b).

There are two further motifs hidden in the poetry of this song. Each word following the Mordechai was destined to descend from him (II Samuel 19:23, Megillah 12b).

נָז פָּרַח מְלוּלָב, הוּן בְּדוּסָה עֲמִידָה לְעוֹדֵד לְשִׁנָּים.
סְרִיסִיָּה הִבְהִילוּ לְהִמּוֹ, לְהַשְׁקוּתוֹ יֵין חִמָּת פְּנִינִים.
עָמַד בְּעִשְׂרוֹ, וְנָפַל בְּרִשְׁעוֹ, עָשָׂה לוֹ עֵיץ, וְהִתְלָה עָלָיו.
פְּיָהִם פָּתְחוּ, כִּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תְּבֵל, כִּי פוֹר הָיָה הֵמָּן לְפוֹרְטוֹ.
צְדִיק נִחְלַץ מִיַּד רָשָׁע, אוֹיֵב נִפְתַּח פִּתְחַת נִפְשׁוֹ.

קִיְמוּ עֲלֵיהֶם, לְעִשׂוֹת פּוּרִים, וְלִשְׁמַחַת כָּבֵל שָׁנָה וְשָׁנָה.
רָאִית אֶת תְּפִלּוֹת מְרַדְּכֵי וְאַסְתֵּר, הִמּוֹ וּבְנָיו עַל הַעֵץ תְּפִלְתֵּי.

The following is recited after both Megillah readings.

שׁוֹשַׁנּוֹת יַעֲקֹב צִבְחָה וְשִׂמְחָה, בְּרֵאוֹתֶם יָגֵד תְּהַבֵּלַת מְרַדְּכֵי.
לְשׁוֹנֵיכֶם הֵייתֶם לְצַחַת, וְהַתְּקַנְתֶּם כָּבֵל יוֹד וְדוֹד.
לְהוֹדִיעַ, שֶׁכָּל קִוְיָה לֹא יִבָּשׁוּ, וְלֹא יִכָּלְמוּ לְצַחַת כָּל הַחוֹסִים בְּךָ. אֲרוּר
הַמּוֹ, אֲשֶׁר בִּקֵּשׁ לְאַבְרָם, בְּרוּךְ מְרַדְּכֵי הַיְהוּדִי. אֲרוּרָה וְרָשָׁ, אֲשֶׁת
מְפַחֲדֵי, בְּרוּכָה אֲסֵתֵר בַּעֲדֵי, וְגַם תְּרֻבְנָה וְכָרֵ לְטוֹב.

After the evening reading, Maariv continues with וְאַתָּה קְדוֹשׁ and the Full Kaddish (p. 596), followed by קְבִיעֵי and the Mourner's Kaddish (p. 608). On Saturday evening, Maariv continues with לֵים וְיִמֵי (p. 594). After the morning reading, Shacharis continues with יְפָרְי (p. 150).

כָּן קְרוֹבֵץ לְפוּרִים

Many congregations recite Krovetz during the chazzan's repetition of Shemoneh Esrei on the morning of Purim. See commentary.

The Chazzan begins his repetition (p. 98) and continues through גְּבוּרַת. Then all recite:

וְאַתָּה אִמְנוֹן יְהוּמַת הָיָה, אֲמַנָּה שְׂבָעִים וְהַמֵּשׁ בַּעֲרֵה לְהָגוּ.
אָז מָאוּ כָמוֹ יוֹדַע נַגּוּ, אֲרִיהַ בָּן זֹאֵב לְלַשֵּׁעַ הַחוּגוּ.
אֵץ לְהוֹבִיר אוֹתוֹ מִנְּגוּי, וְמְרַדְּכֵי אֲמַץ בְּאֵלָיו תְּמַגּוּ.

Chazzan concludes the blessing:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, מִגּוֹ אֲבֵרָהִים.

KROVETZ FOR PURIM

The title Krovetz, is the initials of קְרוֹבֵץ, the initials of קְרוֹבֵץ, the initials of קְרוֹבֵץ and sabation is in the tents of the righteous (Psalms 118:15), a verse that expresses perfectly the joy and celebration of the Purim miracle.

The Krovetz is recited during Shacharis on Purim. It consists of poetic stanzas that are recited just before the conclusion of the blessings of Shemoneh Esrei during the chazzan's repetition. The only blessing where this is not done is וְיָצָא מִיַּד הַמֶּלֶךְ, since the Purim miracle came about

through descendants of King Saul. The eighteen stanzas of the liturgy begin, respectively, with the words of the Book of Esther that tell of Esther's rise to power: *Esther more than all the women, and she won more of his grace and favor than all the other girls, so she set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen in place of Vashti (Esther 2:17).*

A second key verse from the Book of Esther is interspersed among the stanzas. In our text its words appear in bold type: *... since the Purim miracle came about*

ἀγίας γῆς καὶ τῆς βασιλείας ἡ καὶ ἐνεπύρσαν τὸν πυλῶνα καὶ ἐξέχεαν αἷμα ἄθλων καὶ ἐδέθημεν τοῦ κυρίου καὶ εἰσηκούσθημεν καὶ προσηγάκαμεν θυσίαν καὶ σμίδαλων καὶ ἐξήψαμεν τοὺς λύχνους καὶ προεθήκαμεν τοὺς ἄρτους. ἡ καὶ νῦν ἵνα ἀγγιτε τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς σκινοπηγίας τοῦ Χασέλευ μηνός. ἔτους ἑκατοστοῦ ὀγδοηκοστοῦ καὶ ὀγδοῦ.

10 Οἱ ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις καὶ οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ καὶ ἡ γερουσία καὶ Ἰουδας Ἀριστοβούλῳ διδασκάλῳ Πτολεμαίου τοῦ βασιλέως, ὅντι δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ τῶν χριστῶν ἱερέων γένους, καὶ τοῖς ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ Ἰουδαίοις χάρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν. ἡ ἐκ μεγάλων κινδύνων ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ σεσωσμένοι μεγάλας ἐχάριστοῦμεν αὐτῷ ὡς ἂν πρὸς βασιλέα παρατασσόμενοι ἡ αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐξέβρασαν τοὺς παραταξαμένους ἐν τῇ ἀγίᾳ

8 καὶ ἐγγύθεν καὶ προσέθηκαμεν 19 enim emisti eos qui dimicaverunt
9 ἡ αἰγιστήρε 106 in sanctam civitatem L ipse enim
10 ἡ γερουσία Ἰουδαίας emissire fecit de Perside eos qui
12 παρατασσόμενος 19 55 62 A ipse fugaverunt contra nos V

of a prologue relating to their interest in the Jews of Egypt. IN THE DISTRESS AND AFFLICTION: *Hebraism* cf. Zeph. 1.15. IN THOSE YEARS WHEN JASON AND HIS PARTISANS REVOLTED: See below, chap. 4. AGAINST THE HOLY LAND: Judaea. This is an indication that this letter was not written by the Jews of Judaea. They would not have used the expression "the Holy Land"; it was used only by the Jews who lived outside of Judaea. Neither in Josephus nor in tannaitic literature do we find the term "Holy Land" applied to Judaea, though Judaea was called the Holy Land by all the Jews of the Diaspora; cf. *Introd.* AND KINGDOM: It is difficult to ascertain to what the word "kingdom" refers. In I Maccabees (1.16, 6.47, 7.8) it refers to the Seleucids. Jason did not revolt against the Seleucids; he was in sympathy with them. Perhaps the word "kingdom" may refer to that of the Ptolemies. Jason, the brother of Onias, was the high priest, and was in favor with the Seleucids. Our author perhaps had this in mind in his letter to the Jews of Egypt when he told them that Jason was hostile to the Ptolemies. The word "kingdom" may refer to the kingdom of the high priests, by whom the country was ruled. It is well known that Judaea down to the time of the Hasmonean period had a theocratic government, i.e., it was ruled by the high priests, and the office followed the line of succession. The author wanted to indicate that Jason revolted against his brother Onias, who was the rightful high priest and the ruler of the Jews. 8. THEY SET THE GATE ON FIRE: According to I Macc. 4.38 all the gates of the sanctuary were burnt. WE BESOUGETH THE LORD AND HE HEDED US: Cf. I Macc. 4.39-41. WE OFFERED . . . LIT THE LAMPS: Cf. *ibid.*, 4.42-51.

sans revolted against the Holy Land and kingdom, they set the gate on fire and shed innocent blood. We besought the Lord and He heeded us. We offered a burnt offering and finest wheat flour. We lit the lamps and displayed the shewbread. 9 Now [we write] urging you too to keep the days of the feast like the Feast of Tabernacles in the month of Kislev.

10 In the one hundred and eighty-eighth year. The people of Jerusalem and Judaea, the Senate of the Jews send greetings and salutations to Aristobulus, teacher of King Ptolemy, who is also one of the stock of the anointed priests, and to the Jews of Egypt. 11 Because we have been saved from great dangers by God, we thank Him as it is right to thank Him for having taken our side against a king. 12 He it was who drove

9. TO KEEP THE DAYS OF THE FEAST LIKE THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES IN THE MONTH OF KISLEV: The purpose of this letter was to ask the Jews of Egypt to observe the feast of "Purification" of the Temple. The "Purification" is not mentioned. There must be a lacuna in this verse. The word "like" is not in the text; however, see v. 18. The simple short Greek word *ὡς* "like", might easily have fallen out (cf. S. Zeitlin, *Introd.* I Macc. 54). The words "like Tabernacles" show that the author had in mind that the Feast of Tabernacles lasted for eight days, and wanted the Jews to celebrate the Festival of Purification for 8 days. The letter ends with this word. The following letter, which the Jews of Judaea supposedly wrote to their fellow Jews in Egypt, is actually based on a document written by an Antiochian Jew; cf. *Introd.* 31-40.

10. IN THE ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-EIGHTH YEAR: 124-123 BCE. THE PEOPLE OF JERUSALEM AND JUDAEA, THE SENATE OF THE JEWS: See critical note; *Introd.* The order is strange. The usual form of address is to place "the Gerousia" first and "the people" afterward, e.g., I Macc. 12.6. This order indicates that this letter was not written by the Jews of Judaea (cf. *Introd.*) TO ARISTOBULUS, TEACHER OF KING PTOLEMY: Clement of Alexandria (*Stromata* 5.14) said that the Aristobulus mentioned by the composer of the epitome of the books of the Maccabees lived in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus (283-245 BCE), while in 1.22 he says that Aristobulus dedicated his book to Ptolemy Philometor (181-145 BCE). This could hardly be the same man. Eusebius in his *Ecclesiastical History* says in chap. 7.32 that Aristobulus was among the seventy who translated the Holy Scriptures for Ptolemy Philadelphus. ONE OF THE STOCK OF THE ANOINTED PRIESTS: i.e., of the family of Zadok who were anointed, while the priests of the Hasmonean family were not anointed. Aristobulus might have been of the stock of Ezechias, the high-priestly family, who were brought to Egypt by Ptolemy Soter after he had taken Jerusalem in the year 320 BCE (cf. Josephus, *Against Apion* 1.87).

πδλει. ¹³εἰς τὴν Περσίδα γενόμενος γὰρ ὁ ἡγεμὼν καὶ ἡ
περὶ αὐτὸν ἀνυπόστατος δοκοῦσα εἶναι δύναμις κατεκόπησαν
ἐν τῷ τῆς Ναναίας ἱερῷ, παραλογισμῷ χρησαμένων τῶν
περὶ τὴν Ναναίαν ἱερέων. ¹⁴ὥς γὰρ συνοικήσων αὐτῇ παρε-
γένετο εἰς τὸν τόπον ὃ τε Ἀντίοχος καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ φίλοι
χάριον τοῦ λαβεῖν τὰ χρήματα πλείονα εἰς φερνῆς λόγον
¹⁵καὶ προσθέντων αὐτὰ τῶν ἱερέων τοῦ Ναναίου κάκεινου
προσελθόντος μετ' ὀλίγων εἰς τὸν περίβολον τοῦ τεμένους,
συγκλείσαντες τὸ ἱερόν, ὡς εἰσηλθεὶν Ἀντίοχος, ¹⁶ἀνοίξαντες
τὴν τοῦ φανώματος κρυπτὴν θύραν βάλαντες πέτρους
συνεκραύωσαν τὸν ἡγεμόνα καὶ μέλη ποιήσαντες καὶ τὰς
κεφαλὰς ἀφελόντες τοῖς ἔξω παρέρριψαν. ¹⁷κατὰ πάντα
εὐλογητὸς ἡμῶν ὃ θεὸς, ὃς παρέδωκεν τοὺς ἀσεβήσαντας.
¹⁸μέλλοντες ἔγειν ἐν τῷ Χασελεν πέμπτη καὶ εἰκάδι τὸν

13 ἐν τῷ τῆς Ναναίας ὄρει

14 συνοικῶν ἄ

15 τῆς Δαναίας 19 templi ananias

16 ἀφελόντες > Α παραρριψάντες Α

17 qui perdidit inimicos nostros qui intraverunt inquam templum X

18

18 τῆς

ἐπιροπτηγίας

τροπον

καὶ

εἰς

18

ἐπιροπτηγίας

τροπον

καὶ

εἰς

μνημοσυρον του πυρος του ἱεροῦτος ἔν

sicut et nos confisionem tabernaculi

ei diem ignis B acais sicut tabernaculi

M ἠωδοθησε το 64 93

13. WHEN THE KING ARRIVED IN PERSIA: The text has *hegemon*, leader, but in the late Greek literature the word *hegemon* was applied to the Roman Emperor (cf. Strabo 4.3.2; Plutarch, *Cicero* 2; see below 14.16). The king here is referred to as Antiochus IV, who went to Persia (cf. I Macc. 6.1). THEY WERE CUT DOWN: Antiochus himself was not killed there. According to the author (Chap. 9) he was put to flight by the inhabitants of the city, and he died of a wasting disease (Appian, *Syrian Wars* 67). Polybius (31.9) relates that Antiochus was smitten with a madness from which he eventually died. IN THE TEMPLE OF NANAIA: Cf. I Macc. 6.2; Polybius 31.9; Appian, *ibid.* 66; Josephus, *Ant.* 12.367-369. The Syrian goddess Nanaea is identical with the Nana of the Babylonians, and is identified with Aphrodite of the Greeks and Venus of the Romans.

14. ON THE PRETEXT OF INTENDING TO MARRY . . . TO CLAIM THE GREATER PART OF THEIR TREASURE AS A DOWRY: Seneca (*Orat. Suasor* 1) relates that Anthony agreed to marry Athene at Athens for a dowry of a thousand talents. Antiochus Epiphanes tried to marry Diana at Hierapolis in Syria. 16. STRUCK THE KING DOWN: The text has *hegemon*, "leader"; no doubt King Antiochus is meant (cf. v. 13). Some scholars are of the opinion that the Epicurist confused Antiochus IV with his father, Antiochus III, who lost his life in 187 when he attempted to plunder the temple of Belus, in the

out those who arrayed themselves against the holy city. ¹³When the king arrived in Persia, with an army that seemed irresistible, they were cut down in the temple of Nanaea, by the guile of the priests of Nanaea. ¹⁴Antiochus, on the pretext of intending to marry [the goddess], came into the place along with his Friends to claim the greater part of their treasure as a dowry. ¹⁵The priests of the Nanaeon had set out the treasures on display. He and a few retainers entered inside the wall of the temple precinct. They then shut the temple gates after Antiochus had entered. ¹⁶Then they opened a door concealed in the panel work of the ceiling, hurled stones, and struck the king down as though with a thunderbolt. They hacked them to pieces, decapitated them, and threw their heads to those who were waiting on the outside. ¹⁷Blessed in all things be our God, who handed over the impious ones to a just fate.

¹⁸We are now about to celebrate the purification of the Elymaean hills. Strabo (16.1.18) says: "When Antiochus, the Great, attempted to rob the Temple of Belus, the neighboring barbarians, all by themselves, attacked him and slew him." Others are of the opinion that the author confused Antiochus IV with Antiochus VII, Sidetes, who was killed in 129 in his campaign against the Parthians (cf. Appian, *Syrian Wars* 68). THEIR HEADS: Torrey, *JAOBS*, v. 60, pp. 119-150, who is of the opinion that the letter was written in Aramaic holds, that the copyist of the Aramaic text carelessly wrote כָּפוֹתָם instead of כְּפוֹתָם. Thus the Greek translator had τὰς κεφαλὰς, "their heads," while actually it refers to the head of Antiochus, which was thrown out from the Temple to "those who were waiting on the outside."

18. TO TELL YOU, SO THAT YOU TOO MAY CELEBRATE [THESE DAYS] LIKE THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES: The word "like" is not found in the text. The Latin version, LBMP, have the word "ilike," *sicut Tabernaculi, tamquam scenophegias* (cf. *Introd.*). AND THE DAY OF THE FIRE: Similarly, the word "day" is not in the text, but the Latin versions VB have *diem ignis* (cf. *Introd.*). The purpose of this letter was to prevail on the Jews of Egypt to celebrate the purification of the Temple on the 25th of Kislew for 8 days, like the Festival of Tabernacles and like "the day of the fire." The author had in mind Nehemiah, who offered sacrifices when he built the Temple and the altar. We learn from the Biblical books Ezra and Nehemiah that the altar and the Temple were built by Zerubbabel before the time of Nehemiah; there was, however, another tradition that Nehemiah had returned to Judaea with Zerubbabel (cf. I Esdras 5.8). The author of Josephon likewise places Nehemiah and Zerubbabel among the leaders who returned from Babylon to Judaea (cf. *Introd.* 40).

τῶν πολεμίων καὶ τῆς στρατίας ἐκταγείσης καὶ τῶν θηρίων ἐπὶ μέρος εὐκαιρον ἀποκατασταθέντων τῆς τε ἵππου κατὰ κέρας τεταγμένης ²¹συνιδῶν ὁ Μακκαβαῖος τὴν τῶν πληθῶν παρουσίαν καὶ τῶν ὄπλων τὴν ποικίλην παρασκευὴν τὴν τε τῶν θηρίων ἀγριότητα ἀνατίνας τὰς χεῖρας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐπεκαλέσατο τὸν τερατοποιὸν κύριον γινώσκων ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν δι' ὄπλων, καθὼς δὲ ἐὰν αὐτῷ κριθῆ, τοῖς ἀξίοις ποιεῖται τὴν νίκην. ²²ἔλεγεν δὲ ἐπικαλούμενος τόνδε τὸν τρόπον Σὺ, δέσποτα, ἀπέστειλας τὸν ἄγγελόν σου ἐπὶ Εἰζέκου τοῦ βασιλέως τῆς Ἰουδαίας, καὶ ἀνέλεν ἐκ τῆς παρεμβολῆς Σενναχηριμ εἰς ἑκατὸν ὀγδοήκοντα πέντε χιλιάδας. ²³καὶ νῦν, δυνάστα τῶν οὐρανῶν, ἀπόστειλον ἄγγελόν ἀγαθὸν ἔμπροσθεν ἡμῶν εἰς δέος καὶ τρόμον. ²⁴μεγέθει βραχιόνός σου καταπλαγείησαν οἱ μετὰ βλασφημίας παραγινόμενοι ἐπὶ τὸν ἄγιόν σου λαόν. καὶ οὗτος μὲν ἐν τούτοις ἔληξεν.

²⁵Οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Νικάνορα μετὰ σαλπύγγων καὶ παϊάνων προσήγον. ²⁶οὶ δὲ περὶ τὸν Ἰουδαν μετὰ ἐπικλήσεως καὶ εὐχῶν συνέμειξαν τοῖς πολεμίοις. ²⁷καὶ ταῖς μὲν χεραῖν ἀγωνιζόμενοι, ταῖς δὲ καρδίαις πρὸς τὸν θεὸν εὐχόμενοι κατέστρωσαν οὐδὲν ἥττον μυριάδων τριῶν καὶ πεντακχιλίων τῆ τοῦ θεοῦ μεγάλως εὐφρανθέντες ἐπιφανεία. ²⁸γερόμενοι δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς χρείας καὶ μετὰ χαρᾶς ἀναλύοντες ἐπέγνωσαν προπεπτωκότα Νικάνορα σὺν τῇ πανοπλίᾳ. ²⁹γενομένης δὲ κραυγῆς καὶ ταραχῆς εὐλόγουν τὸν δυνάστην καὶ ψυχῇ πρωταγωνιστῆς ὑπὲρ τῶν πολιτῶν ὁ τὴν τῆς ἡλικίας εὐνοίαν εἰς ὁμοθενεῖς διαφυλάξας τὴν τοῦ Νικάνορος

²¹ εἰρηστ.] πτ. ἐπὶ μέρος επικαιρον A ²⁷ fm. ἐπιμέλεια A

τας > A

²⁴ λαον] σουν V pau. ³⁰ καὶ προσεταξέ(ν) | προσετ. δε VL φέρειν | πτ. περὶ A

²². A HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIVE THOUSAND OF THE HOST OF SENNACHERIB: Cf. I Macc. 7.41; II Kings 18.

²⁵. SONG OF VICTORY: A paean is a song of victory after the battle. The Greeks marched into battle with songs of victory (cf. Xen. *Cyropaedia* 4.1.6).

²⁸. THEY RECOGNIZED NICANOR LYING DEAD: From the description of the

battle. The elephants were stationed in a strategic location, with the cavalry drawn up on the wings. ²¹Then it was that Maccabee, beholding the presence of such hosts and the varied assortment of arms and the savagery of the beasts, stretched forth his hands toward heaven and invoked the Lord, the Worker of miracles, because he knew that it is not by might of arms but just as God wills that He brings about victory for those who are worthy. ²²Thus he spoke, praying in this way:

"Thou it was, O Lord, who didst send Thine angel in the time of Hezekiah, King of Judah, and didst slay a hundred and eighty-five thousand of the host of Sennacherib; ²³and now, O Sovereign of the heavens, send a good angel to cause terror and trembling before us. ²⁴May these blasphemers against thy Holy people be struck down by the great strength of Thine arm." With these words he ended.

²⁵Nicanor and his troops then began their attack with trumpets and song of victory, ²⁶while Judah and his men closed with the enemy, offering supplications and prayers. ²⁷Fighting with their hands, while they prayed to God with their hearts, they laid low no less than thirty-five thousand men. Greatly were they cheered by the manifestation of God's help.

²⁸After the action was over, they were returning with joy when they recognized Nicanor lying dead in full armor. ²⁹With tumultuous shouting they praised the Sovereign in the language of their fathers.

³⁰Then he who was always in body and soul the foremost champion of his fellow citizens and always preserved his youthful ardor toward them, ordered them to cut off Nicanor's

battle given in our book as well as I Maccabees, it appears that Nicanor was slain during the first engagement.

²⁹. THE LANGUAGE OF THEIR FATHERS: Hebrew or Aramaic.

³⁰. FELLOW CITIZENS: *Homoethnos*. The text of V is preferable: *praecipit autem iudas qui per omnia corpore et animo emori pro civibus paratus erat*, "Judah, who was altogether ready in body and spirit to die for his country-men" (cf. also BMP).

κεφαλήν ἀποτεμόντας καὶ τὴν χεῖρα σὺν τῷ ὤμφ φέρειν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα. ³¹παραγεγυμένους δὲ ἐκεῖ καὶ συγκαλέσας τοὺς ὁμοθνεῖς καὶ τοὺς ἱερεῖς πρὸ τοῦ θυσαστηρίου στήσας μετεπέμψατο τοὺς ἐκ τῆς ἄκρας. ³²καὶ ἐπιδειξάμενος τὴν τοῦ μαροῦ Νικάνορος κεφαλὴν καὶ τὴν χεῖρα τοῦ δυσφήμου, ἣν ἐκτίνας ἐπὶ τὸν ἅγιον τοῦ παντοκράτορος οἴκου ἐμεγαλαύχησεν, ³³καὶ τὴν γλώσσαν τοῦ δυσσεβοῦς Νικάνορος ἐκτεμῶν ἔφη κατὰ μέρος δώσειν τοῖς ὀρνέοις, τὰ δ' ἐπίχειρα τῆς ἀνοίας κατέναντι τοῦ ναοῦ κρεμάσαι. ³⁴οἱ δὲ πάντες εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εὐλόγησαν τὸν ἐπιφανῆ κύριον λέγοντες Εὐλόγητός ὁ διατηρήσας τὸν ἑαυτοῦ τόπον ἀμίαντον. ³⁵ἐξέδησεν δὲ τὴν τοῦ Νικάνορος προτομὴν ἐκ τῆς ἄκρας ἐπίδηλον πᾶσιν καὶ φανερόν τῆς τοῦ κυρίου βοθησίας σημεῖον. ³⁶ἐδογμάτισαν δὲ πάντες μετὰ κοινοῦ ψηφίσματος μηδ' αὐτὸς εἶσαι ἀπαρασήμαντον τῆνδε τὴν ἡμέραν, ἔχειν δὲ ἐπίσημον τὴν τρισκαιδεκάτην τοῦ δωδεκάτου μηνὸς — Ἀδαρ λέγεται τῇ Συριακῇ φωνῇ — πρὸ μᾶς ἡμέρας τῆς Μαρδοχαικῆς ἡμέρας.

³⁷Τῶν οὖν κατὰ Νικάνορα χωρησάντων οὕτως καὶ ἀπ' ἐκείνων τῶν καιρῶν κρατηθείσης τῆς πόλεως ὑπὸ τῶν Ἑβραίων καὶ αὐτὸς αὐτῆσι τὸν λόγον καταπαύσω. ³⁸καὶ εἰ μὲν καλῶς εἰθικτως τῇ συντάξει, τοῦτο καὶ αὐτὸς ἤθελον εἰ δὲ εὐτελῶς καὶ μετρίως, τοῦτο ἐφικτὸν ἦν μοι. ³⁹καθάπερ γὰρ οἶνον κατὰ μόνας πίνειν, ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ ὕδωρ πάλιν πολέμων

31 συγκαλέσας] —σάμενος A ομοθνεῖς] 38 εἰ μὲρ] εἶπεν A

—πος AL: item in 30 L, non A

32 ἐπιδείξαιμ.] ι 2° > A

33 δώσειν > A

36 συριακῇ] κυριακῇ A

39 γὰρ > Αραμ. ἦος L] ἦος AV, ἦος V*

Subscr. ὑδα τοῦ μακ(αφ)αίου τρε-

ξων επιστολῆ A, ὑδα μακαβαίου

πράξεων επιτομῆ V: cf. inscr.

31. HE SENT FOR THE GARRISON FROM THE CITADEL. In order to prove that Nicanor had been slain he showed them his head and arm.

35. HE HUNG THE HEAD OF NICANOR: Cf. I Macc. 7.47; I Sam. 31.9; Judith 13.8; Herodotus 7.238. Cutting off the head and right arm of Nicanor was a punishment for his blasphemy, his raising of his arm, and threatening to destroy the Temple (cf. Yer. Meg. 1.4; B Tan, 17).

36. PUBLIC DECREE: The festival of the 13th day of the month of Adar in commemoration of Judah's victory over Nicanor was inaugurated by public decree. Hanukkah, or the festival of the Purification of the Temple, was the result of a public vote (cf. above 10.8). In *Megillat Taanit*, this festival

head and arm at the shoulder and to carry them to Jerusalem.

³¹Upon his arrival, he summoned his people, stationed the priests at the altar, and sent for the garrison from the citadel.

³²He showed them the head of the accursed Nicanor and the arm of the infamous fellow, which he had boastfully stretched forth against the holy Temple of the Almighty. ³³He cut out the tongue of the impious Nicanor, and said that he would throw it piecemeal to the birds, and the reward of his folly he would hang up opposite the sanctuary. ³⁴Then they all raised their voices to heaven, praising the Lord who had revealed Himself, saying,

"Praised be He who has preserved His own sacred Place from being defiled."

³⁵He hung the head of Nicanor from the citadel as clear and evident proof to all of the help of the Lord. ³⁶Then they all decided by public decree never to permit this day to go by unnoticed, but to mark with honor the thirteenth day of the twelfth month—called Adar in the Syriac language—the day before the day of Mordecai.

³⁷In this way the adventures of Nicanor took place. From that time the city has been in the possession of the Hebrews. For this reason I, too, shall here bring my story to a close.

³⁸If my compilation has been well written and is to the point, this is what I myself have wanted. If it be poor in value or mediocre, this is the best that I could do. ³⁹Just as it is not beneficial to drink wine by itself alone, or in the same way

is mentioned among the semi-holidays on which Jews were not allowed to mourn or weep. After the destruction of the Temple these semi-holidays, with the exception of Hanukkah and Purim, were no longer observed, because they were in commemoration of national victories (cf. Tal. R.H. 186). IN THE SYRIAC LANGUAGE: *I.e.*, Assyro-Babylonian. THE DAY BEFORE THE DAY OF MORDECAI: This is added by the Epitomist. Nicanor was not killed the day before Purim. The year 161 BCE was intercalated with two Adars. Nicanor was killed on the 13th day of the first Adar, which was not the day before Purim (cf. S. Zeitlin, *Megillat Taanit*, 118).

Vv. 37-39 is the *Epitogue of the Epitomist*.

37. IN THE POSSESSION OF THE HEBREWS: *I.e.*, from the time of Agrippa, 41 CE. For the usage of the word "Hebrews" by the Epitomist, cf. *Intro.* 21.

τῶν σαββάτων ³³καὶ εἶπον πρὸς αὐτοὺς Ἔως τοῦ νῦν ἐξελη-
 θήντες ποιήσατε κατὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ βασιλέως, καὶ ζήσασθε.
³⁴καὶ εἶπον Οὐκ ἐξελευσόμεθα οὐδὲ ποιήσομεν τὸν λόγον τοῦ
 35 βασιλέως βεβηλώσαι τὴν ἡμέραν τῶν σαββάτων. ³⁵καὶ ἐτά-
 χυναν ἐπ' αὐτοὺς πόλεμον. ³⁶καὶ οὐκ ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτοῖς οὐδέ
 λίθον ἐνετίραξαν αὐτοῖς οὐδέ ἐνέφραξαν τοὺς κρύφους ³⁷λέγοντες
 Ἄποθάνομεν πάντες ἐν τῇ ἀπλότῃ ἡμῶν μαρτυρεῖ ἐφ' ἡμᾶς
 ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ ὅτι ἀκρίτως ἀπόλλυτε ἡμᾶς. ³⁸καὶ ἀνέσ-
 τησαν ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἐν πολέμῳ τοῖς σάββασι, καὶ ἀπέθανον
 αὐτοὶ καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες αὐτῶν καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτῶν καὶ τὰ κτήνη
 αὐτῶν ἕως χιλλῶν ψυχῶν ἀνθρώπων.

³⁹Καὶ ἔγνω Ματταθίας καὶ οἱ φίλοι αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπέθησαν
 40 ἐπ' αὐτοὺς σφόδρα. ⁴⁰καὶ εἶπεν ἀνὴρ τῷ πλησίον αὐτοῦ Ἐὰν
 πάντες ποιήσωμεν ὡς οἱ ἀδελφοὶ ἡμῶν ἐποίησαν καὶ μὴ
 πολεμήσωμεν πρὸς τὰ ἔθνη ὑπὲρ τῆς ψυχῆς ἡμῶν καὶ τῶν
 δικαιοματιῶν ἡμῶν, νῦν τάχως ἀλθρεύσομεν ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τῆς
 γῆς. ⁴¹καὶ ἐβουλεύσαντο τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ λέγοντες Πᾶς
 ἄνθρωπος, ὃς ἐὰν ἔλθῃ ἐφ' ἡμᾶς εἰς πόλεμον τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῶν
 σαββάτων, πολεμήσωμεν κατέναντι αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐ μὴ ἀποθά-
 νωμεν πάντες καθὼς ἀπέθανον οἱ ἀδελφοὶ ἡμῶν ἐν τοῖς κρύφοις.
⁴²τότε συνήχθησαν πρὸς αὐτοὺς συναγωγῇ Ἀσιδαίων, ἰσχυροὶ
 δυνάμει ἀπὸ Ἰσραὴλ, πᾶς ὁ ἐκουσιαζόμενος τῷ νόμῳ. ⁴³καὶ
 πάντες οἱ φρυαδεύοντες ἀπὸ τῶν κακῶν προσετέθησαν αὐτοῖς
 καὶ ἐγένοντο αὐτοῖς εἰς στήριγμα. ⁴⁴καὶ συνεστήσαντο δύναμις
 καὶ ἐπάταξαν ἀμαρτωλοὺς ἐν ὄργῃ αὐτῶν καὶ ἄνδρας ἀνόμους
 ἐν θυμῷ αὐτῶν· καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ ἔφυγον εἰς τὰ ἔθνη σωθῆναι.
 45 καὶ ἐκύκλωσεν Ματταθίας καὶ οἱ φίλοι αὐτοῦ καὶ καθέλωσαν

38 χιλλῶν>S
 39 πρῶσε (Hippol. Com. Dan. IV 44) 42 ἀσιδαίων ἰουδαίων S 74 ἰουδαε-
 εως σφόδρα A 43 νόμῳ B
 40 ἐξολοθρευσομένων S 34 44 ἀνδρας ἀνομους 46 58
 41 τὴν ἡμέραν ἐαυτῶν S 45 ἐκλευσε S 46 55 φιλῶν] υιοι A,
 cum filiis et amicis suis B

36. NOR THEY HURL A STONE AGAINST THEM: I. e., they did not resist on
 the Sabbath day.
 38. DIED: According to Josephus many escaped and joined Mattathias.
 39. HEARD: V et cognovit.
 40. EACH ONE SAYING TO THE OTHER: Heb.; cf. II Kings 7.9.

encamped against them, and organized an attack against them on the Sabbath day. ³³They said to them, "This is enough! Come out and obey the command of the king, and you will live." ³⁴But they answered, "We will not come forth, nor will we obey the command of the king to profane the Sabbath day." ³⁵Then they attacked them. ³⁶They did not defend themselves nor did they hurl a stone against them, nor block up the hiding places, ³⁷saying, "Let all of us die in our innocence; may heaven and earth testify in our behalf that you destroy us against all justice." ³⁸They attacked them on the Sabbath, and they, their wives, their children and their cattle died, to the number of a thousand souls.

³⁹When Mattathias and his friends heard this, they mourned greatly over them, ⁴⁰each one saying to the other, "If all of us do as our brothers have done, and do not fight against the heathen for our lives and our laws, they will soon destroy us from off the earth." ⁴¹They then made the following decision, "If any man attack us in battle on the Sabbath day, let us oppose him, that we may not all die as our brothers did in the hiding places."

⁴²At that time a company of Hasidim joined them, an exceedingly forceful group of Israel, each one offering himself willingly in defense of the Law. ⁴³All the refugees from misfortune joined them, and came to reinforce them. ⁴⁴They mustered an army and smote sinners in their anger, and lawless men in their wrath, while the rest fled to the heathen to save themselves. ⁴⁵Mattathias and his friends went about,

42. A COMPANY OF HASIDIM: SV. 74 has "Jews." So B *sinagoga iudaeorum*. The reading Hasidim is preferable. This group was the forerunner of the sect known as Essenes, who observed the commandments strictly. The Hasidim were not concerned with the Jews as a nationality. They joined Mattathias only when Antiochus severely persecuted all those who observed the Law. Only after more than a thousand persons were burned to death in the cave because they did not wish to resist Antiochus, did the Hasidim see the folly of their policy and join the rebellion. But as soon as the Jews received religious freedom, the Hasidim not only withdrew from the Hasmoneans and refused to participate in the struggle for the political independence of Judaea but actually opposed them.

καὶ δέξαι αὐτῷ τὴν ὀλοκαύτως τὴν προσφερομένην ὑπὲρ τοῦ βασιλέως. ³⁴καὶ ἐμυκτήρισεν αὐτοὺς καὶ κατεγέλασεν αὐτῶν καὶ ἔμιλανεν αὐτοὺς καὶ ἐλάλησεν ὑπερφάνως. ³⁵καὶ ὤμοσεν μετὰ θυμοῦ λέγων Ἐὰν μὴ παραδοθῆ Ἰουδας καὶ ἡ παρεμβολὴ αὐτοῦ εἰς χεῖράς μου τὸ νῦν, καὶ ἔσται ἐάν ἐπιστρέψω ἐν εἰρήνῃ, ἐμπυριῶ τὸν οἶκον τοῦτον. καὶ ἐξῆλθεν μετὰ θυμοῦ μεγάλου. ³⁶καὶ εἰσῆλθον οἱ ἱερεῖς καὶ ἔστησαν κατὰ πρόσωπον τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου καὶ τοῦ ναοῦ καὶ ἔκλαυσαν καὶ εἶπον Ὡς ἐξελέξω τὸν οἶκον τοῦτον ἐπικληθῆναι τὸ ὄνομά σου ἐπὶ αὐτοῦ εἶναι οἶκον προσευχῆς καὶ δεήσεως τῷ λαῷ σου. ³⁷τοῖσιν ἐκδικησιν ἐν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ τοῦτῳ καὶ ἐν τῇ παρεμβολῇ αὐτοῦ, καὶ πεσέτωσαν ἐν ῥομφαίᾳ· μνησθητὶ τῶν δυσφημιῶν αὐτῶν καὶ μὴ δῶς αὐτοῖς μνην. ³⁸καὶ ἐξῆλθεν Νικάνωρ ἐξ Ἱερουσαλὴμ καὶ παρενέβαλεν ἐν Βαιθωρον, καὶ ⁴⁰συνήτησεν αὐτῷ δῆγμας Συρίας. ⁴⁰καὶ Ἰουδας παρενέβαλεν ἐν Ἀδασα ἐν τρισχιλίοις ἀνδράσιν· καὶ προσήξατο Ἰουδας καὶ εἶπεν Ὅτι παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως ὅτε ἔδυσφημισαν, ἐξῆλθεν ὁ ἄγγελός σου καὶ ἐπάταξεν ἐν αὐτοῖς ἕκατόν ὄγδοήκοντα πέντε χιλιάδας. ⁴¹οὕτως συντριψὼν τὴν παρεμβολὴν ταύτην ἐνώπιον ἡμῶν σήμερον, καὶ γνώτωσαν οἱ ἐπίλοιποι ὅτι κακῶς ἐλάλησεν ἐπὶ τὰ ἄγια σου, καὶ κρῖνον αὐτῶν κατὰ τὴν κακίαν αὐτοῦ. ⁴²καὶ συνῆψαν αἱ παρεμβολαὶ εἰς πόλεμον τῇ τρισκαυδεκάτῃ τοῦ μηνὸς Ἀδαρ, καὶ συνετρίβη ἡ παρεμβολὴ

34 καὶ ἔμιλανεν αὐτοὺς > 107

40 ἄδασα 236

41 βασιλέως + ασσυρίων
Sennacherib V

34. JEERED AT THEM AND POLLUTED THEM: MS 107 "polluted them." Josephus says he cursed them but does not say that he polluted them. According to the Hebrew Josephus he spat at them. See critical note.

35. I WILL BURN DOWN THIS HOUSE: Nicanor boasted that if Judah were not delivered to him he would on his return destroy the Temple.

36. AND STOOD BEFORE THE ALTAR AND THE SANCTUARY: They stood between the porch and the altar. Cf. Joel 2.17. See Introd. p. 59.

39. BETH HORON: See above 3.16.

40. ADASA: According to Josephus (408) Adasa was a village about 30 stades (a little more than three miles) from Beth Horon on the road to Jerusalem. Abel (*ibid.* 377-9) identifies it with the modern Khirbet 'Adaseh, which is about 7 miles from Beth Horon. Cf. Mishna Er. 5.6,

the whole burnt offering that was being offered in honor of the king. ³⁴He sneered at them, however, and jeered at them ³⁵and polluted them, and spoke disdainfully. ³⁵He swore with rage, saying, "Unless Judah and his army are delivered into my hands right now, it shall come to pass when I return in peace, that I will burn down this house."

He went away in great rage. ³⁶The priests entered and stood before the altar and the sanctuary, and wept and said, ³⁷"Thou hast chosen this house to be called by Thy name, to be a house of prayer and supplication for Thy people. ³⁸Take revenge on this man and on his army. Let them fall by the sword. Be mindful of their blasphemies, and give them no peace."

³⁹Nicanor then went out of Jerusalem and encamped at ⁴⁰Beth Horon where the Syrian army met him. ⁴⁰Judah in the meanwhile encamped in Adasa with three thousand men, and Judah prayed and said, ⁴¹"When the king's men blasphemed, Thine angel went forth and smote one hundred and eighty-five thousand of them. ⁴²In the same manner shatter this army before us today, that those who remain may know that he spoke wickedly of Thy sanctuary. Judge him as his wickedness deserves."

⁴³The armies met in battle on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar, and Nicanor's army was shattered. He him-

A. Neubauer, *La Géographie du Talmud*, p. 98. See also Schürer, *Geschichte* I, p. 218 n. 28.

41. WHEN THE KING'S MEN BLASPHEMED: The reference is to Sennacherib, king of Assyria. Cf. II Mac. 15.22; II Kings 18.

43. THE THIRTEENTH DAY OF THE MONTH OF ADAR: 161 BCE (152 AS). In II Mac. 15.36 the author adds, "Day before the day of Mordecai." The reason why the day of Mordecai or Purim is not mentioned is due to the fact that the year 161 was intercalated, with two Adars. Nicanor was killed on the 13th of the first Adar, which was not the day before Purim. The author of II Mac., seeing in the records that Nicanor was killed on the 13th of Adar and knowing that the 13th of Adar was the day before Purim, made the addition not knowing that the 13th of Adar of that particular year was not the day before the Day of Mordecai. Cf. S. Zeitlin, *Megilat Taanit*, p. 118.

Νικάνορος, καὶ ἔπεσον αὐτὸς πρῶτος ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ. ⁴⁴ὥς δὲ εἶδεν ἡ παρεμβολὴ αὐτοῦ ὅτι ἔπεσον Νικάνωρ, ρίψαντες τὰ ⁴⁵ ὄπλα ἔφυγον. ⁴⁵καὶ κατεδύκων αὐτοὺς ὁδὸν ἡμέρας μίᾱς ἀπὸ Ἀδασα ἕως τοῦ ἐλθεῖν εἰς Γαζῆρα καὶ ἐσάλπιζον ὀπίσω αὐτῶν ταῖς σάλπιγγιν τῶν σημασιῶν. ⁴⁶καὶ ἐξῆλθον ἐκ πασιῶν τῶν κωμῶν τῆς Ἰουδαίας κυκλόθεν καὶ ὑπερέκερων αὐτοὺς, καὶ ἀπέστρεφον οὗτοι πρὸς τούτους, καὶ ἔπεσον πάντες ῥομφαίᾳ, καὶ οὐ κατελείφθη ἐξ αὐτῶν οὐδὲ εἷς. ⁴⁷καὶ ἔλαβον τὰ σκῦλα καὶ τὴν προνομίην, καὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν Νικάνωρος ἀφείλον καὶ τὴν δεξιὰν αὐτοῦ, ἣν ἐξέτεινεν ὑπερηφάνως, καὶ ἤνεγκαν καὶ ἐξέτειναν παρὰ τῆ Ἱερουσαλημ. ⁴⁸καὶ ἠψφράνθη ὁ λαὸς σφόδρα καὶ ἤγαγον τὴν ἡμέραν ἐκείνην ἡμέραν εὐφροσύνης μεγάλης. ⁴⁹καὶ ἔστησαν τοῦ ἄγειν κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν τὴν ἡμέραν ταύτην τῆ τρισκαίδεκάτῃ τοῦ Ἀδαρ. ⁵⁰καὶ ἠτύχασεν ἡ γῆ Ἰουδα ἡμέρας ὀλίγας.

8 ¹Καὶ ἤκουσεν Ἰουδας τὸ ὄνομα τῶν Ῥωμαίων, ὅτι εἰσὶν δυνατοὶ ἰσχύϊ καὶ αὐτοὶ εὐδοκοῦσιν ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς προστιθεμένοις αὐτοῖς, καὶ ὅσοι ἂν προσέλθωσιν αὐτοῖς, ἰστώσιν αὐτοῖς φιλιαν, καὶ ὅτι εἰσὶ δυνατοὶ ἰσχύϊ. ²καὶ διηγήσαντο αὐτῷ τοὺς πολέμους αὐτῶν καὶ τὰς ἀνδραγαθίας, ἃς ποιοῦσιν ἐν τοῖς Γαλάταις, καὶ ὅτι κατεκράτησαν αὐτῶν καὶ ἤγαγον

⁴⁵ αὐτοῦ—οἱ περὶ αὐτῶν 311 ἐσαλίπισαν

A

VIII

1 καὶ οσοὶ εἰν προτεῶσων αὐτοῦς A

⁴⁶ ἀπέστρεφον A

⁴⁴ THEY THREW AWAY THEIR ARMS: Cf. above 5.43.

⁴⁵ GAZARA: Cf. above 4.15. AND THEY SOUNDED THE TRUMPET SIGNALS: The notes of the trumpet were to signal their friends in the villages to occupy the passes and intercept the retreat.

⁴⁶ BEGAN TO OUTFLANK THEM: I. e., close them in. The strategy was very well employed by Scipio against the army of Hasdrubal: cf. Polybius 1.1.23.

⁴⁷ CUT OFF NICANOR'S HEAD: Cf. I Sam. 31.9; Judith 13.8. Cf. also Herodotus 7.238. AND HIS RIGHT HAND: A means of counting the slain. In this case the cutting off of the head and right hand of Nicanor was a punishment for his blasphemy and his raising of the right hand in threatening to destroy the Temple. Cf. II Mac. 15.32; Yer. Meg. 1.4; B. Tan. 17.

⁴⁹ ON THE THIRTEENTH OF ADAR: In *Megillat Taanit* this festival is mentioned among the semi-holidays on which Jews were not allowed to

self fell first in the fight. ⁴⁴When his army saw that Nicanor ⁴⁵ had fallen, they threw away their arms and fled. ⁴⁵They pursued them a day's journey from Adasa until you come to Gazara. They sounded the trumpet signals after them, ⁴⁶and the people came forth from all around the villages of Judaea and began to outflank them. They turned them back upon themselves, and they all fell by the sword. Not even one of them was left. ⁴⁷They took the spoil and the plunder, and cut off Nicanor's head and right hand, which he had stretched out so arrogantly, and brought them and hanged them near Jerusalem. ⁴⁸The people rejoiced greatly, and kept that day as a day of great rejoicing, ⁴⁹and ordained that this day should be observed annually, on the thirteenth of Adar. ⁵⁰And the land of Judah was quiet for a little while.

8 Judah had heard of the fame of the Romans, that they were valiant in power, that they were favorably disposed toward all who joined them, and that they offered friendship to all who approached them. ²People had told him about their wars and their exploits among the Gauls, and how they had

mourn and weep. After the destruction of the Temple these semi-holidays, with the exception of Hanukkah and Purim, were no longer observed, as they were of a national character in commemoration of victories. Hence we find a dispute in the Talmud (R. H. 18b) among the sages whether the semi-holidays mentioned in the *Megillat Taanit* were really abolished since the rabbis never officially ratified such non-observance.

⁵⁰ FOR A LITTLE WHILE: Lit. "a few days." From the 14th of Adar, 161 BCE to Nisan, a period of between seven and nine weeks.

1. THE FAME OF THE ROMANS: The Battle of Magnesia in particular spread the fame of Rome throughout the East. WHO JOINED THEM: The Romans had made alliances with Ariarathes of Cappadocia, Attalus of Pergamum, and also Ptolemy Philometor. The text repeats the clause "they were valiant in power" either by error or for the sake of emphasis.

2. AMONG THE GAULS: Perhaps the Gauls or Celts who invaded Asia Minor in the third century BCE and were conquered in 189 BCE by Manlius Vulso; or possibly those of upper Italy whom Rome conquered in 190 BCE. Cf. C. Kautsch, *Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments*, ad. loc.

CHAPTER ONE

1. It is a positive Torah commandment to cry out and to sound trumpets in the event of any difficulty that arises which affects the community, as [Numbers 10:9] states: "[When you go out to war... against] an enemy who attacks you and you sound the trumpets...."

Commentary, Halachah 1

It is a positive Torah commandment - See *Sefer HaMitzvot* (Positive Commandment 59), which mentions this in the reckoning of the 613 mitzvot of the Torah.

Significantly, however, the Rambam's appreciation of this mitzvah differs in the *Mishneh Torah* from that in *Sefer HaMitzvot*. To explain: Following the verse quoted here by the Rambam as a proof-text, the Torah continues [Numbers 10:10]: "On the days of your rejoicing, on your festivals, and on your new moon [celebrations], you shall sound the trumpets for your burnt offerings and for your peace offerings."

In *Sefer HaMitzvot*, the Rambam writes:

We are commanded to sound the trumpets in the Temple when offering sacrifices that are offered only at appointed times.... [Also,] we are commanded to sound the trumpets at a time of distress and difficulty when we pray to Him.

In *Sefer HaMitzvot* (and similarly in *Sefer HaChinuch*, Mitzvah 384), the emphasis of the mitzvah is clearly on the sounding of the trumpets during the sacrifices. In the *Mishneh Torah*, when listing the 613 mitzvot at the beginning of the text, the Rambam mentions the sounding of the trumpets both for the sacrifices and in times of distress. Nevertheless, further on in the beginning of the text, when delineating the mitzvot according to subjects, he places the emphasis on crying out to God at a time of distress (seemingly, including crying out verbally and crying out with the trumpets in the same mitzvah). Significantly, in *Hilchot Klei HaMikdash*, Chapter 3, where the Rambam mentions the practice of sounding the trumpets in connection with the offering of the sacrifices, he does not mention it as a component of this or any other specific mitzvah.

(Note also the commentary of the *Maggid Mishneh*, which questions why these two different rites were included as a single mitzvah at the outset. Even in the Torah, they are included in two separate verses.)

to cry out - in prayer. Our Sages (*Sifre, VaEichanan*) explain that *תָּרַח* is one of the ten verbs used for prayer.

and to sound - The verb *תָּרַח* refers to the sounding of a series of staccato notes referred to as *teruah*. See *Hilchot Shofar* 3:2-4. Significantly, although in practice, both types of notes were sounded, with regard to the sounding of the trumpets at the offerings, the Torah uses the verb *דָּרַח*, which refers to sounding a *teki'ah*, a single long note.

trumpets - In the Temple, these were made of silver (*Hilchot Klei HaMikdash* 3:5). Josephus describes them as being approximately a cubit long, slightly thicker than an

פֶּרֶק רֵאשׁוֹן

א מִצְוַת צִשׁוּה מִן הַתּוֹרָה לְזַעַק וּלְהִרְיעַ בְּהַצְרָאוֹת עַל קַל עֲרָה שֶׁתְּבִיא עַל הַצִּבּוֹר.
שְׂפָאָמָר: עַל הַצֵּד הַצֵּד אֶתְכֶם - וְהִרְעַתֶם בְּהַצְרָאוֹת.

ordinary flute, and having a bell-like end. It is questionable whether it was necessary for them to be silver outside the Temple as well.



See also the Ramban (*Drashot l'Rosh HaShanah*), who mentions an opinion that the shofar, and not a trumpet, should be sounded in time of communal distress. The *Maggid Mishneh* also notes this opinion and states that either instrument, a shofar or a trumpet, is acceptable, but that - outside of the Temple premises - only one of the two should be used in time of distress. Some support for this position can be drawn from Halachah 6.

in the event of any difficulty that arises which affects the community, as [Numbers 10:9] states: "[When you go out to war...] against an enemy who attacks you and you sound the trumpets...." - As obvious from Halachah 4, this practice was observed throughout *Eretz Yisrael*, and not only in the Temple. Nor is its observance dependent on the existence of the Temple, nor does the Rambam specify that it must be fulfilled only in *Eretz Yisrael*. (In this regard, there are differing opinions; see *Mishnah Berurah* 576:1.) Accordingly, the *Magen Avraham* 576:1 questions: Why is the rite of sounding the trumpets (or shofarot) not observed at present?

The resolution of this question lies in the Rambam's words, "any difficulty that arises which affects the community." This rite should not be observed when an individual, or even a group of individuals, are in distress, but only when a "community" is affected.

Pesachim 54b explains that communal fasts are possible only within *Eretz Yisrael*. There is no concept of taking such a unified communal act of this nature in the diaspora. Therefore, this mitzvah was not relevant in all the generations of our people's existence in the diaspora. (See also the *Drashot l'Rosh HaShanah* of the Ramban.)

A question arises, however, with regard to the situation at present, with the renewal of the Jewish settlement in *Eretz Yisrael*. As explained in the commentary on Chapter 3, Halachah 11, there are opinions (see the gloss of the *Birket Yosef* to the *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim* 575) that maintain that at present, the concept of community also applies in *Eretz Yisrael*.

According to this view, without entering into the discussion regarding the halachic status of the present government, it would appear that it would be proper for this mitzvah to be observed, since its observance is not dependent on the Temple.

קלומר: כל דבר שיצר לקם, כגון בצרת ודבר וארבה וכו' צא בקו, וצקו עליהן והריעו.

ב ודבר זה מודרי הפשוטה הוא.

שבומו שתבוא צרה וצקו עליה וריעו, ידעו הכל שכולל מעשיהם הרעים הודע להן. ככתוב: צנותרקם השו וגו'.

זה הוא שיגלם להסיר הצרה מעליהם.

ג אךל אם לא יצקו ולא יריעו, אלא יאמרו: דבר זה מונגה העולם אנו לנו, וצרה זו נקרה נקריה - הרי זו דרך אכזריות, וגורמת להם להקבץ במעשיהם הרעים.

arousing the people to inspect their conduct. Similarly, in *Hilchot Teshuvah* 3:4, the Rambam writes:

Although the sounding of the shofar on Rosh HaShanah is a mitzvah, it also contains an allusion. [It is as if the shofar is saying,] "Wake up you sleepy ones.... You who forget the truth in the vanities of time... look to your souls and improve your conduct."

that [the difficulty] occurred because of their evil conduct, as [Jeremiah 5:25] states: "Your sins have turned away [the rains and the harvest climate]." - See *Hilchot Teshuvah* 9:1, where the Rambam explains that God has instituted a cycle of causation into the world in which performing a mitzvah brings an individual - or a community - blessing and prosperity, which enable them to perform more mitzvot. Conversely, the failure to observe mitzvot brings about misfortune, which, in turn, makes it even harder to observe mitzvot.

This [realization] will cause the removal of this difficulty. - For when the Jews turn to God in repentance, He will remove their hardships.

Commentary, Halachah 3

Conversely, should the people fail to cry out [to God] and sound the trumpets, and instead say, "What happened to us is merely a natural phenomenon and this difficulty is merely a chance occurrence" - Rather than seeing their difficulty as part of a Divinely structured plan to motivate their repentance. Nevertheless, this is a cruel conception of things - Misfortune is definitely not pleasant. Nevertheless, when one conceives of it as a message from God, intended to motivate a change in one's conduct, one can appreciate that, ultimately, its intent is mercy. In contrast, when one does not appreciate God's hand, one is left with a conception of an existential and cruel world in which there is no force working for man's benefit.

[This commandment is not restricted to such a limited scope; rather] the intent is: Whenever you are distressed by difficulties - e.g., famine, plague, locusts, or the like - cry out [to God] because of them and sound the trumpets.

2. This practice is one of the paths of repentance, for when a difficulty arises, and the people cry out [to God] and sound the trumpets, everyone will realize that [the difficulty] occurred because of their evil conduct, as [Jeremiah 5:25] states: "Your sins have turned away [the rains and the harvest climate]." This [realization] will cause the removal of this difficulty.

3. Conversely, should the people fail to cry out [to God] and sound the trumpets, and instead say, "What has happened to us is merely a natural phenomenon and this difficulty is merely a chance occurrence," this is a cruel conception of things, which causes them to remain

[This commandment is not restricted to such a limited scope - i.e., it does not apply to war alone, as might be understood from the verse.

rather] the intent is: Whenever you are distressed by difficulties - e.g., famine, plague - Note *Taanit* 22b, which states that the trumpets should not be sounded in the case of a plague even during the week. Since a plague is a very severe matter, were the trumpets to be sounded during the week, they might also be sounded when a plague took place on the Sabbath, and thus a prohibition would be violated. The Rambam discusses this question in his Commentary on the Mishnah (*Taanit* 3:3). Similarly, in Chapter 2, Halachah 1, the Rambam rules that the trumpets are sounded when a plague occurs.

locusts, or the like - i.e., circumstances that cause distress to the community as a whole. cry out [to God] because of them and sound the trumpets. - See *Hilchot Teshuvah* 2:6, where the Rambam gives the assurance that if the Jews cry out to God as a community, He will surely heed their prayers.

Commentary, Halachah 2

This practice is one of the paths of repentance - Note the conclusion of *Hilchot Temurah*, where the Rambam writes that although all the mitzvot of the Torah are Divine decrees and thus unfathomable in nature, we should meditate upon them and, to the fullest extent of our potential, try to explain them. Similarly, with regard to the mitzvah under discussion, without claiming to be able to fathom it in its entirety, the Rambam gives a rational explanation for the practice. for when a difficulty arises, and the people cry out [to God] and sound the trumpets, everyone will realize - The very sound of the trumpets will have a startling effect,

attached to their wicked deeds. Thus, this time of distress will lead to further distresses.

This is implied by the Torah's statement [Leviticus 26:27-28]: "If you remain indifferent to Me, I will be indifferent to you with a vengeance." The implication of the verse is: When I bring difficulties upon you so that you shall repent and you say it is a chance occurrence, I will add to your [punishment] an expression of vengeance for that indifference [to Divine Providence].

4. In addition, it is a Rabbinic ordinance to fast whenever there is a difficulty that affects the community until there is a manifestation of Divine mercy.

On these fast days, we cry out in prayer, offer supplications, and sound the trumpets only. In the Temple, we sound both the trumpets and the shofar. The shofar blasts should be shortened and the trumpet blasts extended, for the mitzvah of the day is with the trumpets. The trumpets are sounded together with the shofar only in the Temple, as [can be inferred from Psalms 98:6]: "Sound trumpets and shofar blasts before God, the King."

which causes them to remain attached to their wicked deeds - for they refuse to pay attention to the external cues God gives to motivate repentance.

Thus, this time of distress will lead to further distresses. - Note the conclusion of *Hilchot Tum'at Tzara'at*, where the Rambam explains that when a person remains indifferent to the punishment God gives him, God brings more severe punishment upon him.

This is implied by the Torah's statement [Leviticus 26:27-28]: "If you remain indifferent to Me, I will be indifferent to you with a vengeance." - בקרה, the Hebrew for "chance occurrence," shares the same root as "p," "indifferent." Thus

The implication of the verse is: When I bring difficulties upon you so that you shall repent and you say it is a chance occurrence, I will add to your [punishment] an expression of vengeance for that indifference [to Divine Providence].

Commentary, Halachah 4

In addition - to the obligation to cry out and sound the trumpets incumbent upon us from the Torah

it is a Rabbinic ordinance to fast - The *Or Sameach* mentions that this practice has its source in Biblical times. II Chronicles 20:3 relates that Yehoshafat called a communal fast when beset by war.

Whenever there is a difficulty that affects the community - These difficulties are listed in Chapter 2.

והוסיף הצדה צרות אחרות. הוא שכתוב בתורה: והלכתם עמי בקרי, והלכתם גם אני עמכם בתמת קרי.

כלומר: לשאבא עליכם צרה כדי שתשובו, אם תאמרו שהיא קרי, אוסיף לכם תמת אותו קרי.

ד ומדברי סופרים, להתענות על כל צרה שתבוא על הצבור עד שתתקן מן השמים.

ובימי התעניות האלו זועקו בתפלות ומתתננים ומריעין בתעניות בלבד. ואם היו במקדש, מריעין בתעניות ובשופר.

השופר מקצר והתעניות מאריכות, שפנות היום בתעניות.

ואין תוקעין בתעניות ושופר באחד אלא במקדש, שנאמר: בתעניות וקול שופר הריעו לפני המלך ה'.

until there is a manifestation of Divine mercy. - I.e., we are not required to fast only once when a distressing situation occurs. Instead, we are obligated to continue fasting until God shows us His mercies and eliminates the source of distress.

T'ami 14b quotes a Rabbinic opinion that maintains that no more than thirteen communal fasts should be ordained because of a difficulty. The Talmud, however, explains that this statement was made with regard to drought alone. With regard to other difficulties, we should continue to fast until our prayers are answered. This conclusion is alluded to by the Rambam's choice of wording in Chapter 3, Halachah 9, and is quoted by the *Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chayim 575:6)*.

On these fast days, we cry out in prayer, offer supplications, and sound the trumpets - blow a series of *teru'ah* notes only. - I.e., with no other instrument to accompany them.

In the Temple, we sound both the trumpets and the shofar. - From the Mishnah (*Rosh HaShanah 3:3*), it would appear that two shofarot were sounded together (*Minchat Chinuch*).

The shofar blasts should be shortened and the trumpet blasts extended - I.e., the trumpet blasts should continue even after the shofar blasts have ceased.

for the mitzvah of the day is with the trumpets. - Note the contrast to *Hilchot Shofar 1:2*.

The trumpets are sounded together with the shofar only in the Temple, as [can be inferred from Psalms 98:6]: "Sound trumpets and shofar blasts before God, the King." - I.e., only "before God," in the Temple, where His Presence is manifest, should these two instruments be sounded together, not elsewhere.

5. These fasts ordained for the community because of difficulties should not be consecutive, for the community would not be able to observe such a practice.

A communal fast should be ordained only on a Monday, on the subsequent Thursday, and on the subsequent Monday. This pattern - Monday, Thursday, Monday - should be followed until [God manifests His] mercies.

6. A communal fast should not be decreed on a Sabbath, nor on a festival. On these days, neither a shofar nor a trumpet should be sounded, nor do we cry out [to God] or offer supplications in prayer. The [only] exceptions are a city surrounded by gentiles or a [flooding] river and a ship that is sinking at sea. [In these instances, and indeed,]

Commentary, Halachah 5

These fasts ordained for the community because of difficulties should not be consecutive - day after day.

for - even though it would be permitted to eat at night

the community would not be able to observe such a practice. - And an ordinance for the community is not instituted unless it is possible for the majority of the community to observe it (*Hilchot Mamrim* 2:5). Were a communal ordinance that could not be observed by the majority of the community to be instituted, the people's observance, not only of that particular ordinance, but of the Torah as a whole, would be weakened.

A communal fast should be ordained only on a Monday - See the commentary on the following halachah, which deals with the question of communal fasts being instituted on days other than Monday or Thursday.

on the subsequent Thursday, and on the subsequent Monday. - Mondays and Thursdays are days associated with significant spiritual influences. Also, in this manner, the fasts are separated from each other and from the Sabbath.

In his Commentary on the Mishnah (*Ta'anit* 2:9), the Rambam explains that communal fasts should be held first on Mondays, because were they to be held on Thursday, the shopkeepers would assume that the possibilities for famine are great - for otherwise why would a public fast be instituted before the Sabbath - and they would raise the prices of foodstuffs.

(This rationale differs slightly from Rashi's interpretation of the Mishnah. Significantly, many of the traditional commentaries on the *Mishneh Torah* do not mention the Rambam's Commentary on the Mishnah. See the *Sefer HaKoveitz*.)

This pattern - Monday, Thursday, Monday - should be followed until [God manifests His] mercies. - From the wording of this halachah, it would appear that the second Thursday should be skipped, and the second series of three fasts begun on the third Monday. The commentaries note that although there is justification for this position in the Jerusalem Talmud (*Ta'anit* 2:13), the Babylonian Talmud (*Ta'anit* 15b) rules that there is no need to interrupt the sequence of fasts on the second Thursday. This

ה תעניות אלו, שגזרין על הצבור מפני הצרות, אינן יום אחר יום, שאין רב הצבור יכולים לעמוד בדרך זה.

ואין גזרין בתחלה תענית אלא בשני בשבת ובחמישי שלאחריו ובשני שלאחריו.

ובן על הסדר הזה: שני וחמישי ושני. עד שיירחמו.

ו אין גזרין תעניות על הצבור לא בשבתות ולא בימים טובים.

ובן אין תוקעין בהן לא בשופר ולא בחצוצרות, ולא זעקים ומתהוננים בהם בתפלה.

אלא אם כן היטה עיר שהקפופה עמו, או נהר, או קפינה הפטרפת בהם.

ruling is also borne out by the Rambam's Commentary on the Mishnah (*loc. cit.*) and some authoritative manuscripts of the *Mishneh Torah*. There are, however, other Rabbinic opinions - which are also supported by different manuscripts of the *Mishneh Torah* (see the commentary on Chapter 3, Halachah 3) - that maintain that a series of communal fasts should always begin on a Monday.

Commentary, Halachah 6

A communal fast should not be decreed on a Sabbath, nor on a festival - for the reasons mentioned above.

The *Merchevat HaMishneh HaSefaradit* raises a question regarding this statement. From the previous halachah, it would appear that a communal fast is ordained only on Mondays and Thursdays, and from this halachah one might assume that, since it is necessary to exclude the Sabbath, such a fast might be ordained for other days.

In resolution, it is explained that the previous halachah refers only to the thirteen communal fasts instituted when the rains fail to descend. When a difficulty of another nature arises, a fast may be instituted on a day other than Monday or Thursday. Alternatively, it can be explained that if the difficulty is not a matter of immediate emergency, the fast is put off for a Monday, as mentioned above. In the case of an immediate emergency, however, a fast may be held on any day other than those mentioned in this and the following halachah.

On these days, neither a shofar nor a trumpet should be sounded, nor do we cry out [to God] or offer supplications in prayer. - Because of the atmosphere of rest and pleasure that permeates the Sabbath, it is improper to make requests about matters that are not immediate necessities. See *Hilchot Shabbat* 30:12

The [only] exceptions are - See also Chapter 2, Halachah 2, which states that we should cry out in prayer, even on the Sabbath, if our source of sustenance is threatened. a city surrounded by gentiles or a [flooding] river and a ship that is sinking at sea. - for these are situations where human life is in immediate danger.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. There are days when the entire Jewish people fast because of the calamities that occurred to them then, to arouse [their] hearts and initiate [them in] the paths of repentance. This will serve as a reminder of our wicked conduct and that of our ancestors, which resembles our present conduct and therefore brought these calamities upon them and upon us. By reminding ourselves of these matters, we will repent and improve [our conduct], as [Leviticus 26:40] states: "And they will confess their sin and the sin of their ancestors."

2. These days are the following:
The Third of Tishrei. This is the day on which Gedaliah ben Achikam was slain and the ember of Israel that remained was extinguished, causing their exile to become complete.

The Tenth of Tevet. This is the day Nebuchadnezzar, the wicked, the King of Babylon, camped against Jerusalem and placed the city under siege.

Commentary, Halachah 1

There are days when the entire Jewish people - All healthy adult men and women fast - It appears that the Rambam considers these fasts to be obligatory in the present era. Based on his interpretation of *Rosh HaShanah* 18b in his Commentary on the Mishnah, *Rosh HaShanah* 1:3, the Rambam explains that in the era of the Second Temple, these fasts were of an optional nature. After the destruction of the Temple, however, every Jew is required to observe them. This obligation is also explicitly stated by the *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chayim* 549:1, 550:1).

because of the calamities that occurred to them then - Here, the Rambam employs the same principle he developed at the beginning of this text regarding fasts instituted because of difficulties of an immediate nature, with regard to these fasts which were instituted for these national calamities.

Fasting in and of itself is not a purpose. Fasting can, however, serve to arouse [their] hearts and initiate [them in] the paths of repentance. - This is the intent of the fasts, and not merely refraining from eating. For this reason, the *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 121:1 harshly reproves those who fast, but spend their days taking pleasure strolls and being involved in other forms of leisure activity.

This will serve as a reminder of our wicked conduct and that of our ancestors, which resembles our present conduct and therefore brought these calamities upon them and upon us. - Although these tragedies took place in previous generations, we share the responsibility for them. The Jerusalem Talmud (*Yoma* 1:1) states, "Every generation in which the Temple is not rebuilt should consider it as if it was destroyed in its days."

By reminding ourselves of these matters, we will repeat - The word *נשח*, translated as "we will repent," literally means, "We will return." *Teshuvah* involves a return to one's fundamental self, becoming aware of the fundamental Divine nature one possesses.

Such a process relates to these commemorative fasts, which on the surface are

פֶּרֶק חֲמִישִׁי

א יש שם ימים שכל ישראל מחננים בהם מפני הצרות שארעו בהן, כדי לעורר הלבבות לפתח דרכי התשובה. והיה זה זכרון למעשינו הרעים, ומעשה אבותינו שהיה כמעשינו עתה, עד שגם להם ולנו אותן הצרות. שזכרון דברים אלו נשוב להטיב. שאמר: והתוודו את עונם ואת עון אבותם וגו'.

ב ראוי הן: יום שלישי בחשוני, שבו נהרג גדליה בן אחיקם, ונקח חטאת ישראל הנשארת, וסב להם גלותו.

ג עשירי בטבת, שבו סמוך מלך בבל נבוכדנצר הרשע על ירושלים, והביאה במצור והמנון.

associated with undesirable elements, but possess a positive core, as reflected in the Rambam's statements at the conclusion of this chapter that in the era of the Redemption, all these fast days will be transformed into days of rejoicing and celebration.

and improve [our conduct], as [Leviticus 26:40] states: "And they will confess their sin and the sin of their ancestors." - See *Hilchot Teshuvah* 1:1-2, 2:2, where the Rambam associates the mitzvah of teshuvah with confession.

Commentary, Halachah 2

These days are the following: - The Rambam lists these fasts, not in the order in which the events which they commemorate transpired, nor according to the order in which they are mentioned in Zechariah 8:19 (see Halachah 4), but rather in the order of the year, beginning from the month of Tishrei.

The Third of Tishrei. This is the day on which Gedaliah ben Achikam - The governor appointed by Nebuchadnezzar to supervise the land of Judah. The Jews who were not exiled rallied around him, and it appeared that there would be hope of maintaining a Jewish settlement in the land (Jeremiah, Chapters 40-41).

was slain - According to the Radak (Jeremiah 41:1), Gedaliah was slain on Rosh HaShanah. Because a fast could not be held on that sacred day, the commemoration of his murder was postponed until the first available weekday.

and the ember of Israel that remained was extinguished, causing their exile to become complete. - After Gedaliah's murder, the Jews remaining in *Eretz Yisrael* feared the wrath of the Babylonians and fled to Egypt, leaving *Eretz Yisrael* devoid of Jewish leadership and possessing very few Jewish inhabitants. (See Jeremiah, Chapters 41-43.)

The Tenth of Tevet. This is the day Nebuchadnezzar, the wicked, the King of Babylon, camped - The Hebrew term *טק*, which the Rambam [and the prophet Ezekiel (24:2)] employ, usually has a positive connotation, meaning "support." Perhaps this is also an allusion to the concept that ultimately these commemorative fasts have a positive intent, as mentioned at the conclusion of the chapter.

against Jerusalem and placed the city under siege. - Our commemoration of this

Unit Three Resources

Lesson 1 Resources

Resource 3.1a

Film scenes worksheet

Resource 3.1b

Film Lesson Clips

Lesson 2 Resources

Resource 3.2a

Found poetry instructions

Resource 3.2b

Found poetry peer assessment

Lesson 3 Resources

Resource 3.3a

Tyndall Reading

Resource 3.3b

Museum Assignment

Lesson 4 Resources

Resource 3.4a

Night Words – 1st 12 pages of the Intro

Clip #1: Scene at concentration camp

Jot down some images, dialogue, and actions that stand out to you from this scene:

Who are the Jewish character(s) in this scene? On a scale of 0 – 10, 0 being “weak, passive, victim”, and 10 being “strong, active, heroic”, rate the Jewish character(s) in this scene.

0 -----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

Discuss the following questions with your group:

1. How did you rate the Jewish prisoner on the 0-10 scale above?
2. Did you notice any other Jewish characters in the scene? If so, who and what did you rate them?
3. Does the main Jewish character in this scene have any choices or make any decisions?
4. The last words spoken at the end of this scene are, “How strange.” What do you think is strange about this scene, if anything?

Film Scenes Worksheet

Clip #2: Scene in Ghetto

Jot down some images, dialogue, and actions that stand out to you from this scene:

What are the Jewish characters doing in this scene? On a scale of 0 – 10, 0 being “weak, passive, victim”, and 10 being “strong, active, heroic”, rate the Jewish character(s) in this scene.

0 -----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

Discuss the following questions with your group:

1. What is happening in this scene? How do the Jews react?
2. How did you rate the characters on the scale above?

Film Scenes Worksheet

Clip #3: Scene in Forest

Jot down some images, dialogue, and actions that stand out to you from this scene:

What are the Jewish characters doing in this scene? On a scale of 0 – 10, 0 being “weak, passive, victim”, and 10 being “strong, active, heroic”, rate the Jewish character(s) in this scene.

0 -----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

Discuss the following questions with your group:

1. What are the Jewish characters doing in this scene? On a scale of 0 – 10, 0 being “weak, passive, victim”, and 10 being “strong, active, heroic”, rate the Jewish character(s) in this scene.
2. At the end of the third clip, the little boy asks about the leader, “Is he Jewish?” Why do you think he asks that question?

Film Scenes Worksheet

Clip #34: Scene on Battlefield

Jot down some images, dialogue, and actions that stand out to you from this scene:

What are the Jewish characters doing in this scene? On a scale of 0 – 10, 0 being “weak, passive, victim”, and 10 being “strong, active, heroic”, rate the Jewish character(s) in this scene.

0 -----1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

Discuss the following questions with your group:

1. What are the Jewish characters doing in this scene? On a scale of 0 – 10, 0 being “weak, passive, victim”, and 10 being “strong, active, heroic”, rate the Jewish character(s) in this scene.
2. What are some of the differences between the way the Jew(s) in the first two clips from film *Schindler's List* are depicted compared to the final two clips from the film *Defiance*?

Scenes from “Schindler’s List”

Universal Pictures / Amblin Entertainment 1993

Directed by: Steven Spielberg

Depicting Jews as helpless victims

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=veztNJQyRJg>

In this tense moment, a factory worker making metal hinges is tested by the SS Commander Amon Goeth. In record time, the man produces a perfect working hinge. But Goeth is disappointed by the fact that in several hours of work, the man has produced so few hinges. He takes him outside to kill him, only to have his gun jam several times. He wants to kill this man so badly, but he is unable to, yet still treats him like he is nothing.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_6lrPI1r_9w

In this extended sequence, set to an alternate soundtrack of classical music, The liquidation of the Krakow ghetto from Schindler’s List is full of powerful imagery depicting senseless violence against Jewish people, treating them as helpless, powerless victims.

Scenes from “Defiance”

Paramount Vantage / Paramount Pictures 2008

Directed by: Edward Zwick

Depicting Jews as strong and resilient in the face of oppression and war.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7CEYqIjhTHs>

In this emotional scene, Daniel Craig as Tuvia Bielski speaks to those who have managed to escape persecution at the hands of Nazi Germany and speaks of the importance of work and welcomes those people into the community.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZrA-i6kOdc>

In this action packed sequence, the partisan fighters, led by the Bielski brothers, show tremendous strength and courage to take on a German squad and a tank in the fight of their lives to defeat their oppression.

Found Poetry on Holocaust Testimony Assignment

Step 1: Choose a theme related to the Holocaust that is important to you such as hope, resistance, or survival. Find a piece of testimony or literature that relates to your theme. Examine the testimony or literature to understand the writer or speaker's message and personal experience. Create a found poem that communicates the message.

Step 2: Follow the instructions on "How to Write a Found Poem" from the ReadWriteThink.org website.

Step 3: On a separate piece of paper, write 1 paragraph explaining your poem – why you chose and organized the words/phrases as you did. Make sure to tell us your source. The rest of your paragraph should explain the idea or message behind why you chose and arranged as you did.

Found Poem Instructions

1. Carefully re-read the prose text you have chosen, and look for 50–100 words that stand out in the prose passage. Highlight or underline details, words and phrases that you find particularly powerful, moving, or interesting. Note especially examples that reflect your loving feelings or loving feelings of the subject of the prose text.
2. On a separate sheet of paper, make a list of the details, words and phrases you underlined, keeping them in the order that you found them. Double space between lines so that the lines are easy to work with. Feel free to add others that you notice as you go through the prose piece again.
3. Look back over your list and cut out everything that is dull, or unnecessary, or that just doesn't seem right for a poem about love. Try to cut your original list in half.
4. As you look over the shortened list, think about the tone that the details and diction convey. The words should all relate to love, since you are creating a love poem. Make sure that you have words that communicate your emotions or those of the person in the prose text.
5. Make any minor changes necessary to create your poem. You can change punctuation and make little changes to the words to make them fit together (such as change the tenses, possessives, plurals, and capitalizations).
6. When you're close to an edited down version, if you absolutely need to add a word or two to make the poem flow more smoothly, to make sense, to make a point, *you may add up to two words of your own*. That's two (2) and only two!
7. Read back over your edited draft one more time and make any deletions or minor changes.
8. Check the words and choose a title—is there a better title than "Found Poem"?
9. Copy the words and phrases into your journal or type them in a word processor. Space or arrange the words so that they're poem-like. Pay attention to line breaks, layout, and other elements that will emphasize important words or significant ideas in the poem.
 - Read aloud as you arrange the words! Test the possible line breaks by pausing slightly. If it sounds good, it's probably right.
 - Arrange the words so that they make a rhythm you like. You can space words out so that they are all alone or allruntogether.
 - You can also put key words on lines by themselves.
 - You can shape the entire poem so that it's wide or tall or shaped like an object (say a heart?).
 - Emphasize words by playing with boldface and italics, different sizes of letters, and so forth.
10. At the bottom of the poem, tell where the words in the poem came from. For example,

Instructions adapted from "Found and Headline Poems" from *Getting the Knack: 20 Poetry Writing Exercises* by Stephen Dunning and William Stafford.

Peer Assessment Sheet for Found Poetry

Instructions: Study your partner's found poem and complete the following assessment form.

Category	Positive Feedback	Specific Suggestions for Improvement
Clear focus on Theme: _____		
Use of details and imagery		
Logical progression or sequence		
Clear, consistent tone		

Holocaust Museum Assignment

Assignment: Use one of the following museum websites or search for another on your own. Make sure the website you choose provides the information necessary to complete the assignment.

On a scale from 1 to 10, 1 being purely particularistic and 10 being purely universalistic, how would you rate the philosophy and approach of this museum? Provide evidence for your determination using at least one example from each of the following:

- Name of Museum:
- Mission Statement:
- Major Exhibits and Experience
- Educational Materials available

Jerusalem Yad Vashem -
Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes Remembrance Memorial
WWW.YADVASHEM.ORG

Los Angeles, CA Museum of the Holocaust
WWW.LAMOTH.ORG

Los Angeles, CA Simon Wiesenthal Center
WWW.WIESENTHAL.COM

Los Angeles, CA USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education
WWW.SFI.USC.EDU

St. Louis, MO Holocaust Museum and Learning Center
WWW.HMLC.ORG

New York Anne Frank Center
WWW.ANEFRANK.COM

Chicago, IL Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center
WWW.ILHOLOCAUSTMUSEUM.ORG

- Second World War. I: *Volunteering and Its Role in Zionist and Yishuv Policy* (Hebrew). Jerusalem: Yad Yitzhak Ben Zvi.
- Gelber, Yoav. 1981. *Jewish Palestinian Volunteering in the British Army during the Second World War. II: The Struggle for a Jewish Army* (Hebrew). Jerusalem: Yad Yitzhak Ben Zvi.
- Goldberg (Goshen) Zvi. 1947-8. 'Mauritius' (Hebrew). *Mithqanim*, 12: 78-97.
- Kranzler, David. 1988. *Japanese, Nazis and Jews: The Jewish Refugee Community of Shanghai 1938-1945*. Hoboken, NJ: Klav.
- Mardot, Mordchai. 1966. *Haganah*. New York: New American Library.
- Ofer, Dalia and H. Weiner. 1996. *The Dead End Journey: The Tragic Story of the Kladovo-Sabac Group*. Lanham: University Press of America.
- _____. 1990. *Escaping the Holocaust: Illegal Immigration to the Land of Israel, 1939-1944*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pilot, Genevieve. 1998. *The Mauritius Shtetl*. Fort Louis: Vizavi.
- Shabtai, Yaakov. 1972. 'The journey to Mauritius', in *Uncle Peretz Take Off*. Merhaviv: Sifriat Poalim (Hebrew).
- Weinryb, Elazar. 1985-7. *Historical Thinking: A Collection of Essays in the Philosophy of History I-II*. (Hebrew). Tel-Aviv: The Open University.
- Zweig, Ron. 1981. 'The British colonial Office and immigration into Palestine under the White Paper'. (Hebrew). *Hizionut*, 7: 292-323.
- Zwergbaum, Alexander. 1960. 'The Mauritius affair'. *Yad Vashem Studies*, 4: 191-257.

CHAPTER SIX

MEMORY, AUTHENTICITY AND REPLICATION OF THE SHOAH IN MUSEUMS

DEFENSIVE TOOLS OF THE NATION¹

Andrea Tyndall

Historical (re) presentation (in this case the story of the Shoah as rendered in museums) is not art for its own sake, nor form divorced from content, nor method without meaning. It is, rather, as Walter Benjamin suggests, about art as the political (Benjamin, 1985: 224).

How, then, may we examine Holocaust museums in terms of their educative mandate and function? This 'politics' that Benjamin writes of in 'the age of mechanical reproduction' is not a term of reproach but rather an invitation to examine technology (Benjamin's 'mechanical reproduction') and the workings of history/memory upon the polis: the idealised state and its constructed mythos. It is my contention that history (as remembered in museums) is art as much as a method, and, further, that education about the Shoah (and genocide) is political.

The main arguments of this essay will be introduced by briefly exploring theoretical and historical issues concerning authenticity, evidence, and the purpose and function of Holocaust museums in general. Then, examples from specific museums (Yad Vashem, The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the Anne Frank House) will be discussed in relation to the construction and maintenance of national myths that underpin their representation of the tragedy. In that the presentation of content cannot be separated from the form in which it is presented, particular attention will be given to the mission of these museums as educational centres. This essay concludes by making some connections between the values

promoted in Holocaust education and values that serve political needs in an increasingly unifying trans-national world (particularly a unified European and Western one). Such a world poses new challenges to concepts of memory, authenticity, and historical narratives. Moreover, in light of 'Operation Enduring Freedom' and 'Operation Iraqi Freedom', I have added a postscript that questions the lessons learned from the past and the relationship between Holocaust education and the politics of action that face us in the war against terrorism (and genocide).

My purpose, therefore, is to examine the form through which institutions envisage and implement their national, and thus historic, function. We cannot separate museums from public life and argue that the social function of such art is its aesthetic performance.

Theoretical and Historical Issues

In 2000 in Amsterdam, a few blocks away from the Anne Frank House, there was an exhibition of paintings by the Dutch artist Ronald Ophuis. This exhibition caused quite a stir, and gallery visitors physically attacked one painting titled 'Birkenau I'. Here was a series of paintings that depicted the most brutal, sadistic scenes of sexual abuse and torture, miscarriages, homo- and hetero-erotic violence and, self-inflicted mutilation. Images of breasts, penises, blood, and gang rape lined the walls of the Galerie de Praktijk. Some of the paintings represented the dark ethos of concentration camp life. In one such painting, one inmate stands behind another, whose pants are pulled down, and thrusts straw into his bottom. In another, two Jews rape a woman on the floor of a barracks. Already victimised by the Nazis as a Jew, she is now victimised by men as a woman. All scenes, the artist claims (*de Volkskrant*, 12 September 2000) were taken from autobiographical writings of life in the camps. Lust, passion, aggression, and hatred turned victims into perpetrators. Ophuis's world is a brutal one, where everyone is doing it to everyone; violence and evil are all pervasive, and seem typical modes of statement.

Ophuis, a Roman Catholic from Limburg, says that it is the image of Jesus 'suffering in agony' that moved him as a child, which now inspires his paintings of the Holocaust. 'The way I see it', he told a stunned Dutch audience (Concertgebouw, Amsterdam: March 2001), 'I paint the stories of the new bible.' A bible in which 'victims should not be holy.'

The artist described his method of reproducing the past. First, he gets an idea and quickly sketches it on A4 paper. Then, he goes to a casting agent and hires actors and models to re-enact his ideas in the flesh. They play out his close reading of the text fifty, sixty, perhaps seventy times, while he photographs them from different angles. He then selects the photographs he likes best and paints from those images.

Primo Levi wrote in his last work *The Drowned and the Saved* (1988) that

perpetrators and victims. This grey zone that Levi writes of is the space between persecutors and victims. It is the space where 'victims' become so demoralised that they become perpetrators in order to survive. How can this be understood and represented in the present? '... one is never in another's place. Each individual is so complex that there is no point in trying to foresee his behavior; all the more so in extreme situations; nor is it possible to foresee one's own behavior.' (Levi, 1989: 60). In Ophuis's reproductions, there is no grey. The victims are completely black.

Ever since Hannah Arendt wrote about the Judenrat in *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (Arendt, 1994), the victim as perpetrator has not been a comfortable image. By public standards, some representations are wrong – in this case Ophuis's – because, as it is not deemed as an image of ideologically defined suffering, it was deemed an inauthentic reproduction of the Shoah and therefore inappropriate as a representation (at least, by some in the Netherlands).

Authenticity and Evidence

The debate over authenticity is one of degrees, and is a question of interpretation, not exactitude. Is authenticity the clearest print, the earliest narrative, the closest thing to 'fact' as we know it? Is authenticity separate from us, or is authenticity the image, the narrative that best corresponds to our views that are ever changing and ever becoming?

It could be argued that a reproduction and an original work of art, or an event and its reproduction, or an artistic reproduction of a historical event – such as Delacroix's *Liberty Leading the People* (1830) or Picasso's *Guernica* (1939) – are not the same things and thus incomparable, and of unequal value. But images do become a kind of currency unto themselves. They also become a part of the economy of signs. Reproduction, as Andy Warhol so clearly demonstrated time and again, is so much more than a mere reflection or a mirroring of something that already exists. Art and reality share a dynamic relationship: art reflects memory and art becomes our memory. Art and memory are multi-dimensional, layered, and often find their beauty and depth in conflicting elements.

Benjamin offers some solutions to the problems surrounding the relationship between reproduction and reality through his posturing of emotions as an important component of authenticity. In *The Arcades Project* (1999), he offers two elements with implications for my study.

The first element is Benjamin's surrealist reading of the fantasy content of everyday life. Like the surrealist, he sees culture as suffused with the direct statement of the unconscious. Wish fulfillment and repression are integral to the processes of exchange and distribution. The market is not

Secondly, Benjamin asserts that culture can be deciphered. He speaks of this in terms of 'awakening and remembering' (Benjamin, 1999: 58). While it is unclear in Benjamin's analysis what we are awakening to and remembering, what is apparent through his approach is that authenticity should not be perceived as a product, but rather understood as a process. The representation of the 'Holocaust' (as opposed to the event itself) is located in a historically changing constellation of elements, and it has multiple definitions that are shaped and defined (and understood) in a social/political/cultural context.

People come to museums to find statement for their unconscious and their fantasies. And places, like museums, must distort time and space to produce the illusion of an extraordinary experience – an 'ecstasy' of experience – for the visitor (Ritzer and Liska, 1997: 108–9). In fact, 'The closer that life in the tourist resorts comes to resemble the pure play form, the more will tourists flock to visit' (Rojek and Urry, 1997: 12).

In Washington D.C., a tourist's admission ticket to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) is designed to look like a passport. Inside are the name, picture (if available), and important highlights of the life of a person who survived or died during the Holocaust. The victim's story unfolds as the tourist walks through the highly structured displays from the fourth floor to the first. In between, tourists can do things like walk through an 'authentic' cattle car or stand inside a 'real' barracks. This would hardly seem like a place to spend a lazy Sunday afternoon, or motivate a family excursion. Yet still they come. Thousands upon thousands come to these little shops of horror every day. They pay, they learn, they look, and they buy souvenirs. Their curiosity, buying habits, and emotional vulnerability to the narrative presented, in part, bestow legitimacy upon the institution.

People bring to such sites mental images from books, education, movies, television, personal memories, and fantasies. Historical consciousness is heavily constructed by culture. To know the story of the Shoah, it is thought, is not to fall victim to repeating it. It is the story of who we were but also of who we are now. 'Authenticity does not exist in a vacuum, it is spun from the times in which it is constantly rediscovered and retold. Authenticity is, in part, determined by the evidence deemed as appropriate' (Adorno, 1998: 4–6).

The standard of evidence is not absolute. In western societies, when we think of evidence we might imagine someone giving oral testimony in a court before which they have sworn to 'tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth'. Criminologists agree, however, that eyewitness testimony is usually not the most accurate evidence. More reliable, perhaps, are written documents. These can be anything from an official text (deemed to be among the most reliable sources in official set-

In dealing with the Holocaust, however, this standard of evidence is turned on its head. Since many 'official' German and other European documents were destroyed due to the ravages of war, and because documents from the Axis side (especially, but not exclusively) are not given high marks for 'telling the truth', other sources of documentation are used to construct Holocaust narratives in museums.

Most Holocaust museums are not authentic places unto themselves, although they might contain items that are. In Holocaust museums, all types of evidence are used to support the authenticity of the institution's narrative. A pile of old shoes testifies to a round-up, a tattered piece of fabric authenticates the work experience of a wearer from long ago, a picture of a mangled, sutured breast serves as witness to the terror experienced at the hands of Mengele. The story is shown as the tourist walks down the halls of the museum or students read the story in a book, accentuated with color photographs of the shoes, the cloth, and the body.

Any such object is authentic in Benjamin's terms because its unique existence is based in its 'historical testimony'. It is imbued with the magic of having been there (Benjamin, 1985: 215). Or, to quote Adorno: 'The definition of art is at every point indicated by what art once was, but it is legitimated only by what art became with regard to what it wants to, and perhaps can, become' (Adorno, 1998: 4).

The Function of Museums

Evidence in museums is arranged in visual settings that attest and support certain conclusions. It should be remembered that while everything in the world is on display, not everything is in a museum. There is a selection process at work that supports an over-arching ideology. But in the end, no matter what the intent is, it has to hold attention. The plot is always vetted and made interesting.

In a museum, history is art, it is episodic: there is a relentlessly rising tension, exquisitely tidy discovery and reversal, perfectly resolved drama. Museums are very much structured along the lines of the modern novel. But who is the narrator in the museum? Who is making the selection, through whose eye do we see the story? The answers are completely buried in the text.

On one hand, in some ways Holocaust museums serve as a kind of space for collective Jewish mourning. They tell the story of a particular people, and attempt to make that story unique. Holocaust museums also function simultaneously as gathering places for a mass audience. This entails fulfilling functions as national monuments, tourist attractions, and educational centres. For this, a universal approach is necessary. In this

more Jewish, the less it will be seen as a socially relevant issue. This dialectic has been the core issue since the inception of the first Holocaust museum (Nutkiewicz, 1999).

Michael Berenbaum, former director of the USHMM, defends the universalistic nature of the American museum. He sees the museum's mission as 'to tell the story of the Holocaust in such a way that it would resonate not only with the survivor in New York and his children in San Francisco, but with a black leader from Atlanta, a Midwestern farmer, or a Northeastern industrialist' (Flanzbaum, 1999: 5).

In response, Alvin Rosenfeld – and many others – have lambasted the idea that the memory of the Holocaust should be built upon universal themes. In 'The Americanization of the Holocaust', Rosenfeld wonders 'how any story of the crimes of the Nazi era can remain faithful to the specific features of those events and at the same time address contemporary American social and political agendas'. He questions whether the mingling of such 'very different historical experiences' transforms the Holocaust into an 'empty and all but meaningless abstraction' (Rosenfeld, 1995: 36).

Yehuda Bauer, former director of the International Institute for Holocaust Research Yad Vashem, has claimed in the past that a mixed memorial would 'submerge the specific Jewish tragedy in the general sea of suffering'. In the public mind, he concludes, the term Holocaust has become flattened in any case (Bauer, 1980: 42). In recent years, he has shifted his view slightly, acknowledging the genocide of other groups. In *Rethinking the Holocaust* (2001), he steps back from his previous stance and cracks the door open by agreeing to the benefit of a more comparative analysis of genocide.

This debate on the meaning and purpose of the Holocaust shapes and underpins the institutions' authority in the field of educational curriculum. These museum-memorials stand at the forefront of funding major research projects, organising international conferences, as well as serving as major archive depositories and centres of curriculum production. The museum cannot be separated from the classroom. The narrative of one is the point of departure of the other.

James Young wrote that memory is never shaped in a vacuum; motives of memory are never pure (Young, 1993: 2). In order for an event to take a permanent place in history textbooks or museums, it must be accepted by both professionals and the general audience as authorised, or in Thomas Kuhn's phrase, 'normative' (Kuhn, 1996). How a historical event is 'packaged', and then ultimately 'bought' as normative or authorised is complex. Governments and ethnic and national groups are sensitive to how their story is portrayed in fiction, reportage, and scholarship. They are sometimes willing to use extraordinary means to stop a representation of themselves that is not to their approval through censorship, lies, violence, and other means.

In *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson (1991) emphasises the imagined nature of nationalism. He argues that nationalism is a uniquely modern phenomenon, which creates a new consciousness. He also suggests that nationalism is sometimes invented to overcome perceived injustices and mobilise communities against such injustices. Of course, one element critical to the construction of a national image is that citizens find evidence for their sense of nation in the legends and myths out of which national identity is constructed (or, to use Anderson's term, imagined).

The ruling classes, Antonio Gramsci wrote in *The Prison Notebooks* (1971), rule because they make their interests seem 'natural' and universalist. He developed the notion of 'hegemony' that explains how the ruling classes use political and military control to maintain power, while employing cultural means to express their right to that power.

When we consider the nature and functions of museums in general, we may recognise and acknowledge their educative purpose, but this tends to be a subtext of a more explicit intent to collect and preserve particular cultural artifacts and icons. Thus, for example, the main text of an institution, such as the British Museum, may be presented in a neutral guise as the protector and restorer of world antiquities, curiosities, and artifacts. At the same time, however, and as part of the museum's educative function in the creation of cultural capital, there is a masking of western 'civilization's' hegemony, and pillaging of dominated cultures so as to secure the artifacts and prove other (read 'lesser') cultures' debt and indebtedness.

It is somewhat different in the case of museums and memorials dedicated to the event known as 'The Holocaust'. Here, arguably, the text and subtext of museums are reversed in that the primary purpose is educative and this, in turn, is served by the purposeful selection and preservation of records and artifacts to support an educational agenda. If we acknowledge that the museums and memorials of the Holocaust have taken on a fully legitimised function as educational institutions, then we can, and should, legitimately ask questions regarding their curriculum, methods, and means of presentation and their socio-political intent. In other words, we need to reconsider these places as educational institutions with specific social, cultural, economic, and national agendas.

The Museums

The methodology espoused by the Jerusalem-based Holocaust memorial museum Yad Vashem is very much in accord with its clearly established political intent. The problem is that the political and ideological intentions are obscured in the claims of universal authority, scholarly preeminence, archival dominance, and righteousness as regards the Jewish Holocaust, and the Jewish experience in general. *Relativising in its name ... it*

and definer of the Holocaust and how it is taught (Tabakin, 1997: 6). The following is a quote from a *Yad Vashem Magazine* article (April 1996) headlined, '100,000 students and teachers annually will attend courses in the first International School for Holocaust Studies':

Yad Vashem's School for the Holocaust Studies has a remarkable record. Housed in extremely cramped quarters, the School is currently engaged in intensive educational work in six different languages for various target populations. An annual total of more than 40,000 Israeli high-school students study the history of the Holocaust and ponder its dilemmas; over 20,000 soldiers from the Israeli Defence Force investigate Holocaust related concepts such as racism and isolation; and several thousand teachers and educators from both formal and informal educational establishments in Israel and abroad are instructed by the School's expert staff of forty on teaching methods and materials. This is the only school in the world that trains teachers of Holocaust studies, offering a full twelve-month enrichment program. The staff of the library and pedagogic centre has guided numerous authors, dignitaries and researchers in the multiple complexities of Holocaust research (*Yad Vashem Magazine*, 1996: 5).

Five years after this article was published, that number has grown to over 100,000 students and 50,000 soldiers annually, who attend programmes hosted by Yad Vashem.

Since its inception in 1953 by an act of the Israeli Knesset, there has been a strong sense of conformity and unanimity at Yad Vashem about the Holocaust. The Holocaust is presented as a unique Jewish event, not to be compared with others. Holocaust museums and memorials properly belong in Israel in part, it is suggested, because the Holocaust, the Land of Israel, and Zionism are intricately linked. At Yad Vashem, the image emphasised and the myth created is that of heroes and martyrs: victims are inappropriate to that image.

The view presented is almost totally historical with a heavy emphasis on collecting archival documentation and producing educational materials. For example, Yad Vashem has a number of poster series that it sells to teachers. The stories are framed to support the documentation rather than the other way round (Young, 1993: 243). The version of the Nazi genocide is presented in a manner that does not invite questions or discussion, since the truth and historic authenticity are presumed to be self-evident in the displays and the preponderance of archival documentation available.

Yad Vashem produces one narrative for home consumption promoting Zionism, and another eulogising the victims for support (or sympathy) among non-Jews abroad. For example, Yad Vashem has a number of poster series that it sells to teachers, schools and the public. The themes chosen are standard: from legal exclusion, to extermination, to liberation. The teachers' materials, as well as the captions on the posters, are in several languages. One set of posters, however, is produced only in Hebrew and tells the story of Palestine and the Jewish people.

show the Holocaust not as the end of something – like the other poster sets – but as a beginning. Similarly, in textbooks one sees a difference in materials for external, and for home consumption. Those for external consumption stress the trope of the victim – misery, despair and darkness. Those for home consumption stress strength, hardness and light.

The thousands of students that attend the 'Yad Vashem School for Holocaust Studies' do so as a requirement of the state education system; soldiers from the Israeli Defence Force also attend. The military is also used as guides and teachers at Yad Vashem. Dressed in fatigues, these soldiers – usually women – lead groups of young Israelis (and members of non-Israeli Jewish youth groups) through the museum and grounds of Yad Vashem. In 2000, a special office was established in the Pedagogy Centre that houses a unit of – mostly women – soldiers, who organise educational exhibits and exercises for school children throughout Israel. They go to schools – in military uniforms toting machine guns – and teach about the Final Solution. Must we not ask what messages these young students get from such presentations?

The insistence on presenting the destruction of European Jewry in terms of heroism and resistance is defended in terms of the need for an assertive and defiant self-image as befitting a warrior nation under threat of annihilation. 'Never again' is presented in this context as first and primarily specifying Jews. The experience of the Holocaust is portrayed as the precondition and necessary event that secured the birth of the nation. The perpetrators of the event are, for the most part, identified and contained within the immediate group of Hitler and his close followers. The existence and establishment of other museums and memorials outside of Israel are presented in terms of competition for scarce resources, undue duplication, and control over access (Tabakin, 1997: 7), although this attitude has been gradually changing in recent years.

All of this is entirely consistent and appropriate to the situation and purpose of Yad Vashem. What is at issue here is the claim to the universal applicability of method implied by Yad Vashem's agenda for the training of teachers. In recent years attempts have been made to train Israeli-Palestinian teachers at Yad Vashem, in order that their students be better prepared to take the national exam on the History of the Holocaust for high school graduation. In light of the political tensions, participation in this programme is practically nonexistent.

This is very much in contrast to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The establishment of a Holocaust museum in Washington, D.C. required a great deal of political flair. Prominent in the debate of its creation was the question of representation – just who was to be represented, and how this would be representative of the United States. There was an

the use of media, and mediating technology, all machinate to emphasise a totalising involvement rather than analytic distance.

At the U.S. museum, cultural pluralism is promoted in its exhibits by the inclusion of Roma-Sinti, homosexuals, the mentally challenged, and others who were rounded up and murdered by the Nazis. The educational agenda here is to assist students' understanding of the ramifications of racism and citizens' responsibility to speak out against violations of 'civil rights' (USHMM, *Guidelines for teaching about the Holocaust*: 1).

The aim of the U.S. programme is to train educators to help students to extract moral lessons from the Shoah that universalise the experience, so that broader questions about racism and nation can be explored. A discussion of the Holocaust might be connected to issues such as slavery, the treatment of Japanese-Americans during World War II, the Enola Gay controversy, the treatment of Native Americans, etc. The subtext is that the moral lessons learned fit a particular 'American' national mission. All this is done with the highest 'Disneyland' index of all the museums I have studied.

In contrast, the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam is stark and bare. It is different from the two previous examples, in that the museum is an authentic Holocaust site. The message of the Anne Frank House is also substantially different from the others, given the real Dutch ambivalence towards intense nationalism. Here one feels a sort of reconciliation of European culture by fact that the Holocaust is increasingly cast as a European event as much as a nationalist one.

The Anne Frank Stichting is responsible for the maintenance of the Anne Frank House and its educational centre, international exhibitions about Anne Frank, and the production of an annual journal for elementary and high school students. These activities support a clear national message: tolerance.

Present-day racial tensions, however, belie the Dutch mantle of tolerance. The influx of Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese, Antilleans, Moluccans, and refugees from Eastern Europe and the non-industrial world into the Netherlands has made political and social life tense there in recent years. In reality, almost half of the approximately one million members of ethnic minorities (as estimated by the Dutch government) have Dutch citizenship, but are often viewed as outsiders to Dutch culture. The Anne Frank Journals always have photos of Anne on the cover and a lead story about her life in hiding. The rest, however, is devoted to issues of current racial tensions and tolerance for difference conveyed in bright, eye-catching cartoons, personal teen stories, puzzles, quizzes and pop-culture posters.

While the Anne Frank House is a national museum with universalistic themes (like the U.S. museum), it also connects the lessons of the Anne Frank story to larger transnational human issues.

world as well. In recent years the journals have been translated into a host of languages, including French, German, and Polish.

In addition, the Anne Frank House/Stichting has constructed the very successful exhibit entitled 'Anne Frank and the World'. This touring educational display is unique in that it allows each community that it visits to interject its own local history of racism into the 'official' exhibit. Up to this point, the Holocaust has been represented in a national guise – whether Jewish or secular. The Dutch example raises the possibility that perhaps a new, broader, universalistic-transnational representation might become increasingly important in the coming years.

The Transnational Challenge

The rapidly unifying European Community is currently preoccupied with the question of which symbols or 'symbolic actions' will bring the 'Citizens of Europe' into being in spite of the fact that no political consensus is expected within the foreseeable future. Issues concerning common currency, postage stamps, anthems, national and common flags have been hotly contested. In such an environment, the past can become an effective symbol of union.

In 1989 a summit was held in Strasbourg expressly to speed up the realisation of a 'Citizen's Europe'. The mission of the meeting was to create measures whereby 'citizens of Europe' would be able to perceive in their daily lives how they are bound up with each other as members of the same entity. The notion of a common European identity, the commission asserted, would be based upon diversity. Racial tolerance is the key to the political stability of a unified Europe. In the end, this move toward unity, however, is larger than Europe. Might the Holocaust serve to connect European values with other Western nations' value systems in the future?

Ultimately, it is not a question of whether people are moved by a museum, but *how* they are moved. To what ends have they been moved, what historical conclusion have they reached, what understanding and actions have resulted in their own lives? The relationship of citizens to the State is determined through ideology and one of the most important mechanisms of that relationship consists of the construction, perception and presentation of the imagined community within popular political and ideological discourses. The Shoah has become such a reference. It consists of both imaginary and practical elements that depend upon each other for their meaning. It functions as an effective symbol for the evocation of, among other things, particular historical traditions in different countries. Martin Broszat wrote that monuments might not remember events so much as bury them altogether beneath layers of national myths and explanations.

Postscript

The symbols of the Holocaust are overwhelming and they play upon the emotional content of our very being. Since September 11 2001, the world has been moving forward into a new era, hopefully well equipped with dynamic lessons from the past, that will serve it well in difficult times. Israel, the United States, the Western and much of the non-Western world now face many of the same challenges, dilemmas, and issues met before in a different form, but eerily with much the same content. Have we learnt anything useful from decades of Holocaust education? Did we learnt teach the right things?

One thing we did not learn in museums, nor teach well enough, is that there is no Jewish conspiracy. To this day there remains – as during the Third Reich and other periods – an undying belief in a world Jewish conspiracy that underpins or justifies fundamentalist political action. From neo-Nazis, to fanatic Christians, to Osama bin Laden, Saddam Hussein and Hamas, people all over the world still arguably believe and act upon this myth. This single idea has caused far too much bloodshed, destruction and discrimination. The capitalism-modernism-Judaism triad is an old one that continues to fester. The Jew as perpetrator or as victim is a high stakes political image with real consequences. It can be seen in the struggles over Ophuis's paintings, educational representation, and educational curriculum, but also in the war against terror.

The debates over a memorial in Germany and the Zionist connection, touted by Yad Vashem, further increase the suspicions that Holocaust education itself is part of a Jewish conspiracy inflicted upon small schoolchildren in Florida and New Jersey, where such education is mandated by law. This is a tragic unfolding and a potential silencing of a story that has yet to yield all its real benefit. In large part, Holocaust museums are financed through private individuals, German reparation money, and restitution for stolen wealth. These museums also receive some national and local financial support. The Anne Frank House, for example, receives – in light of its tourist appeal – substantial contributions from the city of Amsterdam. Museums, such as the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, could especially raise an eyebrow. Sitting just off the National Mall, the project won presidential approval when Jimmy Carter feared Jews would conspire against him in the New York presidential primaries (Linenthal, 1995: 47–48). The idea of a Jewish conspiracy is a sickness of the collective consciousness that the education of the young must address more thoroughly, and, hopefully, more universally in museums.

It becomes obvious from the present conflict and the rhetoric it engenders that the messages and values espoused at and by the USHMM, Yad Vashem, and the Anne Frank House are Western – and, for the most part,

and the values that accompany its standard narrative are not perceived in the same way in Afghanistan, Sudan, or the occupied Palestinian territories, and probably never will be. Since the Holocaust has such important implications for the State of Israel, this difference in historical attitude is critical. Was the Holocaust about a people who were overpowered by terror and the apparatus of the state on the grounds of 'race'? Or is it a story of people who murdered their own, and fabricated a tale of extermination in order to occupy another people's land? Why are these types of questions becoming foreign policy concerns? One important lesson not learned, is that a dialogue between different opinions must be built before conflict erupts. This is the foundation of global consciousness.

From the events of September 11, we also realise that we did not learn to be vigilant enough about evil. One of the main messages of all Holocaust education is 'never again', but we do not say how this will be achieved in real political terms. The realisation of the price to civil liberties and civilian deaths has come as a shock. We felt war was far away, while it actually festered in our own backyards. Today, with all the rallying around the flag, perhaps it would also be a good idea to examine more deeply our connection to intensive nationalism and the repercussions it has on the progress of democracy and its representations. As we watch the glorification of the flag, aren't we also reminded how great the human need for symbolism that transcends individual fear while supporting state objectives is? Perhaps, in the final analysis, this will not be judged as a conflict between nations, as much as a breakdown in human behavior caused by polarisation and a lack of fundamental cultural understanding on all sides.

What we seem to have learnt is that such obvious evil cannot be morally justified, and that we, the 'victims', too, are capable of committing evil in the name of good (and thus are not even aware of its evil) both in the past and the present. As debates over civil liberties and domestic defence intensify, perhaps the challenge of Holocaust education in museums should be not to fall prey to a progressive moral relativism. Instead, the opportunity should be seized upon to open up the educational process, look past the particulars of the event, and try to make some sense of our very real connection to the past and to ourselves as humans, united in our differences. In this way the past would be, as Walter Benjamin says, in a process of becoming, and not in a state of being remembered as antiquated museum pieces, frightening, but safely separated from us by time.

Notes

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NIGHTWINGS

נאַכטווערטער
אַ מדרש אויפֿן חורבן

NIGHTWORDS

A LITURGY
ON THE
HOLOCAUST

מִיְלֵי לַיְלָה
מְדַרְשׁ עַל הַשׁוֹאָה

Compiled by David G. Roskies

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SOME WORDS ON *NIGHTWORDS*

The Day of Broken Covenants

In the Jewish calendar, there is a day for every purpose under heaven: a day for parody and a day for penitence, a day for feasting and a day for fasting, a day for reenacting the Exodus and a day for reliving the Exile. But where, in this orchestrated array of catharsis and commemoration, is there a day set aside for anger? How can we love God with all our heart and soul (Deut. 10:12) without a time for sanctioned rage? Can we rejoice before the Lord, affirm the covenant between the God of Israel and the People of Israel, if we cannot acknowledge the broken covenants? A marriage, no matter how solid, cannot be sustained without the ability to express one's disappointment, without a venue for one's sense of betrayal. So too the marriage promulgated at Sinai. "At Sinai we received the Torah," the poet Jacob Glatstein reminds us, "and in Lublin," in the shadow of the Maidanek death camp, "we gave it back." The destruction of European Jewry is the sign of God's betrayal of Israel. Yom Hashoah marks the day of broken covenants. It is the day of sanctioned rage against God.

Once before, the People of Israel stood at this very crossroads. The sin offerings had just been abrogated, priests and prophets were silenced, and God's Presence removed from the Temple in Jerusalem. What did the survivors do? Some, those distant Jews who were far removed from the catastrophic events and secure in their surrogate temples, went on with business as usual. Contrariwise, some turned the Destruction into the sum and substance of their faith; as Mourners of Zion, they donned sackcloth and ashes and ascended to the devastated Temple mount, there to recite dirges. Still others abandoned Judaism altogether.

The rabbinic course of action was to recreate Judaism in the wake of the disaster by formulating new laws and gathering new lore.

The Art of Sacred Parody

Rather than allow the Holocaust to become the crucible of Jewish culture, rather than turn every day in the calendar into a day of national mourning, it is possible—and preferable—to make Jewish culture the crucible in which all events, no matter how catastrophic, are reforged. That strategy was employed by some of the Rabbis after the Destruction of the Second Temple. They found a way of mimicking the sacrilege and channeling Jewish rage back toward the wellsprings of greatest sanctity. Confront that which is most timeless and sacred with the evil that your enemies have perpetrated in historical time. Do unto the sacred texts that which they have done to you. And out of that brutal juxtaposition of divine promise and historical reality, of prophecy and profanity, a new set of meanings evolved.

Nightwords is a primer in this art of sacred parody. It brings together the boldest such symbolic inversions from rabbinic, medieval, and modern literary sources. The oldest—and most celebrated—is from Talmud Gittin 56b:

WHO IS LIKE UNTO THEE AMONG THE MIGHTY (*elim*), ADONAI [Psalm 89:9]? In the school of Rabbi Ishmael it was taught: “Who is like unto Thee among the silent (*illemim*), Adonai”—since God sees the suffering of God’s children and remains silent!

A wordgame? Hardly. These words of the Rabbis border on blasphemy. They give license to argue with God using God's own words. Here is another, more elaborate example, from the *Midrash on Psalms 19:2*:

Rabbi Pinḥas the Priest said: Moses established the order of prayer for Israel when he said: THE LORD YOUR GOD IS GOD OF GODS, AND LORD OF LORDS, THE GREAT, THE MIGHTY, THE AWESOME GOD. Jeremiah, in his order of prayer, said: THE GREAT, THE MIGHTY GOD, but not "the awesome God." Why did Jeremiah say "The mighty God?" Because, he explained, even though God saw the children put in chains and the Temple destroyed, He remained silent; hence it is proper to call God "mighty." But he did not say "the awesome God," because the Temple was destroyed. For where was the awe, if enemies came into God's house and were not awed? Daniel, in his order of prayer, said, THE GREAT, THE AWESOME GOD, but not "the mighty God." Why not? Because, as Daniel asked: "When God's children were put in chains, where was God's might?" (Trans. William G. Braude)

Jeremiah and Daniel are here recast as radical liturgists who throw back at God the failure to fulfil the letter of the divine promise to Moses. By the same token, the twelfth-century poet Isaac bar Shalom built an entire *piyyut* (liturgical poem) around Rabbi Ishmael's countercommentary on Psalm 89:9. The full weight of medieval Jewry's historical experience is brought to bear upon the covenantal promises made to Israel in the Torah—and subsequently broken. In *Nightwords*, Isaac bar Shalom's "There Is None Like You Among the Dumb" is enlisted to form the backbone of the "Yizkor" service. Only the date was changed, to update the charge.

Such arguing with God, which the Rabbis called *ḥutspah kelapei shemaya*, is nowhere more radically expressed than in the Book of Job. Job is our first modern, the progenitor of Dmitri Karamazov, of Sholem Aleichem's Tevye, of Kafka's Joseph K. In revising *Nightwords* for this, the fourth time, I was fortunate to have at my disposal a spare and vigorous translation of the Book of Job by my colleague, Raymond P. Scheindlin. Scheindlin's Job brings to mind the personal testimonies in poetry and prose from the Warsaw, Vilna, Lodz, Cracow, Bialystok, and Riga ghettos, in which adults protest their innocence and helplessness, children are wise beyond their years, and free thinkers turn in desperation and hope—to God. These wartime writings, which make up the authentic core of the literature of the Holocaust, pay close attention to the brick walls and barbed wire, to the specific terrors of night and day, to the passage of time, to the growing numbers of the dead and dying, and to the burden of memory that the survivors will have to carry with them. By using the 'Amidah (or Standing Prayer) as the moment of radical self-confrontation, one can recreate the dialogue of a ghetto Jew caught between a severed past and an unattainable future. Our latter-day Job, however, does not conclude with a voice that answers from the whirlwind. The whirlwind alone is the answer.

It is possible, through sacred parody, to allow for God's presence by categorically denying God's promise. Thus the fourth "Invocation" employs the richly ambiguous Hebrew phrase *yits'aku 'al Adonai*, which can be translated as "[each man, woman, and child] shall cry out against Adonai." Once again it is the Rabbis who took the lead in subverting the contextual meaning of the words. Where God exclaims to Cain in Gen. 4:10, "*kol demei ahikha tso'akim eilay min ha'adamah*, Hark, your brother's blood cries out to Me from the

ground!” the Rabbis read *eilai*, with an aleph, as *‘alai*, with an ‘ayin. “Your brother’s blood cries out *against* Me from the ground!” After all, when one brother murders another, who is culpable if not the God who created each human in the divine image?

The Exodus, the Holocaust, and Yom Hashoah

Dialogue, voices, questioning, and yes, even orchestrated rage—all this hearkens back to the Passover seder. Not coincidentally, Yom Hashoah (or Holocaust Remembrance Week, as it called in the United States) takes place in the two-week period between the conclusion of Passover and Israel’s Independence Day. It is a period fraught with group memory. Just as the Exodus requires a seder, a communal retelling of the story, complete with special foods and songs, there is a felt need for a Holocaust-specific ritual to be recited year-in, year-out, in the presence of one’s family, community, synagogue, and church.

The Passover festival was ordained when the People of Israel stood poised between the ninth and tenth plagues (Exod. 12:14–28). Even while Egypt was being ravaged by the rod of God’s wrath, the celebration of Israel’s miraculous rescue was already laid out in bold detail. For seven days shall the People of Israel eat unleavened bread, all the people, even the strangers living in their midst; and a paschal lamb shall be sacrificed and consumed before sunrise, not just on this night but every year on this night in perpetuity. Much later, after the Second Temple was destroyed and the Jews were dispersed, the Rabbis entered the breach and invented the seder as we know it. Doing that which they did best—applying

the Torah to everyday life—the Rabbis turned the Passover festival as centered on the Jerusalem Temple into a ritual drama to be enacted by all Jews, everywhere.

The Jews of later generations are specifically enjoined to experience the event as if *they themselves* went out of Egypt. How? Not by listening to a rabbi preach, a professor lecture, or a politician extemporize. Rather, the Exodus is relived by performing a script that was compiled from many disparate sources and over many hundreds of years.

It is the duty of our generation to create a communal ritual for Yom Hashoah.

The Holocaust as a Paradigm Shift

A ritual for Yom Hashoah must begin with those aspects of the Holocaust that are utterly unassimilable. Unique to the Holocaust are the mounds of shoes, combs, hair, prostheses, eyeglasses, and valises belonging to the murdered victims. They bear witness to something heretofore unknown. Never have the innocent been so systematically stripped of security, sanctity, property, and sustenance before being stripped of their lives.

Unique to the Holocaust are the tattooed numbers. They represent the permanent branding of every Jew marked for slave labor and eventual murder. In the writings of Ka-Tzetnik 135633 (Yekhiel Feiner-Dinur), branding becomes a sign of the Apocalypse, beginning with the Jewish stars and armbands that civilians were forced to wear, and culminating in the branding of young Jewish women as *Feld-huren* in Auschwitz. How to live with the shame of it? How reclaim the status of a holy people when branding of the flesh is condemned by the Torah as a form of idolatry; when all the Torah scrolls have either been burned or made

into boots; when every prayer shawl was sold or bartered for bread; when the skin of the victims was used for lampshades?

It is for this reason that Elie Wiesel states, in biblical cadence, “In the beginning was the Holocaust.” He means that the Holocaust signals a rupture in the divine order and in Jewish self-understanding. If there is to be a sanctified life in the wake of this catastrophe, the people must discover new sources of meaning.

Midrash, Liturgy, Anthology

So the Holocaust resists a single layer of meaning, a single textual tradition. That is why we call this creative anthology of biblical, rabbinic, medieval, and modern sources a “midrash.” In midrash, no single voice is authoritative. No scholar, be he ever so famous, can provide the definitive interpretation. It is a level, and extremely cluttered, playing field. Each new reading is introduced the same way: “*davar aḥer*, and here is something else.” And if one reading contradicts the other, so much the better. What’s more, these insights and novellae are recorded in shorthand, a mere précis of what must have been a long and brilliant discourse. The traditional fragmentariness of midrash demands that we fill in the missing context.

The Holocaust is our Text and context; the rabbis and modern writers, our commentators. Since midrash stems from the fundamental belief that “text and experience are reciprocally enlightening; even as the immediate event helps make the ancient text intelligible, so in turn the text reveals the significance of the event” (Judah Goldin). If the Holocaust repre-

sents a new historical archetype, a new order of reality, it must somehow yield its meaning in fierce dialogue with received texts. One way to measure the awfulness of this event is by the number and diversity of the interpretations that it invokes or engenders: the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel; Mishnahs Sotah, Kelim, and Berakhot; the medieval chronicles; Kierkegaard, Camus, and Kazantzakis.

Within their new anthological setting, these disparate texts shed some of their old meanings and gain new ones. The biblical ritual of *ḥalitsah* begins as a denial of responsibility for one's deceased brother, a denial mysteriously signaled by the removal of one's sandal. It ends with millions of abandoned shoes and no one to "establish a name" for their murdered owners except us, who have just removed our own shoes. Will we deny these brothers and sisters their names?

The midrashic method affords startling insights precisely because it invites the marriage of irreconcilable ideas. *Nightwords* is structured around three such impossible pairings:

—God's command to Abraham to sacrifice his only son on the altar was enacted—in God's absence—by every Jewish mother and father who walked to their deaths hand in hand with their children.

—The Deuteronomic commandment to bind the straps of the tefillin for a sign upon one's hand is carried out with greatest devotion by those who have a concentration camp number tattooed on their arm.

—And the most awe-ful pairing: two maps, one laid upon the other. The first is of the Israelite camp in the desert with all the tribes neatly arrayed around the Ark of the

Covenant. The second is of Birkenau, the largest death camp in Europe, with its Family Camp, Women's Camp, Gypsy Camp, and "Canada." At the center of each of these encampments is a space where no mere mortal who enters will come out alive, so terrible is the cloud or Presence housed therein.

Once we are privy to such terrible knowledge, there is danger of succumbing to the Sitra Aḥra, to the Evil Side of life. The purpose of *Nightwords* is to give voice to the outrage, to grant the evil its due, and thereby to contain it. In its sequence and staging, *Nightwords* seeks to create a liturgical space in which the community removes its shoes in mourning, gives voice to its anger and grief, enters vicariously into that Other Time and Place, then reshapes itself through an assemblage of defiance, grief, and hope. The last two acts (the Hallel and Yizkor) are more straightforward, and less jagged than what comes before.

To encompass the entirety of our historical experience, even while cutting the enormity of Auschwitz down to manageable size, there must be a day set aside for the night, so that on the morrow, our fractured lives may be sanctified anew.

New Languages, New Songs, New Rituals

As the day of broken covenants, Yom Hashoah must stretch the bounds of the fixed liturgy beyond traditional limits and languages. *Nightwords* introduces Yiddish as a language of public prayer. Much maligned by friend and foe alike, Yiddish has more recently been enshrined as *leshon hakedoshim*, the language of the martyrs. But Yiddish can speak both for the fighters and the martyrs. The most famous hymns of the Jewish resistance are

Mordecai Gebirtig's "Es brent!" written in 1936, and Hirsh Glik's "Zog nit keyn mol!" written in 1943. They bespeak, in Yiddish, a covenantal faith that remained unbroken.

In contrast, the three Yiddish songs that are woven into the text of *Nightwords* are all in a minor key, all in the voices of the martyrs. Why has the voice of armed resistance been suppressed? I have done so in line with two outstanding monuments to the Holocaust: Rachel Auerbach's "Yizkor, 1943," written in Warsaw six months after the uprising and the final liquidation of the ghetto, and Nathan Rapoport's Warsaw Ghetto Monument, unveiled in 1948. From Auerbach and Rapoport we learn that a special effort is required to mourn the nameless millions. To bring the martyrs and fighters together in a single act of commemoration is to invite an invidious comparison between them. It is to imply that those who went to their deaths without guns in their hands were somehow to blame. But the dead are blameless! They perished, as Auerbach writes, as if swept away by some force of nature. While the fighters are remembered, each by name and political affiliation, the only monument to the martyrs are the words that we recite and the songs that we sing in their spoken language.

The German of Goethe, Heine, and Rilke is another language spoken by the murdered Jews. German-Jewish creativity is here represented by Martin Buber, Nelly Sachs, and Peter Weiss. Despite a desire for inclusivity and innovation, however, I could not bring myself to quote German-language texts other than through the neutral medium of English. *Nightwords* is about wrestling with the severed past, not restitution.

It is clearly no simple matter to experience the event as if *we ourselves* went out of Europe. The only viable model remains the Passover seder. But how much easier it was for the

Rabbis! The duration, basic narrative, and symbolic foods of the festival were already in place. The Rabbis' task was to draft a new script, with their favorite cast of characters playing the lead: Rabbi Akiva, Rabbi Tarfon, and other greats of the rabbinical academy. We who seek to commemorate the Holocaust have far fewer guidelines—and many more characters and cultural idioms to choose from.

Nightwords is situated between two different sets of cultural norms. It brings together the Theater of the Absurd, much in vogue in the years 1965–71 when *Nightwords* was evolving, and the culture of contemplative prayer, as practiced by a generation of young American Jews in Havurat Shalom Community Seminary. The connection between the thirty-six speaking roles and the substance of what they say is mostly ironic, in keeping with the conventions of absurdist theater, which questions all notions of authority. Thus, a “Child” is required to say things that no child in the “real” world ought ever to say. The “Mute” is given some of the most eloquent speaking parts.

From the Havurah's license to experiment, to “reinvent” Judaism in a more contemporary idiom, come the boldest moments in *Nightwords*. Hearing the Scroll of Happenings chanted to the traditional cantillation of the Torah brings home the elemental horror of the atrocities, the more so when their textual source is revealed to be a medieval chronicle. That all the participants are left staring at a mound of their own shoes breaks down those emotional barriers that we inevitably erect when we are forced to grapple with something beyond our comprehension.

But by what authority does one mandate so radical a rite as the Ritual of the Number—the experiential core of *Nightwords*? There is none. Some participants will recoil at the colossal

chutzpah of having each reader inscribe a number on the arm of the person next in line. What moral presumptuousness to act out becoming an inmate at Auschwitz! There was serious debate about this prior to the first public reading of *Nightwords* at Havurat Shalom. As fate would have it, the reading was attended by a survivor of Auschwitz with a bona fide number on his arm. He allayed our fears at service's end. Precisely because the burden of the number was only vicarious, he was pleased to have shared it with a group of American-born Jews. Some years later, my colleague Neil Gillman at the Jewish Theological Seminary had the opposite response. He observed that because of the Holocaust, something so benign as counting heads—as when we count the requisite ten Jews for a quorum—had taken on a sinister resonance. Upon discovering the number still inscribed on his forearm the morning after, he could not decide what to do. Does he wash it off or leave it on?

As always, the future will decide. It may be that this kind of religious engagement is altogether unworkable outside of North America. Or we may already be living at a time when religious passion expresses itself best by reclaiming that which carries the stamp of Tradition.

One thing is certain, however. Should there ever come a time when the sight of a number branded on human flesh does not strike terror in the heart and does not shake the foundations of one's faith, then at such a time the memory of the Holocaust will have died and the memory of Sinai will have been greatly diminished.

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