

Volume 23 - Number 14 ■ 19 April 2019 ■ 14 Nisan 5779

south african Jewish Repport

The source of quality content, news and insights

Pesach 2019/5779

www.sajr.co.za



PROPERTIES

CHAG SAMEACH



WISHING YOU A SEDER TABLE FILLED WITH JOY, AND A PASSOVER FILLED WITH HAPPINESS.



@JawitzProp



@jawitzproperties



@jawitz_properties



www.jawitz.co.za



Reach New Heights

Most advanced trading
platform in SA

We offer a premium product, without the premium price!



FSP NO 48325

Powered by

 InteractiveBrokers

MEXEM

+27 11 883 0768 | www.mexem.co.za

Murano vase with blue, green and amber stripes
SOLD R 1,500



George III style Sheffield silver plated four light candelabra and matching pair of candlesticks
SOLD R 4,500



Walter Whall Battiss, watercolour on paper
SOLD R 19,000

Our next edition will be out on 3 May.

Volume 23 - Number 14 ■ 19 April 2019 ■ 14 Nisan 5779

South African Jewish Report

The source of quality content, news and insights

www.sajr.co.za

Brimstone bows to BDS, but it's milk and honey as Clover deal continues

NICOLA MILTZ

An Israeli-led deal is going ahead to buy Clover Industries in spite of the ugly setback caused by intense pressure from the Boycott Divestment Sanctions South Africa (BDS-SA) movement. Johannesburg Stock Exchange-listed Brimstone Investment Corporation is bowing out of the multibillion rand, foreign direct investment (FDI) deal led by Tel Aviv based Central Bottling Company (CBC) to buy South Africa's biggest dairy producer. This comes after huge pressure by anti-Israel lobby groups. But the deal is still on the cards, say insiders, and CBC is leading the transaction as the biggest shareholder in the MilCo consortium (the entity that has offered R4.8 billion to buy Clover Industries). Grave threats and intimidation by BDS-SA and other anti-Israel lobby groups has taken its toll on Mustaq Brey, the chief executive. A devout Muslim businessman and philanthropist, his life has been turned upside down by pressure from within his own community. The charitable executive, who is known to support a range of worthy causes including the Chevrah Kadisha, is believed to have sought refuge in India for weeks following his ordeal. Brey and his partner, Fred Robertson, the executive chairman and co-founder of the successful, proudly South African company, visited Israel in January this year to inspect the operations of CBC. Brey worshipped at the Al-Aqsa Mosque – one of the holiest sites in Islam – located in the Old City of Jerusalem. They visited several other holy sites, including the Kotel (Western Wall), toured Jaffa, and other parts of the country.

They were said to be highly impressed with the country and CBC. An excited Brey hailed the future transaction, in which Brimstone would have a 15% stake in MilCo SA. He said the deal would bring foreign direct investment into South Africa, which was so necessary "if we wish to achieve the economic freedom our country deserves". The Israeli company would have a 59.5% stake in the consortium. However Brey's excitement was short-lived. No sooner had the announcement been made about the buyout offer, than BDS-SA and other Palestine solidarity groups mobilised a forbidding campaign to smear CBC and scupper the deal from taking place. Anti-Israel lobbyists accused CBC of being complicit in human-rights abuses and violating international law. Brimstone was forced to reconsider its participation after noting the "widespread outrage". The consortium, however, has reiterated its commitment to the deal in spite of this unwelcome setback. Meanwhile, the home-grown empowerment investment company is in advanced talks with a black economic empowerment firm to acquire Brimstone's stake in the Clover consortium. This move would result in Brimstone exiting its full shareholding of MilCo SA. In all likelihood, a deal will forge ahead with a new company that, according to insiders, is not going to entertain BDS's threats. Brimstone said that should a suitable replacement not be in place by the end of the year, another partner in the consortium would acquire its stake. BDS-SA milked the news of Brimstone's exit. In a celebratory statement, it said it commended the leadership of Brimstone for

having interacted with it, and for "following through with its exit" from the deal. The organisation said it "saluted" all those who it said "engaged" on the issue. Notwithstanding Brimstone's exit, the organisation said that "if the Israeli take-over proceeds" it would actively support or initiate a call for direct action and a "militant but peaceful" campaign, including "protests and disruptions" of Clover, and would boycott all of its products. The lucrative deal, which would benefit South Africa's ailing economy and help boost employment, has been publicly opposed by

the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the Food and Allied Workers Union (Fawu), among other Palestinian solidarity organisations. Earlier this year, the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (Dirco) tried to stop the anti-Israel lobby from attempting to scupper the much-needed FDI deal. Dirco said South Africa was "open for business". This occurred in the same week that President Cyril Ramaphosa made it clear that the government was continuing its drive to attract FDI to South Africa.

Continued on page 2>>

Old friends enjoying Pesach

See page 17



Photography by Alon, shot by Anele Khoza

KosherWorld 
TRULY KOSHER

WISHING ALL OUR
CUSTOMERS & THE
ENTIRE COMMUNITY
A CHAG KASHER
V' SAMEACH

פסח כשר ושמח
**Happy
Passover**



Pulitzer for Pittsburgh newspaper

The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* was awarded the 2019 Pulitzer Prize in breaking news reporting for its coverage of the Tree of Life Synagogue massacre last October.

Eleven people were shot and killed by a gunman during the rampage, which came as congregants at the synagogue complex

in Pittsburgh were gathering for Shabbat morning services. The prize, the most prestigious in journalism, was awarded to the daily's entire reporting staff on Monday.

The prize committee cited the *Post-Gazette* for "immersive, compassionate coverage of the massacre at Pittsburgh's Tree of Life synagogue that captured the anguish and resilience of a community thrust into grief".

Among the 10 stories cited was an investigative profile of the gunman and how he went "from conservative to white nationalist."

The *Sun Sentinel* of South Florida won the Pulitzer for public service for its coverage of the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Multiple Jewish students and staff were among the 17 killed in the shooting.



Israelis print 3D heart

Scientists in Israel have made a 3D print of a heart using human tissue and vessels.

It is the first time that an entire heart has been successfully printed that includes cells and blood vessels, the *AFP* news service reported, citing Tal Dvir of Tel Aviv University, who led the project.

It will be a long time, however, before such a printed heart will be fully functional and ready to be transplanted into a human patient, the scientists said.

More arrests for Argentinan chief rabbi attack

Three gang members suspected of being involved in the attack on Argentina's chief rabbi were arrested on Monday night in three raids in the greater Buenos Aires area.

Buenos Aires city police have also recovered objects belonging to Rabbi Gabriel Davidovich, including a pen with Hebrew words in a box labelled "Jerusalem", money, and jewellery matching the description of items that the rabbi said were stolen from his home.

The gang leader was among those taken into custody. Two other members of the gang were captured a month ago.

The 25 February attack left Davidovich with serious injuries, including nine broken ribs and a punctured lung.

The attack is not being treated as a hate crime, and reports have indicated that it was a revenge attack arranged by a prominent member of the Jewish community involved in a divorce case adjudicated by the rabbi.

Davidovich also says he's not sure if the home assault was anti-Semitic, in spite of hearing the assailants shout, "We know that you are the AMIA (Jewish centre) rabbi" during the attack.

Appliance Repairs on Site
 Fridges, Dishwashers,
 Washing Machines, Stoves
 Tumble Dryers & more
 Call Jason
 082 401 8239 / 076 210 6532
FREE QUOTATIONS

HAROLD'S REMOTES
 Est. 1977
 Keys & Key Cutting
 Remote Control Transmitters for
 ★ Alarms ★ Gates ★
 ★ Garage Doors ★
 81 Hathorn Avenue Cnr Durham St,
 Raedene Estate (free parking)
 Tel: 082-881-3720

Brimstone bows to BDS, but it's milk and honey as Clover deal continues

>> Continued from page 1

However, this stance was fiercely contradicted when Dirco Minister Lindiwe Sisulu two weeks ago told foreign dignitaries that South Africa was in the process of downgrading all relations with Israel, including trade relations.

Brimstone's profit fell by nearly half. The company released its results last month for the year ended 31 December 2018, reporting a profit of R71.3 million, down from R141.7

million for the prior year – a drop just short of 50%.

Brey told *Fin24*, "We still believe we are good at what we do. We believe we

have quality assets. It is a long-term thing. The market will come right, and then we will be ok."

According to a Stock Exchange News Service (SENS) release on 12 April, Brimstone's share of the transaction costs in relation to its exit from the Clover transaction is not expected to be material to its intrinsic net asset value.

CBC, which is Israel's leading manufacturer and distributor of popular beverages

including Coca-Cola, Fuze Tea, Tuborg, and Carlsberg beers, sees the Clover deal as a way of expanding its operations in Africa. Clover, meanwhile, has 8 000 employees and operates 13 plants.

Shabbat and YomTov Times

19/20/21 April			25/26/27 April				
CL	CL	YTE	CL	CL	YTE		
17:30	18:19	18:18	JHB	17:25	18:24	18:13	JHB
18:01	18:52	18:51	CT	17:54	17:53	18:45	CT
17:15	18:05	18:04	DBN	17:09	17:08	17:58	DBN
17:35	18:24	18:24	BFN	17:29	17:28	18:18	BFN
17:32	18:23	18:22	PE	17:25	17:24	18:16	PE
17:24	18:15	18:14	EL	17:17	17:16	18:06	EL

Michael David
QUALITY WORKMANSHIP
 Tired of your old worn-out furniture?
 Rejuvenate your home...
CUSTOM UPHOLSTERY & FURNITURE REPAIRS
 Michael
082 820 7091
 Warren
072 940 7757
 430 Louis Botha Avenue, cnr Main Street, Rouxville

Torah Thought

Get out – it's a pyramid scheme!

A few years back, some friends of mine were trapped in a terrible pyramid scheme. Basically, they were invited to get involved in a wildly profitable property development in which by merely signing on to the venture with zero equity and almost minimal exposure, they stood to make a small fortune.

The developers had incredible government support, including major tax incentives and a long reputation of similarly successful projects.

When things didn't go as planned, they were encouraged to bring others to increase their share based on the level of their investment. So, they spoke to family and friends, and they all started getting "in on the action" to the point that some of them even started coming to the development site themselves to see how they could make things come right.

Well, it turns out that what started as a minimal exposure suddenly became a metastasising debt which started to

consume my friends' entire life, ensnaring them in what turned out to be a fraudulent scheme. It destroyed them financially, socially, emotionally, and even spiritually, and of course left them destitute paupers, enslaved to the debt which they now carried for decades thereafter.

I know this story well because my father is the one who bailed them all out, in one hostile takeover of the entire project. He literally "bought them out", and put the bad guys out of business – for a while.

The bad news is that the con men are still out there. Yes, 3 331 years after my ancestors were freed from this toxic cycle of slavery servicing a literal pyramid scheme in Egypt, Pharaoh and his treacherous descendants haven't given up one bit.

From simple "pre-approved!" credit card applications in the mail, to a social group-think that cynically seeks to dismantle our sacred values and divine heritage, society today relentlessly pursues ownership of

our most valuable asset - our very selves.

But the good news is that my father, your father, our father in heaven, is still happy to bail us out.

This evening, before you go to sleep, take a moment to recite the Shema... *Hashem echad*, the fact that the oneness of Hashem is powerful enough to collect the broken pieces of your soul, heart, mind, family, business, community, and make them *echad* (one) again.

There's no carry-over debt involved in this buy-out. You simply trade in the slavery you're suffering from today for a loving relationship with Hashem that frees you to be your ultimate self, serving Hashem through Torah and mitzvah.

Avoid the pyramid scheme. Speak to your father tonight. At the seder, and every night thereafter.



Rabbi Asher Deren, Chabad of the West Coast - Cape Town

VEHICLES WANTED
 Any make, any model, any condition
 Accident damaged vehicles and non-runners also wanted
 Arnold Orkin 082 823 7826
 AUTO AFRICA

Jewish Report
 Editor Peta Krost Maunder - editor@sajewishreport.co.za • Sub-editor Julie Leibowitz
 Journalists: Nicola Miltz • Tali Feinberg • Jordan Moshe
 Editorial co-ordinator Martine Bass - editorials@sajewishreport.co.za
 Proofreader Kim Hatchuel - kim@a-proofed.co.za • CEO Dani Kedar - ceo@sajewishreport.co.za • Advertising Britt Landsman: 082 292 9520 - britt@sajewishreport.co.za • Design and layout Bryan Maron/Design Bandits - bryan@designbandits.co.za
 Subscriptions Avusa Publishing (Pty) Ltd. Tel: 0860 525 200 • Board of Directors Howard Sackstein (Chairperson), Herby Rosenberg, Dina Diamond, Herschel Jawitz, Shaun Matisonn, Benji Porter. Advertisements and editorial copy do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, staff and board of directors. Tel: 011 430 1980.

The SA Jewish Report subscribes to the Code of Ethics and Conduct for South African Print and Online Media that prescribes news that is truthful, accurate, fair and balanced. If we don't live up to the Code, within 20 days of the date of publication of the material, please contact the Public Advocate at 011 484 3612, fax: 011 484 3619. You can also contact our Case Officer on khanyim@ombudsman.org.za or lodge a complaint on their website: www.presscouncil.org.za

Yom Ha'atzmaut 2019
 is going back to
Gold Reef City!
 Take the day off!
Thursday 9 May 2019
 Tickets: R100 pp | Kids in prams FREE
 Gates open at 12:00 - 17:00
 www.sazionfed.co.za
 SOUTH AFRICAN ZIONIST FEDERATION
 Gold Reef City
 THEME PARK

Sisulu claims Israel is funding Wits University

JORDAN MOSHE

Lindiwe Sisulu, the minister of international relations and cooperation, stated last Friday night that she had recently discovered that the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) was heavily funded by Israel's government. This, she said, was a fact that must be taken into account when implementing the proposed downgrade of the South African embassy in Israel.

Wits Vice-Chancellor Adam Habib said this was "absolute nonsense".

"She is in violation of her oath as a minister for knowingly misrepresenting the state of affairs at a public university," Habib said.

Sisulu's statement about the university's so-called funding came in the wake of her recent announcement of the downgrade. Last Friday's statement was made at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's (UKZN's) Dr Phyllis Naidoo Memorial Lecture, where Sisulu was delivering the keynote address.

During her address, she reflected on her position regarding the Israeli-Palestinian situation and the downgrade (see other story on this page).

She claimed that the department of international relations and cooperation (Dirco) was under pressure to put the downgrade into effect. It wasn't "as simple as just downgrading" owing to "other things – bilateral arrangements – all those things that we have to take into agreement". The example she went on to cite, however, came as a surprise: Israel's investment in Wits.

"Last week I was at Wits, and I discovered that Wits is heavily funded by the Israeli government," Sisulu said. Offering no further explanation as to the source of this information, she simply added that this was one of the things "that we could package and work out in phases how we will finally implement what has been instructed to us".

Habib said this statement was not only untrue, but wholly unfounded. He described elections as the "silly season" because politicians have a habit of saying the first stupid thought that pops up in their head. "Minister Sisulu has never approached any of the Wits executives to ask if we are funded by

the Israeli state," he said. "For the record, we are not.

"If she does not know anything about Wits University, I suggest she remains silent or muses about matters other than higher education."

The South African Jewish Board of Deputies echoed this sentiment, saying that Sisulu was broadcasting baseless information. "It is unclear where the minister is getting her information from, but she seems to have resorted to completely fake and unsubstantiated claims to further her arguments," said the board's vice-president, Zev Krengel. "There is absolutely no basis for her comments, and it seems that she is using zealotry rather than facts as a basis to punish Israel.



Unfortunately, this is irresponsible for someone in such an influential position."

Some have even said that unless Sisulu provides evidence for her

claim, she might be guilty of making discriminatory remarks. "Her comments may reflect anti-Semitism if they are proved not to be true," said Sara Gon, policy fellow at the Institute of Race Relations. "If Adam Habib says it's nonsense, then she's just lying and using Israel to imply a nefariousness, which is outrageous and anti-Semitic."

Gon said someone needed to demand how the minister came to make that statement, and who gave her the misinformation. It could be that the minister was "told this by someone in authority at Wits who knew better and lied to her knowing that she would say something like she said". Or, said Gon, someone could

have said it to her not knowing the truth, but wanting to misrepresent the facts, using the minister as a conduit.

When the *SA Jewish Report* initially asked Dirco spokesperson Ndivhuwo Mabaya for comment, he said he didn't understand what the issue was, and asked if the newspaper had checked with Wits.

Then, responding to a message from the *SA Jewish Report*, he said, "no one seems to know what you are talking about" and asked where the remark had been made. After learning that it was said in the context of the UKZN lecture, he said he was not present, and asked for proof that the remark had been made.

• Although both a recording of the statement, and a transcript of the relevant section of the address were provided, no further comment had been received at the time of going to print.

Minister Sisulu defends downgrade in face of backlash

TALI FEINBERG

While pro-Palestinian groups have welcomed Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Lindiwe Sisulu's announcement that South Africa has begun downgrading its embassy in Israel, there has also been an outpouring of outrage from around the country and the globe.

This anger may be having an impact, because on 12 April, she made a number of statements to defend the downgrade decision.

In a presentation titled "Key international relations issues facing South Africa" at the Dr Phyllis Naidoo Memorial Lecture at the University of KwaZulu-Natal on Friday night, Minister Sisulu said that she had never pushed for the downgrade.

"In the end, the ANC at its 54th conference took a decision that it was going to order, that it was going to direct the government. At that time, I was sitting in the back seats and it didn't affect me. I was somewhere in human settlements. They were going to direct the government with immediate effect to downgrade the Palestinian embassy, I mean the Israeli, our embassy in Israel. And it didn't affect me."

She later said that she had "inherited" the resolution, and "this is what we have had to implement right now".

However, if we look back to a speech she made on 4 January 2018, we see that Sisulu has always been an ardent supporter of the downgrade. She said at the time, "I'm hoping out of this we will be able to have regular contact on this matter

to ensure that we finally reach our determined destination and ensure that the Israeli embassy is gone. That was the directive that I was given in no uncertain terms, so we still have one outstanding matter, but I'm glad that we're here."

She also said, "A very important decision was taken by the ANC at the conference. Unfortunately, the embassy of Israel is not in the Dead Sea, it's very much in Pretoria, and we still have to work very hard to make sure the final request that was made is carried through."

On 12 April 2019, she was asked if South Africa would apply a downgrade to other countries with supposed human-rights violations. She responded that she didn't "know of another country where we would be required to do the same thing, but I am certain if there has been a precedent, that is probably what we are going to do, judging from what the ANC has decided".

But later, she said that only Israel was being picked out for a downgrade. "The issue of Israel is different in the sense that these are people who have been very much at the centre of our attempt to try to find a solution that will be lasting for the Palestinians with whom we have fought and for the Israelis who live there. It has therefore been part and parcel of what we have been engaged in for a very long time. We have not been engaged in human-rights violations with any other country quite to the same extent."

This lines up with her comments on 4 January 2018, when she said that, "Two requests were made. One, there must be a downgrading of

the embassy, and two, please make sure that tomorrow, the embassy of Israel packs up and goes to the Dead Sea." This was greeted by a round of applause.

"She may have inherited it from the ANC conference in 2017, but her enthusiasm is clear," said analyst Sara Gon of the Institute of Race Relations (IRR). "You don't try to find lasting peace between two parties when you shun the one. Israel is not going to give a hoot whether South Africa is there or not. We are insignificant in the scheme of this issue."

"I have little doubt that she is probably a classical left-wing anti-Semite who sees Palestinians only as good victims and Israelis only as bad oppressors. Her feelings are with the Muslim community completely."

"There are countries with worse human-rights violations," Gon said. "Sudan, countries in Africa that do nothing to halt the slave trade operating [within their borders], Russia, China, Venezuela, Cuba, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Myanmar. Don't tell me she will act similarly with any of those countries!"

Zev Krengel, the vice-president of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, said, "There is no doubt that there is an unprecedented zeal by the minister to implement this resolution. It is interesting to note how many ANC resolutions have not been implemented, many far more pressing and critical to the South African government's functioning and ability to deliver. The obsession to implement this resolution is astounding."

Continued on page 50>>

JAWITZ

PROPERTIES

THINKING OF SELLING AND BUYING?

Joel Harris | 082 926 0287
Lauren Shalpid | 083 789 0229

**SHOWCASING
OUR SUCCESS**

Sold.



Jews out in space

HOWARD SACKSTEIN

“We’re Jews out in space, zooming along protecting the Hebrew race.” This was sung by a bunch of tallit-wearing Jews depicted at the end of Mel Brookes’ 1981 comic classic, *History of the World Part 1*. Flying a Magen David (star of David) shaped spacecraft, the Jews dance a hora each time they destroy an enemy spacecraft while singing, “When goyim attack us, we give them a smack and slap them right back in the face.”

Not so joyous, however, were the engineers at the Beresheet moon landing’s mission control centre, as they watched Israel’s first spacecraft crash-land on the moon’s surface. Its main engines failed a mere few kilometres from the “Sea of Serenity” on the light side of the moon last Thursday evening.

After a 6.5 million kilometre journey and about 150m above the moon’s surface, communication with Beresheet went dark. Engineers at SpaceIL believe that the device which measured Beresheet’s altitude from its landing site failed, triggering a chain reaction that caused the main engines of the spacecraft to stop firing.

With the main engines gone, there was no mechanism to slow the descent of Beresheet to the moon’s surface. Descending at 500km/h, a collision with the lunar surface was “inevitable”, according

to a spokeswoman for the Beresheet team.

US Apollo 11 mission astronaut and second man on the moon, Buzz Aldrin, tweeted, “Condolences to the Beresheet lander @TeamSpaceIL for what almost was! Communications were lost with the spacecraft just 150 meters (!!!) above the surface, and it couldn’t quite stick the landing. Never lose hope – your hard work, team work, and innovation is inspiring to all!”

Now lying in pieces on the face of the moon is a microchip carried by the Beresheet moon lander containing the names and faces of the Schusterman Foundation Fellows, including South African Guy Lieberman.

The main promoter of the Beresheet project was South African, Benoni born businessman, and philanthropist, Morris Kahn, who provided at least \$40 million (R557 million) to kick-start the project. “We didn’t make it, but we definitely tried, and I think the achievement of getting to where we got is pretty tremendous,” Kahn, said during a livestream of the attempt.

Within two days of the crash-landing, Kahn was launching project Beresheet 2. Appearing on Israeli TV, he said, “We started something and we need to finish it. We’ll put our flag

on the moon. Project Beresheet 2 begins tomorrow ... A mission team will be meeting tomorrow to start work.”

Before plummeting to its ultimate demise, Beresheet sent back to earth its final “selfie” picture, a photo of the moon’s surface silhouetted against an Israeli flag, with the words inscribed



“small country big dreams”.

Beresheet was the first privately funded mission to the moon. The project was a joint venture between the Israeli non-profit SpaceIL and Israel Aerospace Industries. It was funded by private donations from, among others, Kahn, the founder of Israeli telecommunications billing company Amdocs, casino moguls Miriam and Sheldon Adelson, and oil tycoon Lynn Schusterman.

Kahn who was actively involved in

Habonim before leaving South Africa in 1956, was adamant that, “This is also a good lesson for the youth. I said that if you fail, you need to get up and try again, and this is an example I have to give them.”

While Beresheet was Israel’s first attempt to land safely on the moon, Jews have always featured prominently in missions to space.

On 1 February 2003, 16 minutes before its scheduled landing, the American Space Shuttle Columbia exploded over eastern Texas on re-entry into the earth’s atmosphere. On board was Israel’s first astronaut, Ilan Ramon, who died as the Shuttle disintegrated into pieces. At age 48, Ramon was the oldest member of the seven-member crew.

The son of a Holocaust survivor, Ramon had taken with him into space a tiny Torah scroll given to him by Israeli President Moshe Katsav and a pencil sketch, *Moon Landscape*, drawn by 16-year-old Petr Ginz, who died in Auschwitz.

Also among Ramon’s personal items on the doomed mission, were a barbed wire mezuzah by San Francisco artist Aimee Golant, and a dollar note from the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson.

The first Jewish woman astronaut,

Judith Resnik, also perished when the Space Shuttle Challenger exploded on take-off from Cape Canaveral on 28 January 1986.

In total, 14 Jewish astronauts have been to space, including Russian Cosmonaut Boris Volynov who travelled on the Soyuz 5 and Soyuz 21 missions for the Soviet Union.

Both missions were plagued by technical difficulties, reinforcing the message of Israeli mission control that, “space is hard”.

The first Jewish American male astronaut was Jeffrey A. Hoffman, who flew five Space Shuttle missions between 1985 and 1996. Besides Resnick, there have been two additional American Jewish women astronauts, Ellen S. Baker and Marsha Ivins, who flew eight Space Shuttle missions between them.

Other Jewish astronauts include Jerome Apt, David Wolf, Martin Fettman, John Grunsfeld, Scott Horowitz, Mark Polansky, Garrett Reisman, and Gregory Chamitoff.

Chamitoff spent six months aboard the International Space Station across Expedition 17 and 18 in 2008, and another 15 days as part of STS-134 in 2011.

As part of his personal allowance, Chamitoff brought with him the first ever bagels into space: 18 sesame seed bagels brought from his cousin’s Fairmount Bagels bakery.

As Project Beresheet 2 gets off the ground, the Jewish stamp on space travel will get bolder and stronger.



UPCOMING:

William Kentridge, *Untitled (Woman and Café)* (detail)
Estimate: R2 800 000 – 3 800 000

ASPIRE
ART AUCTIONS

FOR BEST RESULTS

SELL WITH US. CONSIGN NOW.

WINTER 19 AUCTION

Modern & Contemporary Art

Johannesburg, 2 June

CONSIGNMENTS CLOSE MID-APRIL

FREE ART VALUATIONS

JOHANNESBURG
011 243 5243 | 071 675 2991
enquiries@aspireart.net

www.aspireart.net



Purple Cow founder defends right to engage with alt-right

NICOLA MILTZ

One of the founders of the newly formed Capitalist Party of South Africa (ZACP) has been criticised for engaging and sharing a platform with alternative-right wing extremists in an online live stream.

Roman Cabanac is one of the ten founders of the recently registered ZACP, whose logo is a purple cow. The party's members describe themselves as "positive disruptors", and believe their innovative thinking could create solutions to many of South Africa's problems.

Cabanac, a legal consultant and the co-host of a controversial podcast, *Renegade Report*, recently engaged with a motley crew of alternative right-wing thinkers, one of whom holds Nazi beliefs.

The online discussion on 11 April raised the ire of Johannesburg-based author and journalist, Nechama Brodie, who criticised the politician for allowing racist comments to be aired without even challenging or debating them.

She happened to tune in to the live "online hangout" at the precise point when Cabanac asked what she claimed was a leading question of one of the participants, which elicited a racist, anti-Semitic remark, according to Brodie.

The chat took place on The Kaaplander's YouTube channel. Kaaplander has various pictures

of the old South African flag with soldiers bearing arms and skulls on his status, and says #StopWhiteGenocide. Participants on the chat included Kaaplander and Willem Pet (Willem Petzer), a right wing Afrikaner who had a recent run in with well-known comedian and journalist Daniel Friedman, alias Deep Fried Man, which turned ugly and caused an anti-Semitic Twitter explosion. Then there was BasedNogals, a Cape Town coloured man whose real name is unknown, but who describes himself as a Christian anti-Zionist; and another person going by the name of Ash, who describes himself as a Hindu Nationalist fascist, and who is anti-gay.

The conversation touched on various topics including the genetics of black and white people; affirmative action; the shooter in Christchurch, New Zealand; the global right-wing movement; and refugees.

Brodie entered the stream after someone alerted her to listen to the controversial conversation.

She heard Cabanac and Nogals engage in a discussion about whether certain "elites" referred to by Nogals as a "tribe" were behind engineering immigration into Europe.

Brodie then criticised Cabanac for not challenging Nogals and calling him out as anti-Semitic.

Cabanac told the *SA Jewish Report* he was invited to participate in a debate, "to discuss each other's views

on various topics".

"I don't sympathise with their views at all, which is why I agreed to debate them. The point of the debate is to challenge and criticise views."

He said he had nothing in common with them, and said none of the participants would be potential voters for the ZACP.

"Kaaplander actually made a very disparaging video about the ZACP after the debate. Nogals changed his Twitter profile to the Purple Cow [our logo] and made several disparaging tweets about the party. Their antagonism to the ZACP and the ideas of the ZACP increased after the livestream, indicating that they fundamentally disagree with the classically liberal ideas of the party."

He said he was not aware that Nogals had previously shared anti-Semitic tweets.

On 18 January, Nogals tweeted, "I would not kill baby Hitler. In fact I'd rather teach the young lad that six million wasn't enough." He openly admits his political views are "hard core right wing".

Brodie has done research on the emergence of white right supremacism, and has been vocal following the recent attack on Muslim worshippers in Christchurch.

She did extensive research into the "false claims" six years ago of a so-called white right genocide in South Africa, and says there is a "common language emerging".

"These false claims of a white genocide have been cited by multiple mass shooters in multiple locations as a justification and motivation for their acts of retribution and vengeance. This is why they are doing it, because [they believe] white people are under some terrible threat."



Roman Cabanac

She said South Africa was an important part of the global narrative, as apartheid South Africa was the white supremacist ideal.

"It is not ok to go online and say that six million was not enough, and yet this is an environment in which people feel that it is ok."

She called out politicians in the public eye for not standing up to it.

Said Cabanac, "I always talk to people who dislike my views. My

podcast, *Renegade Report*, is based on that very premise. We host people we don't agree with. I don't shout or cause a scene when someone says something objectively reprehensible, I criticise their views, and I offer alternative views, premised on individual rights and the universal application thereof.

I'm a free speech absolutist, and the *Renegade Report* and ZACP agree with that."

However, Brodie said, "Words matter. As Jews, we know words have power. I'm frustrated by people who claim to be activists for free speech but at the same time seem dismissive of the terrible and tremendous power of speech."

"If a Democratic Alliance member was hanging out with white supremacists online, that politician would be under extreme scrutiny," she said.

There has been a rise in white right-wing anti-Semitism, which experts agree is of concern.

David Saks, the associate director of South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) said, "Inciting racial hatred is bad enough, but an even greater danger is the potential it has to lead to acts of lethal violence. Sooner or later, as happened in Pittsburgh last year and more recently in Christchurch, certain people will no longer be content to simply seethe on the side-lines but will decide to do something about it."

SUPERSTAR
Holidays

Purchase your ticket to Israel from Superstar Holidays and receive a Jerusalem City Pass

The Most Affordable And Exciting Way To Experience Jerusalem!

JNB / TLV / JNB

From ZAR 9 000 all inclusive
(includes 1 bag, 23KG)

Jerusalem City Pass Includes:
Free shuttle to/from the Airport / free public transportation / free attractions and other discounts / a FREE taste of Jerusalem

For more information contact Superstar Holidays on (011) 620-2525 or email heidia@delal.co.il / palesa@delal.co.il

Sheba Medical Center
Tel HaShomer
ISRAEL'S CITY OF HEALTH

Sheba Medical Center, Israel
Leading the world's healthcare revolution

JOIN SOUTH AFRICAN FRIENDS OF SHEBA

Top 5 reasons to become friends:

- ✓ Receive second opinion from senior doctors at Sheba
- ✓ VIP hotline to Sheba when visiting Israel
- ✓ Be the first one to receive the latest medical news from Sheba
- ✓ Take part in helping disadvantaged communities in South Africa
- ✓ Attend acclaimed conferences and exclusive events

Be a part of something truly great. Learn more and join here:
friendsofsheba.co.za | eng.sheba.co.il | [f](https://www.facebook.com/ShebaMedicalCenter) The Sheba Medical Center at Tel Hashomer
Email: naomi@shebamed.co.za | Phone: 0829077728

South African Jewish Report

The source of quality content, news and insights

South African Jews are not the Israeli government!

Pesach is about Freedom. Pesach is about learning not to cower when someone demeans you. Pesach is about standing up for your rights. Pesach is upon us and, as you can see from the myriad articles we have in this newspaper, there are so many things we can learn at this time of year.

Life is about learning from what we do and don't do. And every Pesach, we learn something different in spite of reading the same book over and over.

In our country right now, we are faced with some tough lessons, ones that are very hard for our community to swallow.

Consider our own Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Lindiwe Sisulu's recent utterances. Two weeks ago, she declared at a media briefing that South Africa was already in the process of downgrading its embassy in Israel, and cutting ties with the Jewish state. Just like that.

Then, last Friday night, she went on to reiterate what she had said, claiming that no other country had human-rights abuses like Israel. If others were involved in human-rights abuses, she maintained, then South Africa would be cutting ties with them too. Really!

You don't have to look very far to find many countries involved in horrific abuses of human rights. And, South Africa has wonderful relations with a fair number of them.

Syria, for one, is way up on the list of these countries, according to the latest Human Rights Watch World Report. As are Venezuela, China, and the global list goes on. As for Iran, a country which our government recently met to improve relations, its abuses are extensive. Israel isn't on the global report list. However, our minister has done nothing to cut ties with these countries, has she?

Of course not. As much as I would like to believe that her impetus is 100% about her concern for human rights, it is becoming more and more apparent that this is not the case.

When she claimed at the same talk last Friday night that the University of the Witwatersrand was being heavily funded by the Israeli government, she took a turn that could take her to the point of no return.

You see, as most of us are aware, Israel has many other things to invest its money in, and the South African university – though still an iconic institution of learning – is not one of them. In fact, I cannot think of one reason she could possibly think Israel would want to invest in Wits. It has its own universities.

Who on earth would tell her this nonsense, and why would she simply believe them? Whoever it was could only have been up to mischief and hate-mongering, but they were certainly not telling the truth.

Or could they have been talking about all the money Jewish people have invested in Wits? Now, that would be true. I can't tell you how much, but I do know this to be a fact.

So, then, did she confuse the Israeli government – because she specifically mentioned it – and South African Jews? If this is the case, why would she do this? We are a community, and Israel is a country.

Is it possible that in her mind we are one and the same thing? So, could it be that, to our minister, the Israeli government and Jews in South Africa are interchangeable and indistinguishable from one another.

Something is starting to make sense in a very disturbing way.

Remember how the Boycott Divestment Sanctions movement is constantly saying that it is not anti-Semitic – in fact, there is a whole section on its website that goes on about how it isn't – but anti-Israel. Meanwhile, its members so often get caught out doing or saying something anti-Semitic.

Well, the minister has on so many occasions made it clear that she is opposed to what Israel does and because of that, she wants our government to cut ties. She sees the Israeli government as oppressive and abusive. So, if Israel is all those bad things and she can confuse the Jewish state with local South African Jews, then what does that mean about how she feels about us?

In the context of what she was saying last Friday night, she was clearly intimating that this money from the Israeli government – which we assume now was in fact local Jews – is a problem for South Africa. Is she planning to stop Jews from donating money to South African universities?

What is she planning to replace it with – government money?

I have perhaps jumped a few steps here, and made assumptions that I hope are wrong. However, there is something really wrong with this situation.

Now, coming back to Pesach. As Jews, we have to stand up for our rights. We dare not cower. We dare not turn the other cheek.

We must not let this lie. We need to ask the right questions, get the right answers. This is one of the lessons we have learnt from Pesach.

The elections are almost upon us and, as we have learnt from Pesach, we need to follow the best leaders. We need to vote with our consciences. We need to vote for a party that will recognise our place in the sun.

So, as we sit down with our families this Pesach, let us remind ourselves of the importance of freedom. This is not just physical freedom, but freedom of religion, freedom of association, and so on.

Let us teach our children not to cower, but to hold their heads high, and fight for our rights.

Chag Pesach Sameach!
Peta Krost Maunder
Editor



Benjamin Netanyahu re-elected as voters swing to the right

As expected, Israeli President Reuven Rivlin has named incumbent Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu the best person to put together the next Israeli government.

All week, Rivlin has been consulting with the leaders of the parties that won seats in the 120-member Knesset (parliament) about their preference for premier. No surprise that Netanyahu is the most popular choice.

His Likud party won the largest number of parliamentary seats in last week's election, and his closest rival, former Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) Chief Benny Gantz of the centrist Blue and White party, conceded defeat days ago.

Netanyahu won 35 seats, the same number as Gantz, but with a slightly higher number of voters favouring the premier. He now has up to 42 days to form a government. If he fails, Rivlin can ask another politician to try.

It's happened before. Back in 2009, former Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni's Kadima party won the most seats, but she was unable to form a government because, in part, she could not match Netanyahu's promises to the ultra-Orthodox.

They demanded – as they do today – funding for their religious seminaries, exemption from the army, and control of the country's Jewish religious life.

Winning 20 seats this time around, the religious parties carry important political weight. They are critical for whoever is tasked with forming the next government. It is highly unlikely they'll form a coalition with parties on the left because of disagreement about the Jewish nature of Israel. It throws into question whether a left-wing majority coalition government can ever again be formed.

This means that even if Gantz had won the most seats in last week's elections, he would have been unable to form the next government.

And so, Netanyahu is on track to secure a fourth consecutive, and a fifth overall term, in office. But coalition negotiations can drag on, especially as smaller parties put forward demands to satisfy their own electorates, which don't always align with Netanyahu's preferences.

While right-wing and ultra-Orthodox Jewish parties were quick to announce that they backed Netanyahu, it gave him only 60 seats. He needs a minimum of 61 to have a majority in the next Knesset.

The sticking point was former Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman's Yisrael Beitenu party, which won five seats (and appeals to the mostly elderly Russian-speaking population). While slow to announce his support for Netanyahu, it was always unlikely that Lieberman would side with left-wing and Arab parties as they are far from his political outlook.

So, while he took his time, it was merely a way of pressing for concessions in coalition negotiations.

On Monday night he came on board, giving Netanyahu 65 seats, four more than he secured during the last parliament. Netanyahu is now in a stronger position to push for what he wants.

These elections proved once again that the right-wing and religious parties dominate Israeli politics, a trend that dates back about two decades.

In the final tally, more than 57% of votes went to these parties – the highest proportion in Israel's history. Only 34% went to centrist and left of centre Zionist parties.

And still, the right-wing bloc lost a staggering potential eight Knesset seats.

In December, Education Minister Naftali Bennett and

**DATELINE:
MIDDLE EAST**

Paula Slier



Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked left the New Home party that they had led until then to set up a new one. This was less than four months before the elections.

They hoped to appeal to more secular Israelis, but the political gamble they took backfired and their new party (New Right) did not win enough votes to enter the Knesset. They were short of just a thousand votes to pass the election threshold, which would have translated into four Knesset seats for them.

In addition, Moshe Feigin's Zehut party (a right-wing party that among other things called for the legalisation of cannabis) also narrowly missed the threshold. This means that a potential eight Knesset seats that would have joined Netanyahu's coalition effectively went down the drain.

The right-wing bloc was watered down by there being too many parties with very similar agendas for people to choose from.

Once seen as rising young stars in Israeli politics, there are rumours that Bennett and Shaked have dissolved their political alliance and that Shaked might be (re-)joining Likud.

As for the Israeli left, the elections were a wakeup call. The Labour party, which led Israel from its founding in 1948 for the following 30 years, and was for decades the mainstay of the Israeli centre-left, won only 4.45% of the vote. It garnered just six seats in the next parliament. It was Labour's worst-ever election showing.

A similar pattern emerged on the left to that of the right. A significant number of Meretz supporters, a



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his wife, Sara, address supporters as the results in Israel's national elections are announced

progressive peace and civil-rights alliance further on the political left than the Labour party, abandoned their party in support of Gantz's Blue and White.

The same happened to Labour. While votes were not rendered meaningless like some of those on the right, there seemed to have been too many parties competing for the same left and centre-left electorate. For this reason, officials in the Labour and Meretz party are now exploring the possibility of a merger.

It's worth noting that even though security remains the number-one concern for most Israelis, very few voters from the right of the political spectrum put their support behind Gantz and the two other former IDF chiefs of staff who ran in his party alongside him. And so, those on the left of the political spectrum are feeling despondent. While voter turnout was a healthy 67.9%, the reality is that more people than ever in Israel's history voted for right and ultra-Orthodox parties – and they did so with their eyes wide open.

Israeli voters are informed. They know that Netanyahu faces corruption charges. They know any resumption of the peace process with the Palestinians under his watch looks unpromising. But they also know that he has the support and respect of world leaders like American President Donald Trump and Russian president Vladimir Putin. They feel safe with him at the helm.

Christian community takes on Ramaphosa over downgrade

TALI FEINBERG

“ANC members who are Christian are intimidated by the political leadership and the Muslim community,” Johannesburg-based Reverend Reuben Chapasuka told the *SA Jewish Report* this week.

“In my open letter to the president, I said that he represents the continent’s Christian leaders, and that in his capacity as a South African who has accepted [the position] of chairperson of the African Union, he cannot take sides. Church leaders in every country are behind me,” Chapasuka said.

Last week, he wrote an open letter to President Cyril Ramaphosa from concerned Christian leaders about Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Lindiwe Sisulu’s announcement that South Africa had begun to downgrade its embassy in Tel Aviv. It was just one of many varied reactions around South Africa to the announcement, as well as a response worldwide.

“Thousands upon thousands of Christians visit Israel yearly. Many of them in large church groups,” the reverend said. “By downgrading the South African embassy, you are making it far more difficult for such people to travel with the security and safety of an embassy. Israel is the only country in the Middle East where the Christian population is growing. There is absolute freedom of religion for Christians and Muslims in Israel.”

But other religious groups welcomed the decision. Moulana Ebrahim I Bham, the secretary general of the Jamiatul Ulama Council of Muslim Theologians, wrote, “This move... is timely not only in showing the determination of the ANC-led South African government in expressing solidarity with the oppressed Palestinians, but also in setting a benchmark for the rest of the world. Other countries should emulate South Africa.” The Muslim Judicial Council also sent a letter of congratulations to Sisulu.

The South African Jews for a Free Palestine said, “We, members of the South African Jewish community, welcome the downgrade of the South African embassy in Israel to a liaison office. The downgrade ... increases pressure on Zionist Israel to abandon apartheid, and move towards a secular and democratic Palestine/Israel that respects the rights of all its peoples. As such, we commend Minister Sisulu for standing her ground, and condemn the attacks on her.”

However, Mzoxolo Mpolase, the managing director at Political Analysis South Africa, wrote in *Daily Maverick* that the downgrade would only be detrimental to South Africa. “Any other country faced with such debilitating challenges would not put into jeopardy the near R10 billion worth of trade between South Africa and Israel, and would instead balance its own practical priorities against the real task of ensuring that the Israelis and Palestinians finally talk and hash out some kind of peace deal. Instead, like an ostrich in the sand, the ANC government is intent on acting out ideological and factional motivations, much to the detriment of its own people and position in the world.”

Political analyst Ralph Matheka told the *Mail & Guardian (M&G)* that the decision might be “short-lived”, pointing out that South Africa’s elections are coming up on 8 May, and, as he put it, “political parties usually yield to popular ideas during this time... I wonder if there will be a re-opening of talks after the elections. My view is that South Africa cannot ignore the state of Israel.”

Benji Shulman from the South Africa Israel Forum told the *M&G* that he was convinced that South Africa could not fully sever ties with Israel. “From our perspective, this is at best a cosmetic change,” he said. “It certainly doesn’t assist in creating peace; it doesn’t assist in helping South Africa’s trade balance.”

The Democratic Alliance criticised the decision, but the Congress of South African Trade Unions, the South African Communist Party, the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, and Boycott Divestment Sanctions South Africa all welcomed the downgrade announcement. Mosiuoa Lekota, the leader of the Congress of the People said the decision went against the grain of democracy. “South Africa should be playing a mediating role,” he said.

The Inkatha Freedom Party said the move was “regressive diplomacy which does not advance the agenda of peace and stability in the Middle East. Moreover it is a decision that is nothing more than short-term ‘electioneering’ on the part of the ANC without giving due consideration as to the impact this will have on South Africa in the long term in respect of not only maintaining a neutral two-state solution stance, but also in respect of South Africa’s beneficial trade, development, and investment relationship with Israel.”

The African Christian Democratic Party’s Reverend Kenneth Meshoe said that his party was “shocked” and “appalled” and expressed his opposition “in the strongest possible terms”.

“The decision smacks of double standards. South Africa maintains full diplomatic ties with many countries that have been accused of gross human-rights violations (including Iran, Syria, and North Korea). South Africa has also indicated its intention to upgrade its diplomatic ties with Morocco, in spite of its differences with that country regarding the Western Sahara issue.”

Continued on page 19>>

KosherWorld



TRULY KOSHER

We will be popping up to serve you delicious food during the days of Chol Hamoed



Panko Chicken Schnitzel



Crunchy fried Crinkle Cut Chips



Delicious hamburgers on Pesadicke rolls from Israel



Lemon & Herb or Sweet Chilli Rotisserie Chicken

PRESENTED BY ERIC STERN

1st Floor KosherWorld Centre

22 - 25th April

12am - 9pm - Lunch & Dinner

(Thursday close at 3pm)

1 Long Avenue, Glenhazel | 011 440 9517 | info@kosherworld.co.za | www.kosherworld.co.za
SEE IN-STORE FOR PESACH TRADING HOURS

ACCOMMODATION

Budget Rooms, Studios & Cottages
Daily • Weekly • Monthly

Easy walk to Pine Street Shul, Torah Academy, Chabad Norwood & Kolel



GUEST HOUSES



Shabbat Special
Pay for Friday and get Saturday FREE

53 Garden Road Orchards (next to H.O.D.)
☎ (011) 485-3800/1 • info@gardenplace.co.za



SAVOY PHARMACY

PERCELIA PHARMACY

MONDAY – FRIDAY
8:30am – 7:00pm

SATURDAY
9:00am – 2:00pm

SUNDAY & PUBLIC HOLIDAYS
9:00am – 1:00pm

☎ (011) 885-1200/1
savoy@medicarehealth.co.za

MONDAY – THURSDAY
8:30am – 6:00pm

FRIDAY
8:30am – 4:30pm

SATURDAY: CLOSED
SUNDAY
9:00am – 1:00pm

☎ (011) 640-4321/31
percelia@medicarehealth.co.za

NEWS OF THE EMPIRE



R20 MILLION
CASH | CARS | PRIZES

1 Feb - 5 May 2019 | Car draws : 27 Apr and 4 May



12 MAR - 28 APR

50% OFF Promo Code: **SUNWO** | Present coupon on arrival
Valid Wed - Sat. One coupon per booking. Max 10 people.



FREE ENTRY!

Family market every last Sunday of the month
At the Red Roman Shed | 10h00 - 15h00
FOOD | ENTERTAINMENT | STALLS | CRAFT BEER



EMPERORS PALACE

*Ts and Cs apply to all offers and promotions

emperorspalace.com

Follow us



PEERMONT PROUDLY SUPPORTS THE NATIONAL RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING PROGRAMME. PROBLEM GAMBLING COUNSELLING TOLL-FREE HELPLINE 0800 006 008. PLAYERS MUST BE 18 YEARS OR OLDER. WINNERS KNOW WHEN TO STOP.



ANC flayed in fiery election debate

MIRAH LANGER

The African National Congress (ANC) received a political pummeling during an election debate held by the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) at the Rabbi Cyril Harris Community Centre in Johannesburg this week.

From the get-go, the ruling party was on the back foot after Fikile Mbalula, who was advertised as the ANC's representative at the debate, turned out to be a no-show.

His last-minute replacement, Phelisa Nkomo, was introduced by moderator and journalist Mandy Wiener as a member of the ANC's elections communications team. Yet, even Nkomo's opening apology to the crowd for Mbalula's absence was used as fodder for an attack by her compatriots from opposition parties.

When Nkomo explained that Mbalula was "unable to make this evening because of attending to Alexandra issues. I think you will be aware that we have had a lot of protests this week", the other parties jumped on the information. Each accused the ruling party of stirring up service delivery protests as a way to orchestrate electioneering.

"Mr Mbalula is not here today because he is dealing with Alexandra issues?" queried the Inkatha Freedom Party's (IFP's) national spokesperson, Mkhuleko Hlengwa.

"[Mbalula] is not a minister. He is not an MP. He is just an ANC head of elections... [and] he is taking care of the ANC election campaign in Alexandra!" he asserted.

The Democratic Alliance's (DA's) national spokesman, Solly Malatsi, said this "mentality" of the ruling party was its key problem, namely "The ANC comes first, and South Africa comes second."

The Congress of the People's (COPE) representative and party provincial chair, Tom Mofokeng, said that besides the ANC's alleged blurring of state and party lines, it had a dangerous internal split.

"Sometimes, you don't know which ANC you are talking about because there are two ANCs: There is the [President Cyril] Ramaphosa faction, and there is the [Secretary-General Ace Magashule] faction. And so, you don't know who is going to implement what."

African Christian Democratic (ACDP) Party leader Kenneth Meshoe even quipped that "after 8 May, we promise you that the ANC, which is downgrading the embassy in Israel, is going to be downgraded itself".

In fact, the ANC's policy on Israel was the all-consuming focus of the debate, held at the Great Park Synagogue as part of the SABJD's campaign to promote awareness of the upcoming national elections on 8 May.

Nkomo's explanation of the party's decision to downgrade the Israeli embassy centred on its desire for what she repeatedly termed a "peaceful means to resolution".

"The ANC, as a starting point... supports the two-state solution between Palestine and Israel," she declared.

"Dating back from 2007, the ANC had taken a decision that it would actually ensure that it participated actively and engaged and promoted dialogue in relation to the issues of Israel and Palestine. People in South Africa would know several efforts that the ANC has undertaken to promote dialogue.

"We are of the view that, to date, we don't think that the opportunity for dialogue has been closed because of the downgrade," she said.

Instead, suggested Nkomo, the embassy downgrade, "represents an opportunity for us to continuously engage and play that role of facilitating engagement between Israel and Palestinians. We believe that we don't have to be physically [present] to facilitate dialogue."

Opposition parties appeared to relish their right of rebuttal on this matter.

The DA's Malatsi described the downgrade decision as an example of the ANC's "double-speak".

"We have had clear violations of human rights by other allies of the ANC, and there has not been any withdrawal or downgrade of those embassies," he said. He cited as an example the fact that former Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir was not arrested when he came to South Africa in 2015, in spite of there being a warrant for his arrest by the International Criminal Court at the time.

Mofokeng, said that COPE was, indeed, becoming "biased" when it came to Israel, saying, "We want to support the only democracy in the Middle East."

The ACDP's Meshoe labelled the downgrade as "one of the most foolish decisions that our government has ever made".

He said Israel had the skills and willingness to help South Africa in a number of fields. However, "rather than embracing the nation that can help us solve problems, they [the ANC] chose to embrace the people who are just thinking of killing and annihilating Israel".

He said the party also did not appear to have considered the logistical impact on Christians who wanted to organise pilgrimages to Israel.

Dismissing the move as "regressive diplomacy", the IFP lamented the effect it would have on South Africa as a member of the United Nations Security Council.

"How are we expected to be an objective player on that council? How are we going to be able to embrace all those issues that will come to the table if we already come pocket in hand with a decision that is biased?" asked Hlengwa.

Nkomo was also asked by an audience member about the technicalities of the downgrade. She was asked why International Relations and Cooperation Minister Lindiwe Sisulu had announced the decision, rather than it being adopted through parliamentary processes.

Nkomo's response that, "Parliament is closed", caused even Wiener to admonish her that the reply was insufficient. Nkomo volunteered to try and get more information on the matter.

Nkomo also responded to a question for clarity on the ANC's relationship to Hamas, saying that, "One of the things that the ANC has always been committed to is the liberation of the Palestinian people. The ANC sees Hamas as part of the group seeking to liberate the people of Palestine." She stressed the importance of a "strategic partnership" with Hamas.

The incredulous jeers of the crowd, prompted the DA's Malatsi to offer his own comment.

"One thing that is quite clear is how out of touch the ANC is with the concerns of the Jewish community," he said.



"One thing that is quite clear is how out of touch the ANC is with the concerns of the Jewish community."

Parties slug it out at rowdy Cape Town debate

MOIRA SCHNEIDER

A rowdy 350-strong audience which prevented speakers from being heard properly much of the time was an ironic twist to an event aimed at bolstering democracy.

At times, eNCA news editor-in-chief Jeremy Maggs had his work cut out in maintaining a semblance of order at The Great Cape Debate, hosted by the Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) at the Century City Conference Centre on Sunday night.

Participating were Ferlon Christians, the provincial leader of the African Christian Democratic Party; Ebrahim Rasool, African National Congress Western Cape head of elections and former premier of the province; Alan Winde, Democratic Alliance Western Cape premier candidate and the province's minister of community safety; and Brett Herron, GOOD Party secretary-general.

Cape Board chairman Rael Kaimowitz set the scene, saying, "Tonight is another act of democracy and taking responsibility, allowing us to make informed decisions come election day." Maggs kicked off the debate, saying that 55% of the country's registered voters were female, "yet there are four men here tonight".

"This is no reflection of what we think of females," replied Christians (ACDP). "Our number two is a female, and we place them very high on the list."

Rasool stated that the ANC had a sexual harassment policy in place, to which Maggs interjected, "You've taken your time developing the policy, haven't you?" Undeterred, Rasool continued, "We've made it very clear that every second candidate will be a woman, and women will be protected against sexual harassment. We've got the fourth highest representation of



Ferlon Christians (ACDP); Ebrahim Rasool (ANC); Alan Winde (DA); and Brett Herron (GOOD)

women in parliaments anywhere in the world."

Said the DA's Winde, "The premier of this province at the moment and for [the past] 10 years is a woman. I have some fairly large shoes to fill should I be successful after this election." He said that the biggest issue facing the province was crime, specifically directed against women, including a "massive" rape rate.

"We need to bring that kind of management down to a provincial and local level. But we're pushed back every time we try and step into that space."

Herron said the GOOD movement was led by two women. "We don't have separate women's leagues – they're seated at the table. Women's issues are right at the top of our manifesto, policies and leadership."

Maggs then commented that a survey done a few years ago had shown that the Western Cape had the highest rate of racism and xenophobia in the country. "What are you going to do about it?" he asked the panellists.

Like all good politicians, they side-stepped the thorny issue, preferring to focus on safety matters. "Gender-based violence is an epidemic

in the Western Cape," said Rasool. "Here's a man who draws a salary every month as the MEC for community safety," he said referring to Winde. "If he thinks the portfolio is as useless as he says it is, he should resign."

"Leaders in South Africa are shying away from speaking about racism, as Mr Winde did," said Herron. "Leaders need to step forward and tackle racism head-on. Mr Winde switched the debate to policing – we must get to the root causes of crime if we're to address it."

"What are you going to do differently to reduce crime?" Maggs probed. "You can't tackle it only through policing," Herron suggested, "but by combining policing with social interventions."

"Build a community facility, introduce social programmes. We need to deal with the history of the country, the deprivation, and the fact that people don't have access to facilities."

Christians said the DA, the governing party in the province, was using a "small amount" of the budget for security "so the DA's not serious about it. Neighbourhood watches are under-resourced. We need to resource our community

police forums."

Winde countered that the Western Cape was the only province with accredited neighbourhood watches.

In a further attempt to get an answer to his earlier question, Maggs asked, "How would your party create an environment that protects people from hate?"

"We need to be spending a lot more time in the civil society space when it comes to prevention, and the 'No Place for Hate' campaign is part of that," Winde replied.

"We'd want to find an upgraded version of making the province a home for all," said Rasool. He couldn't resist a dig at Premier Helen Zille, however, adding, "Prevent a premier from glorifying colonialism and calling people who come in 'migrants'."

"Once one demonises the other, it creates the conditions for attacks on those people. Build cohesion by eliminating racism and not justifying it. Eliminate racially unequal services," he said.

Said Herron, "The DA and ANC have been in government for one and a half and two and a half decades respectively and they have failed to build a united, transformed, non-racial South Africa. It's time to abandon the old parties."

Maggs turned his attention to the changed demographic in the province following steady migration from the Eastern Cape. In response to Maggs mentioning that the DA premier had once termed these migrants "economic refugees", Rasool said, "That kind of language is inflammatory and creates hate."

"The South African Jewish Board of Deputies was part of the greatest migratory community, partly because of persecution," he said. "You've got to factor new people in and give them equal services as they arrive."

EL AL Presents the New Way to Fly from South Africa to Israel



LITE TICKET

NO checked baggage allowance.

Only hand baggage.

Fares starting from

ZAR 5 300 all inclusive

CLASSIC TICKET

Includes a checked bag and advance pre-boarding.

Fares starting from

ZAR 7 700 all inclusive

FLEX TICKET

Most flexible option with a wide range of services.

Fares starting from

ZAR 13 300 all inclusive

Ticket sales from South Africa based on the new model will apply to departures on/after 01 April 2019.

Contact ELAL on (011) 620-2525, or visit our website www.elal.co.il for more information

Terms and Conditions Apply. E&OE

EL AL
IT'S NOT JUST AN AIRLINE. IT'S ISRAEL

Pro-Palestinian lobby censure BDS-SA director

NICOLA MILTZ

Boycott Divestment Sanctions South Africa (BDS-SA) has been rapped over the knuckles by members of the broad-based Palestine Solidarity Movement for bringing the anti-Israel movement into disrepute.

The organisation has come under fire following recent sexual-harassment allegations levelled at its director and co-founder,

Muhammed Desai, and the manner in which the matter has been handled.

This latest incident, as well as the handling of “publicly recorded incidents of alleged anti-Semitism” by the organisation, has led a group of activists and pro-Palestine organisations to join forces to voice their disapproval and concern.

At least 27 individuals as well as several organisations have endorsed this, calling for

“deep reflection and action”. Signatory organisations include the University of the Witwatersrand’s Palestine Solidarity Committee, the University of Cape Town’s Palestine Solidarity Forum, and the Muslim Students Association Union.

Fed up and frustrated by the organisation’s apparent lack of accountability, the signatories have come out strongly, lambasting the organisation’s “repeated failure to ensure effective oversight and accountability on serious matters including incidents of anti-Semitism”, labelling this as “gravely regrettable”.

In their statement, the signatories, including several Jewish people, express “concern” about the way in which the BDS-SA board has dealt with the latest sexual harassment allegations.

They express their concern and support for Professor Sang Hea Kil and her two colleagues, who allege that they were sexually harassed by Desai on a recent visit to the country last month.

Professor Kil was in Johannesburg to attend a conference on Palestine, and then stayed on for a study tour of Johannesburg hosted by the Afro Middle East Centre (Amec) – a research institute on Middle Eastern affairs and relations between the Middle East and Africa.

The three women were part of a group of 18 foreign academics who participated in the study tour following the conference.

Mahlatshe Mpya, Amec media and publications co-ordinator, told the *SA Jewish Report* that before returning to America, Kil had laid a charge of sexual harassment at the Brixton Police Station. The incident allegedly took place on 21 March at a restaurant in Melville.

The criminal case against Desai was reportedly closed by police less than a week after charges had been laid. In a personal statement issued by Desai himself, he indicates that the case was closed on the basis of being a “false case”.

The group of activists took umbrage at BDS-SA’s statement on 3 April which was reported in the *SA Jewish Report*. In it, the BDS board said it condemned all forms of harassment, adding that it was aware that sexism and harassment could “rear its ugly head in any space, including within the NGO (nongovernmental organisation) sector”.

Perceived as cold and clinical, the BDS board’s



Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

Muhammed Desai

statement noted the allegations made against its director, Desai. “We also note his denial, and the closure by the authorities of the case,” it said. The board said it would conduct an investigation into the allegations.

Those objecting to the actions of BDS-SA said the statement “raised immediate concerns with severe implications”.

They criticised the BDS board for making no commitment to follow a victim-centred approach. They said that in spite of the board saying that it took matters of sexual harassment seriously, it was silent on the demand made by the women that Desai be suspended pending a full inquiry. They also raised concerns about the terms of reference of the investigation, and the overall independence of the process.

“Shockingly, Professor Kil has confirmed that neither she nor her colleagues were contacted prior to the publication of the BDS-SA statement,” their statement reads. “They were apparently informed how their complaint would be treated at the same time as [that of] the general public. This is an affront to the basic tenets of victim-centred and sensitive approaches.”

Desai issued his own personal statement, claiming that the allegations made against him were “utterly baseless, contrived, and defamatory”. He said the case was closed on the basis of being a “false case”. Desai said he was committed to following the processes of the investigation.

The group of activists said they were concerned that BDS-SA had not disapproved of Desai’s comments, saying, “The failure of the police to pursue criminal charges does not offer irrefutable vindication for Desai.”

They said that the struggle “demands that leaders and activists within our movements are committed to, and uphold justice and equity in all spheres”.

Expressing support for Professor Kil, they said, “It is hypocritical to fight for justice for Palestine while exploiting and denigrating women who are vital to this movement.”

“Within South Africa’s social-justice sector, this moment calls for deep reflection and action. It is only through a strong commitment to challenge systems that reinforce patriarchy and abuse of power that we can ensure that organisations reflect those principles for which we work,” it reads.

The BDS board was due to begin its “independent” investigation into the allegations against Desai this past Monday. The organisation said the probe was expected to be concluded within a month.

It is understood that the Women’s Legal Centre is representing the women in the investigation.

According to her online profile, Kil is an associate professor at San José State University in the department of justice studies. She is a “scholar-activist” whose research examines the criminalisation of immigrants in the news media, especially in relation to United States-Mexico border coverage.

Desai declined to comment to the *SA Jewish Report*.

TODAY
WE
REMEMBER



so the world won't forget.



YOM HASHOAH 2 MAY 2019
WEST PARK JEWISH CEMETERY
SAJBD.ORG



workforce
HOLDINGS LIMITED

Uplifting people. Growing business

CHANGING LIVES
EVERY SINGLE DAY



With a history that can be traced back to 1972, the Group has evolved from an outsourced labour provider into a diversified organisation with subsidiaries that provide an extensive range of innovative and integrated human capital solutions.

Our entrepreneurial culture creates a stimulating business environment which makes a meaningful and sustainable difference in people’s lives every single day. We pride ourselves on providing employment, training, healthcare, financial services and lifestyle benefits to individuals and their employers.

Staffing and Outsourcing | Recruitment | Training | Financial Services | Healthcare | Africa

010 025 3301 | info@workforceholdings.co.za | www.workforceholdings.co.za





ISRAEL'S
CITY OF HEALTH
INSPIRES THE WORLD

SHEBA MEDICAL CENTER, TEL HASHOMER
WISHES YOU A

חג פסח שמח וטוב

Happy Passover



South African Friends of Sheba is honored to support Sheba Medical Center, recently named one of the top ten hospitals in the world by Newsweek Magazine.

Newsweek

Together, we wish you and your family a joyous and meaningful holiday.



SOUTH AFRICAN FRIENDS OF
SHEBA MEDICAL CENTER

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SHEBA, VISIT
ENG.SHEBA.CO.IL

OR CONTACT NAOMI HADAR AT
082-90-777-28 or naomi@shebamed.co.za

On the couch with Mmusi Maimane

HOWARD SACKSTEIN

Democratic Alliance (DA) leader Mmusi Maimane and I sat on the couch of the bridal room of Sandton Shul to have a one-on-one exclusive interview for the *SA Jewish Report*. Being on the couch is like being in therapy, and I wasn't sure if I would be the therapist or the patient. I was coming in as a sceptic. More than anything, I wanted to ask Maimane, the leader of the opposition in parliament, "Why?"

"Why in an era of load shedding, government plundering, wholesale looting, a collapsing economy, why had the DA failed to capitalise on the collapse of South Africa?" In preparing for the interview, I practiced the question, over and over again, "We gave you one job Mmusi, but instead of delivering us from the rot of the ANC, the DA has been mired in internal squabbles, ego driven in-fighting, and unstable coalition governments."

I went into the bridal room a sceptic, but I walked out a fan.

Maimane is warm, intelligent, articulate, and thoughtful. He has no delusions about winning the next election, but he is determined to reduce the ANC to below a 50% majority, and force it into a coalition with the DA to ensure accountability and good governance.

He comes across as authentic and sincere, speaks from the heart, and does not dodge any of the difficult questions I am determined to ask.

If the DA was in government, would you restore full diplomatic relations with Israel?

"Absolutely, because I believe in a two-state solution in the Middle East. For the existence of the state of Palestine, you must be willing to give full credibility to the state of Israel, otherwise, you are not a two-state solutionist, it's just madness."

The Jewish community seems "gatvol". They have watched the years of Zuma looting, the Zondo Commission, the power outages... emigration is rising, what can you tell them?

"The hope is in a post-ANC South Africa. We have to break the ANC. The idea that Cyril needs a stronger mandate to do that is just a fallacy. We need to break it up, and reform politically. Jewish South Africans have a contribution to make to South Africa. They are citizens like anybody else. We will always ensure that their rights are protected.

More than anything, we in the DA have shown that we can bring clean governance to South Africa.

speak enough about the capture of the media."

But, of course, you are already working with the EFF in

things in Nelson Mandela Bay, it didn't vote for certain things in Joburg. Coalitions are the future. We've learned some very difficult lessons. Even having formally or informally worked with the EFF, we have never implemented its policies. The ANC implements its [the EFF's] policies anyway. It wants to nationalise land, everything. I make it clear, given Gauteng, given the national picture, in a very complicated electoral cycle, we would never work with a fascist party. Once you get into national issues of healthcare and education, then your values become tested, and that's why we would never work with a fascist organisation because they divide society."

What's your personal relationships like with Julius and Cyril?

"I don't trust either of them, but we are professional enough to know what we need to do, and what we need to work on."

And with that, it was back on the campaign trail. A flight to Bloemfontein, a trip to the Eastern Cape, then back to Gauteng... and the election train moves on.

Democratic Alliance leader Mmusi Maimane and Howard Sackstein



Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

However imperfect Joburg and Tshwane are, no money is stolen, I know that for a fact. I think there is a hope. In 1990, people felt uncertain. We had De Klerk, he looked like he was reforming the Nats, but we had leadership, you bring in change, we went through transition, and we did it. It's that moment again".

Maimane didn't just comment on the Jewish community, his views were far reaching and insightful. I questioned him about the political environment, the prospects for his party's success, and about his relationship to the EFF and government.

The DA seems to be struggling to express a clear and concise message, what is its message?

"I don't think that's true. We have a job to speak to eight million people. Our message is clear, "One South Africa for all", now it's "a job in every home".

Is the media being fair to you?

"Totally unfair. The English print media, Iqbal Surve through the PIC (Public Investment Corporation), has captured the Independent Group of newspapers. So, the *Star*, and all of those publications simply do not communicate anything that's good about the DA. *The Sunday Times* has also decided to become a newsletter for Cyril, so frankly, I think we get a lot of negative press. The public broadcaster will cover us equitably based on the last election results from five years ago. We don't

What does this election look like out there?

"In the Northern Cape, we are leading the ANC for the first time ever. In Limpopo, in some areas the DA's black support is even bigger than support for the EFF. We are a party for minorities, but not just for minorities. We are a party for the majority, but not just for the majority. We are a party for everyone. In KwaZulu-Natal we are growing. Why do you think Cyril is in Gauteng all the time? He knows they are in trouble here. The ANC is vulnerable in Gauteng. The DA is growing from national election to national election."

What does success look like to you?

"The increased retention of the Western Cape, a government in the Northern Cape, and a government here in Gauteng. Because if you can do that, you will control the economic landscape of South Africa, and that's important."

You mentioned that you would not go into coalition with fascists. Who were you referring to?

"I don't believe in parties that mobilise on the issue of race. That doesn't just include the EFF. At times, I think we give the Freedom Front Plus a pass just because it is white. But some of its mobilisation [is around the message], 'We are just for Afrikaners'. I will not stand for anyone who undermines the rights of other people and the EFF is very much in that space."

Johannesburg and Tshwane. That's how you govern in those two metros. You are dependent on the EFF for a majority.

"I am not in a coalition with the EFF. It didn't vote for our man in Tshwane. It didn't vote for certain

The Jewish icons of Notre Dame

The Notre Dame Cathedral



JORDAN MOSHE

The world was transfixed on Monday evening by images of flames and smoke pouring from the burning roof of the Notre Dame Cathedral in central Paris.

While the Christian world is reeling over the damage to a site of such religious significance, Jews have also acknowledged the significance of this catastrophe.

"We are all in shock, believers and non-believers, Christians and non-Christians, because a jewel of the history of France and Christianity as much as of the heritage of Europe is currently in flames," said Joel Mergui, the president of the Consistoire Central Israélite de France, the organisation responsible for the religious affairs of French Jews.

Continued on page 13>>

We buy and sell cars

www.samotorcorporation.co.za

11 Republic Road, Bordeaux, Randburg Tel: (011) 326-1954



SA MOTOR
CORPORATION

Passionate politician sets her sights on parliament

TALI FEINBERG

As the niece of African National Congress (ANC) struggle stalwart Denis Goldberg, Madeleine Hicklin saw the very real impact of political activism on a family, and yet she has still chosen it as her purpose in the world.

Being number 71 on the Democratic Alliance (DA) parliamentary list and number 20 on the list for Gauteng, there is a good chance that this Jewish ward councillor will have a seat at the table after the May elections.

"I was seven when Denis was arrested. My mother had come to South Africa from Vilnius, and on the very day of his arrest, they revoked her permanent residency. My cousins and aunt came to live with us before going into exile. I would hear my aunt Esme crying every night," she recalls.

It was this context that shaped her world view. Although deeply committed to Jewish values of *tikkun olam* (healing the world), she found the ANC of her uncle too extreme, and the destruction of his family too high a cost.

So she joined the Progressive Party as a student, taking on small acts of resistance that would make a big impact. For example, she would sign leases for black, coloured, and Indian friends so that they could live closer to university, and would not have to wake up at 04:00 to travel to lectures.

"I couldn't subscribe to fanaticism on any level. I had to be on very strong middle ground. For me, it was more about the human side of life," she says. She therefore found her political home in the Progressive

Party, but she would still pay a price. She once had to escape a building that was set alight, and a special branch car was a regular feature outside her family's home – an ever present threat of deportation for her mother.

Hicklin became a medical journalist, and is particularly passionate about fighting rheumatic heart disease in South African children. This easily preventable condition can be avoided by giving penicillin to a child with strep throat, but too many are not treated correctly.

The result is a huge strain on the child, and our health system. She hopes that if she gets a seat in parliament, she will join the health portfolio to make sure that protocol is put in place for such preventable diseases.

After five decades of voluntary activism, Hicklin formalised her political commitment. She studied in the DA's electoral college, wrote exams, was put through practical tests and debates, and was rigorously evaluated before being elected councillor of the Midrand ward.

She points out that all DA politicians go through such training and high standards, meaning that they are not allowed to stand for election unless they are fit for the job.

They are "a diverse bunch" she says. "People ask me how I can have a Muslim councillor as a friend. I respond, 'how can I not?' I am a staunch Jewess, and used to be in shul every Shabbat and every *chag*. Politics doesn't allow me to do that, but it does allow me to live my Jewish values.

Hicklin adds that "We need to fight for each other in this country. A lot of South African

Jews don't see the battle for equality as their fight. But someone fought for my mother to get out of Europe. If we don't fight for others, who will be left to fight for us? We need to work for



Madeleine Hicklin

a better South Africa – both for my son and my domestic worker's son."

She thinks that South Africans "like labels too much. If they can fit you into a box, then they're comfortable. But I don't want to be compartmentalised. I'm a humanitarian, but also a capitalist and a realist."

Hicklin's lack of cynicism and her passion for the country are clear. "This country is 100% pregnant with opportunity. We can turn it into the golden breadbasket of Africa. We have the most phenomenal resources, the most fantastic people, and the best Constitution in the world.

We just need to learn to live with each other and to care."

She says that state ownership and distribution of the land is a recipe for disaster.

"A person owning land has a sense of worth, dignity, and value. He can take out a loan against that land, and put his child through school. The government should have distributed the acres of unused land that it owns decades ago."

She also calls for the elimination of red tape, and the prioritisation of entrepreneurship. "We want to support small businesses. You can't pat yourself on the back for having 20 million people on social grants. We would rather have four million retired people on social grants, and the rest starting up their own businesses, or going through the DA's job opportunity centres."

Hicklin could have chosen to keep her political activism at a provincial level. If she gets a seat in parliament,

however, "most of my time will be spent at airports. But I am determined to change the status quo and direct policy on a national level, especially in primary healthcare."

So, she will make sacrifices in her own way, because the pride and passion of that seven-year-old girl who saw her uncle arrested is still with her every day. "Let me meet you and your friends. We can sit around a table and talk about what you want for South Africa," she says. "You are welcome to contact me. Let me inspire you, and fire you up to fight for this country."

The Jewish icons of Notre Dame

>>>Continued from page 12

Dating back to the 12th century, Notre Dame features elaborate architecture including friezes, statues, and stained-glass windows that illustrate religious stories for the edification of the Christians of medieval Paris. The Jewish figures among them depict Christianity's conflicting, often antagonistic attitudes toward Jews throughout history. For better and for worse, they reflect the vicissitudes of Jewish history in France.

The Catholic Church, which commissioned the cathedral, was also behind the famous Paris controversy in which the Talmud was tried for blasphemy against the church in 1240. The trial ended with a decree issued from Notre Dame Cathedral that ordered the seizure of all copies of the Talmud, numbering about 10 000 handwritten volumes, and their burning.

French King "Saint" Louis IX (1214-1217) was not a friend of the Jews. His hatred of Jews led to forced conversions, the final crusades, and massacres of Jews.

However, the architecture of the building itself suggests a far more complex relationship between the two faiths, according to some experts. A raised carving of two individuals surmounts the cathedral's main entrance, and although they are recognised Christian saints, these individuals were in fact Jewish. They are Anne and Joachim, thought to be the grandparents of Jesus. Represented in various settings across different friezes, these two figures offer a unique glimpse of the Jewish past.

A frieze depicting their wedding is set in a seemingly faithful reproduction of a medieval French shul, complete with a rabbi wrapped in a tallit, an ark containing a Torah, and a *ner tamid* (eternal flame). Another shows them bringing an offering, and two medieval Jewish figures are deep in conversation close by.

Thanks to these depictions, we know what Jews in Paris wore because they have adorned Notre Dame for 800 years: long robes and tall pointy hats. This was the historically mandated dress code for Jews in the 13th century.

Even the figures of Anne and Joachim

themselves are based on actual local Jews who were alive at the time, used by the artist as models.

On another surface, Notre Dame displays the figures of Ecclesia and Synagoga, two female figures who personify the Church and the Jewish religion. Synagoga is depicted as plain, defeated, and blindfolded, suggesting Judaism's irrelevance. Meanwhile, Ecclesia is majestic, and often wears a crown and Christian symbols.

Although Synagoga was seen as plain here, much like many traditional depictions, she is also cast in Notre Dame as an uncommonly elegant, graceful woman, with an almost aristocratic appearance. Rather than an anti-Semitic depiction, and though she has not accepted the truth of Christianity, she

remains dignified, seemingly an acknowledgment of the standing of the Jewish faith, effectively the mother faith of Christianity.

The interior of the cathedral further illustrates this puzzling relationship. A plaque inside honours Aaron Lustiger, a Paris-born Jew of Polish origin who, when his family was threatened by Nazi persecution, converted to Catholicism at the age of 13. Lustiger's mother was murdered in Auschwitz. After the war, his father tried to have the baptism annulled, but not even the chief rabbi of Paris could change it. Renamed Jean-Marie Lustiger, he entered a seminary and eventually became Archbishop of Paris. Lustiger continued to consider himself Jewish in spite of his conversion, and in fact recited kaddish for his mother

in shul after her death.

Christian though the building may be, Jews are inextricably bound up in its history, and continue to be drawn into its orbit.

Although French police are treating the fire as an accident, several conspiracy theorists took to social media to blame Jews. Some blamed the Rothschilds on the grounds that French President Emanuel Macron once worked at a Rothschild-owned bank. Others accused Jews of wanting to destroy Christianity.

So, whether you believe that Jews have nothing to mourn over, or that they have lost something of historical significance, the fact is that Notre Dame is more than a Christian cathedral; it is a significant part of Jewish history.

CaRRoL BoYeS

Wishing all our Jewish Customers a Happy Pesach.

HANDMADE • QUALITY • FUNCTIONAL ART

CaRRoL BoYeS

30 YEARS

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF DESIGN

Jozi's tree-lined streets may look stark in future

JORDAN MOSHE

South African cities are facing a major threat to their trees. A beetle the size of a sesame seed is killing them at an alarming rate and, unless a solution is discovered soon, the cities stand to lose their oxygen-producing arbour landscape.

The polyphagous shot hole borer, or borer beetle, first garnered attention in 2008 after infesting avocado orchards in Israel, and was later found burrowing into millions of trees in California in the United States. Now facing the largest invasion by surface area to date, South Africa has come under attack and seems powerless to do anything about it.

But if radical action isn't taken soon, walking down tree-lined streets in any of the big cities on Shabbos (or anytime) is going to be far less enjoyable as most of the trees may be gone.

Johannesburg residents have in recent weeks taken to marking dead or dying trees with red paint or plastic ribbons, and created social media groups to discuss the issue.

Experts have said that at the current rate of infestation, the pest is likely to drastically reduce the green canopy of Johannesburg, with some tree experts saying that as much as 30% of all its trees could die. It could also affect the avocado, macadamia, wine, fruit and nut industries.

According to entomology expert Professor Marcus Byrne of the University of the Witwatersrand, the beetle was first spotted in South Africa in 2017 by Dr Trudy Paap in the KwaZulu-Natal National Botanical Garden in Pietermaritzburg. "She detected them during routine inspections of sentinel trees – exotic trees used for precisely the purpose of picking up alien pests entering South Africa," he says.

Byrne explains that the insect is of South-East Asian origin, and since its detection has been found in Pietermaritzburg, Durban, Knysna, the Northern Cape, and Johannesburg (including Soweto). It is likely to be in many other urban centres by now.

Johannesburg has been hardest hit, however, as its avenues are lined with as many as 10 million primarily exotic trees, most of which were planted during the gold rush. The city also boasts numerous parks as well as countless large properties dotted with trees, creating a vibrant industry of gardeners, tree fellers, and tree surgeons. Regarding the signs of infestation and its effects, Byrne says it depends on the species of tree. "Infestations on many tree species are obvious, as small sugar 'volcanoes', which are cones of sap, exude out of a tiny hole in the tree. Other trees just show damp spots that may have a hole associated with them. Other species sometimes have patches of sawdust-like material sticking out from the bark, which is the faeces of the beetle along with ground-up wood ejected from the tunnels that the beetle bores into the tree."

As dire as the situation is, there are currently no solutions available. Byrne says no insecticides are registered for use against the beetle, and even if there were, applying them to a whole tree is a mammoth task that carries the serious side-effect of contamination of the rest of the environment around the tree.

He adds that, given that insects pollinate our food crops and trees turn carbon dioxide into oxygen, we shouldn't contemplate spraying urban trees with poisons. "Drenching the poison into the tree's root system, or injecting it into its tissue, also carries collateral effects to the environment," he says. "Also, the beetle and its associated fungus (the real pest, as that is what makes the tree sick) are deep inside tiny tunnels in the wood of the tree. Getting an insecticide to penetrate into all of those tunnels is very ambitious and highly unlikely over the total surface area of a large tree."

There are also no preventative measures that can be taken to guard against infestation, and all one can do at the moment is assess which tree

species are infected or susceptible, and the extent of the problem. "We need to develop legislation to ban the movement of infested wood to prevent the spread of the problem," says Byrne. "The infested wood must not be transported anywhere to avoid spreading the insect and its fungus. Destroying the tree might not be necessary, because the tree might be able to resist the attack on its own. Wait and see – and monitor the rest – is the best policy. Dead trees should be felled and chipped small, or burned on site."

If no lasting solution is found, the worst outcome would be a profound change in the appearance and ambience of Johannesburg, and it could be worth considering planting more trees in the near future.

"Our 10 million trees provide shade and humidity, along with their obvious aesthetic features such as flowers and foliage," says Byrne. "Forward planning by replanting with resistant,



Photo: Ian Ossendryver

preferably indigenous trees in spots where susceptible trees are lost is worth considering already. We know species such as Chinese maple are very susceptible and likely to die, so they could have a replacement species growing in place."

Byrne says the best outcome would be if a native parasitic insect adopts the beetle as a new host, bringing its numbers down to trivial levels. However, he says, it is more likely that South Africa will need to import a parasitic organism to combat the beetle, such as a tiny wasp, fly or worm that uses the beetle as its host.

"This type of biological control can be very successful and South Africa has a great deal of expertise in this field," he says. "An alternative biocontrol agent could be a fungus that attacks the pest fungus. This line of defence is obviously the best option, but it will take time and money to do the research."

Rock band's concentration-camp imagery generates global outrage

JORDAN MOSHE

As outlandish as some of today's music videos may be, concentration-camp uniforms and the infamous yellow Star of David are among the last things you'd expect to see in them.

Set against a chilling concentration-camp setting, German gothic metal band Rammstein's recently released hit has sparked controversy across the globe, drawing condemnation from critics as far afield as Israel and South Africa.

What makes this video even more surprising is the group's guitarist's Jewish affiliation. Richard Kruspe, who is one of the original three members to form the band, married Jewish South African actress, singer, and producer Caron Bernstein in October 1999.

The ceremony was Jewish-style, and the music for the occasion was composed by Kruspe himself. While he took on the name Richard Kruspe-Bernstein for the duration of his marriage and moved from Berlin to New York to live closer to his wife, they separated in 2004 after being married for five years.

Bernstein – also an activist against rape and sexual assault – was born in Johannesburg and majored in painting at the National School of the Arts. At the age of 14, she was awarded a modelling contract with Ford Models, which took her overseas. She now lives with her new husband and son in New York.

Kruspe's experience of living with Bernstein and her family clearly did not give him the insight to stop Rammstein from releasing its *Deutschland* video at the end of March, making it a target of severe criticism, perhaps most notably from the Israeli government.

The spokesperson for Israeli Foreign Minister Emmanuel Nahshon tweeted, "This Rammstein clip, using the Holocaust for advertising purposes, is shameful and uncalled for. We join the many voices calling for its immediate removal."

Featuring scenes from different points in Germany's history, the video shows band members dressed as camp prisoners, with one wearing a visible yellow Star of David, a badge used by Nazis to identify Jews between 1939 and 1945. In one scene, several band members are seemingly awaiting execution, shown wearing nooses around their necks. Elsewhere in the video, cast members sporting SS uniforms are seen apparently being shot in the head by prisoners.

This is not the first time the rock band has courted controversy. Formed in Berlin in 1994, Rammstein (which translates as "Ramming

Stone"), has for years been recognised for innovation in the music genres of industrial metal and hard rock. Previous songs have dealt with subjects ranging from cannibalism to necrophilia, and even the band's name itself alludes to the Ramstein air show disaster of 1988 in which 70 people lost their lives and more than 1 000 were injured.

The group previously referenced the Nazi regime in a 1998 video that used clips from the sports film *Olympia*, a piece of Nazi propaganda directed by filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl.

The resulting backlash resulted in group frontman, Till Lindemann, saying in a 2006 interview that the band would never again

offensive video "a new form of desecration of the dead".

According to Mary Kluk, the director of the Durban Holocaust Centre, the group's use of Holocaust imagery is not only insensitive, but also has a negative impact on Holocaust education.

She says it is all too easy to forget that there are many people still alive for whom the Holocaust is not history, but the story of their life and that of their families. These are not abstract tragedies on call to provide shock tactics for a controversial rock band. They carry the painful memories of the brutal murder of a cherished baby boy, the abuse of a beloved sister, parents being arrested and never being seen again.



The Rammstein *Deutschland* video

dabble with Nazi themes, as he was "fed up with allegations of it being a right-wing band".

Although the band claimed that it was merely depicting a period in the nation's history, the video has generated disgust in Germany itself. Felix Klein, Germany's anti-Semitism commissioner, responded by saying that if the band created the video just to boost sales, it was "a tasteless exploitation of artistic freedom".

German Jewish voices have also made themselves heard. "With this new video, the band has crossed a line," said Charlotte Knobloch, the former president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany.

"The instrumentalisation and trivialisation of the Holocaust in the images is irresponsible," she told German news agency, *Bild Daily*. "Rammstein is misusing the suffering and murder of millions for entertainment purposes in a frivolous and repulsive way."

German media also quoted a number of politicians who voiced anger and disgust, with Jewish historian Michael Wolffsohn labelling the

Kluk says that quality Holocaust education has the potential to bridge some of the divides in society, as it enables us to step away from the problems and debates of the present and be challenged by this catastrophic event of the past.

"That engagement is lost when we resort to grossly simplified Holocaust imagery and analogies and demean the memory of the dead. As the Holocaust recedes in time, society is becoming increasingly casual and disrespectful to the mass murder of millions."

This is not the first such incident in recent history. A year ago, German rappers Farid Bang and Kollegah aroused considerable ire with lyrics boasting of their bodies being "more defined than Auschwitz prisoners". The ensuing scandal brought about the end of the German music industry's sales-based Echo prize, which had been awarded to the duo, and sparked rallies calling for solidarity with Jews in Berlin and other cities.

• Bernstein, Kruspe's ex-wife, did not respond to the SA Jewish Report's requests for comment.



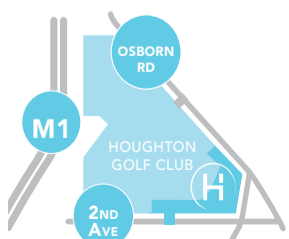
THE HOUGHTON HOTEL
Defining Lifestyle and Resort Living



The Houghton Hotel Opening in May 2019

The development at The Houghton is fast gaining a reputation as one of Johannesburg's prime residential destinations, both as a prudent residential investment and a new style of living, for discerning individuals.

As one of the newest members of Leading Hotels of the World, The Houghton Hotel will be considered to be one of the top ten best hotels in South Africa and one of the most talked about openings in the last 10 years.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
www.thehoughtonhotel.com
011 032 5500 | info@thehoughtonhotel.com



Pesach – on eagles wings

CHIEF RABBI DR WARREN GOLDSTEIN



As Pesach approaches, I am drawn to the verse that describes how G-d took us out of Egypt “on the wings of eagles” (Exodus 19:4). Each year, we are told to relive the experience of leaving Egypt, and I imagine being lifted from slavery and oppression “on the wings of eagles”. What better way could there be to express our transition from the earthly bonds that constrain us to the spiritual transcendence that G-d gave us than through the exhilarating, soaring rush of the eagle’s flight.

is, simply put, that we are still here. We are part of an eternal nation, connected to each of the generations who came before us. We are protected by G-d, riding on the wings of eagles, as we rise above all the adversity that has confronted us throughout the ages and across the continents, to survive, albeit sometimes bloodied and wounded, but ultimately to thrive.

As a people under G-d’s watchful care, we have defied all of the laws of history. Even today, as Israel celebrates 71 years of G-d’s miracles and protection, the country is still surrounded by implacable enemies, but G-d continues to carry and protect us on eagle’s wings, helping us to soar above our adversaries and those who seek to destroy us.

But there is even more to this analogy. The rush of the eagle’s flight also conveys the speed with which G-d liberated us from Egypt. The matzah that we eat on the seder night, a symbol of our redemption for all time, is an annual reminder that our bread didn’t even have time to rise. The rushed departure itself has become emblematic of the exodus. The Maharal explains that the lightning speed of the exodus was a manifestation of G-d breaking through the natural world and its constraints. We did not leave the bondage of Egypt through a natural, historical process, which takes time. Our redemption was an instantaneous, divine process. It was supernatural.

This divine dynamism – depicted by the image of a soaring eagle – becomes a call to action: “Be light as an eagle” says the Mishna in Pirkei Avot. Too often, we get bogged down by life. We become consumed with angst, submerged in introspection and inertia. The



Mishna urges us to live life energetically and enthusiastically. Like an eagle. With a sense of urgency for the task at hand, which is to uplift ourselves and our world through our mitzvot. The Maharal says that this sense of urgency comes directly from the soul; it is a supernatural force that infuses our heavy, lifeless bodies with an electrifying pulse. It is, in fact, the source of life itself.

“On the wings of eagles” reflects another inspiring dimension of the great moment of the exodus. G-d took us out of Egypt to soar with the vision and mission of the Torah, which elevates our lives. The mitzvot are a framework for living life on a higher plane, for soaring “on the wings of eagles” – directing our energy to productive and creative living, forging close relationships with our creator, with our fellow human beings, and with ourselves – ultimately building a better world.

When we live “on the wings of eagles”,

when we soar above the material view of our world, we get a different perspective on life. The Torah tells us that the world we live in is not a random accumulation of molecules that came about in an ad hoc and haphazard way. It teaches us that there is structure and intention to reality. It assures us that an all-knowing, all-loving creator made everything with purpose, that He implanted within our bodies an immortal soul, and that everything we do can be infused with meaning, purpose, and eternal significance.

Freedom is about transcendence and our potential to reach for greatness. Freedom gives us a renewed perspective on life – the ability to look down on the world from soaring heights and see its beauty, meaning, and purpose. To see its G-dliness.

As we sit around our seder tables this year, let us feel the inspiration of being carried by G-d “on the wings of eagles”.

When we live “on the wings of eagles”, when we soar above the material view of our world, we get a different perspective on life.

Rashi explains that there is far more to this analogy. Based on the Midrash, he says that the eagle’s wings represent the nature of G-d’s protection over us. The eagle is unique. While other birds carry their young in their talons because they fear the eagle which soars above them, the eagle carries its young on its wings. As a bird which flies higher than any other, it has no fear of attack from above. All it fears are the arrows of man from below. This is how G-d protects us. We cling to Him, rushing and soaring to freedom, safe in the knowledge that we are protected from above.

The remarkable thing about Jewish history

Get fixed on your holiday dream.

This isn’t just a 12-Month Fixed Deposit. It’s your *next year in Jerusalem* celebrating Pesach. Whatever you are saving for, you get a guaranteed 8.8% interest rate to make your dreams a reality.

sasfin.com | 080 23 23 23 6

Sasfin Bank Ltd. Reg no. 1951/002280/06
An authorised financial service provider licence no. 23833
A registered credit provider NCRCP22 and a member of the Sasfin Group.

Terms and Conditions apply.

sasfin
beyond a bank

A unique moment in time, says Albie Sachs

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

“Why is this night different from every other night?”, Judge Albie Sachs asked, opening his address to guests at the South African Jewish Board of Deputies’ (SAJBD’s) freedom seder at Villa Arcadia in Parktown on Monday night.

Infused with Pesach stories, traditions, and foods, the SAJBD presented a memorable seder. The event aligned the struggles of South African freedom fighters with those of the Jewish people, not least the story of Pesach itself, in which we fought to free ourselves from slavery in Egypt.

Sachs, a celebrated jurist and human-rights activist, addressed the seder. So did Mavuso Msimang, an elder of the African National Congress (ANC), and a former member of the uMkhonto weSizwe military high command, who continues to fight for the principles that underpin our democracy.

For Sachs, what set the night apart was that it was the first time he’d attended a freedom seder in South Africa. The combination of people present, many of them comrades in the struggle and others he knew in the Jewish community, was particularly striking, he said. “It’s not difficult to fuse the themes that come to light. In America, I’ve attended many freedom seders ... a non-racist seder, an LGBT

[lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender] seder, and even a pro-Palestinian seder!” he said.

Speaking of his childhood connection to his Jewish heritage, Sachs remembered the joy of celebrating Pesach and Rosh Hashanah with his family. “I grew up in a very secular home, but I’d look forward to these festivals because I was going to my

auntie Rosie’s where I’d meet my cousins,” he said. “Our family belief was just to connect as a family, and enjoy being together.”

Sachs spoke of a talk he gave to a Jewish audience in Cape Town many years ago upon his return from 24 years of exile. “One thing I noticed was a strong community awareness. Looking after the people in the community – the sick, the elderly, putting people through school, it’s something I appreciate although I’m not active in community activities. My community, in a sense, is a much larger one.

“I can speak to a Jewish audience about freedom and about culture and about ideas.” Yet, Jewish people are an interesting mix of things, Sachs said.

“In the audience at that Cape Town talk, I saw whites with all the benefits that comes with – the culture, the background, the assumptions, and the outlooks, and some take it all for granted.

“One reason why I’ve always responded to requests from the SAJBD is because of my sense that it is aware of those tensions and connections. Being a Jew, being white, being from a community that’s historically been discriminated against, even exterminated, and being part of the master race in this country.”

Tension is a part of life though. “All constitutions are based on the tension between aiming for perfection, and guarding against corruptibility,” he said. “Look at how things have worked out.” People are people, argued Sachs. “Although you’re fighting a heroic and beautiful struggle with beautiful ideals, these are people with frailties, temptations, and ambitions. So, we built into our constitution a whole series of potential constitutional corrections against abuses of power. Ours is the only constitution in the world that has a chapter called ‘Institutions for the

protection of democracy’.” We have a constitution that has been cited throughout the world. “From being a pariah in the world, a universal recipient, South Africa has now become a universal donor,” Sachs said.

Yet, he addressed our challenges. “Saying all these things doesn’t mean the constitution itself has saved us from awful things.” The deep foundation of the ugliness in our society lies in hundreds of years of oppression and systems that we created, but we’ve done wrong things ourselves, and we must take account of that. “We can’t blame history for the things that we’ve done ourselves.” Sachs applauded Msimang for speaking out against corruption in the ANC, saying, “It takes a different kind of courage to speak out against the people that you’ve been with in the trenches.”

He discussed the crises the country faces. “The struggle for the hearts, minds, and souls of South Africans is very intense now,” he said. “But what I’ve found impressive is that the response to that has not been to use presidential power to try and deal with the opposition, it’s to use the law, to use processes and procedures, and that’s important. The problem with the rule of law is that it takes longer, but it’s more lasting. If people have behaved like crooks and stolen and lied under oath, if they violated the law, then the law must deal with them.

But the law can deal with them only if the people in charge of the legal apparatus are themselves not implicated. They needed to be people of integrity, of skill, who are guided by the principles of the constitution.

“I’m proud to feel proud of our constitution and the checks and balances we built into it,” he concluded. “The constitution can work only if enough people in society want it to work. And that’s the other source of my confidence. Millions of South Africans want a just, fair society. They don’t want

lies, cheating, or shenanigans. They want truth, honesty, and directness. People can put up with a lot of hardship if they feel that they’re getting the truth. What’s happening now is the process of transformation in terms of our institutions, procedures, and values. There’s reinforcement of positivity, and great public support for the judiciary, which plays a huge role in our society.”

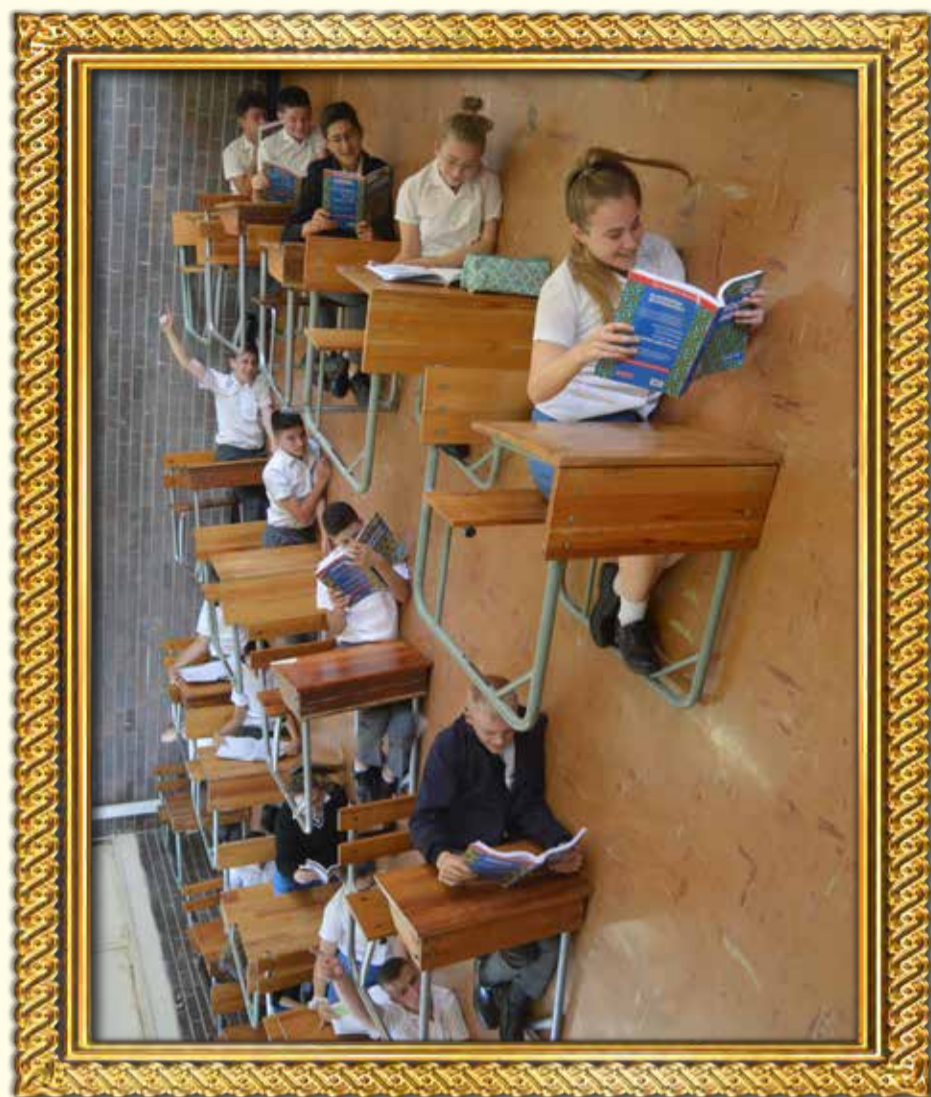
Msimang discussed the founding of the Native National Congress in 1912, which was the forerunner of the ANC. “My parents were at its founding,” he said. Msimang joined the movement in 1958 to fight for freedom. “One was soaked into the politics of the time, it was very enriching.” He worked closely with Oliver Tambo whom he called “an amazing human being”. Msimang now serves as chief executive of the Oliver Tambo Foundation. Though he has spoken out strongly against corruption in the ANC, he stands by the party. “I will not voluntarily be part of a dismantling of the ANC and it’s devaluing. Not today, and not at any time in the future,” he said.

“It’s not a lost battle. We’re in an extraordinary situation where we’re asking people to vote for an organisation that we denounce as having been infiltrated by corruption. Right now, if you had an ANC weaned off corruption, I believe it would be the best organisation to run this country.” Msimang said it was a difficult battle to remove corruption in the party, but there were many who wanted the ANC not to be what its leadership had turned it into.

“Cyril Ramaphosa, at this point in time, is the best thing that we have at a macro level. He’s by no means an angel, but all things considered, I will continue to ask South Africans to vote for the ANC. More as a South African than as an ANC member, do I make such a plea,” he said.

Photo: Alon, shot by Aniele Khoza

Judge Albie Sachs, Marlene Bethlehem and Professor Michael Katz



Together we can reach new heights KDHL Open Day - 2 June 2019

3:00-5:00pm (Yom Yerushalayim)

Call 011 480 4500 for more information

Right of admission reserved



★★★★★

HIRSCH'S

Wishes all our Jewish customers
a happy Pesach



HIRSCH'S TRUSTED SINCE 1979

Cape Town: Milnerton 021-528 6700 • Somerset West 021-001 1066

Kwazulu Natal: Ballito 032-946 7400 • Umhlanga 031-570 4000 • Springfield Park 031-242 2600 • Hillcrest 031-761 7500

Gauteng: Strubens Valley 011-858 4600 • Fourways 011-707 8000 • Centurion 012-621 6300

Meadowdale 011-657 2400 • Silverlakes 012-001 2640 • Carnival 010-822 2050 • Hyde Park 010-001 8590

Shopping hours: Monday - Friday: 8:30am - 17:30pm • Saturday: 8:30am - 16:00pm • Sunday: 9:00am - 16:00pm

Enjoying a seder with thousands in Kathmandu

JORDAN MOSHE

As daunting as it may be to pull off a Pesach seder, chances are you'll find one to attend almost anywhere in the world. While Pesach preparations are underway from Bloemfontein to Golders Green and the Golan Heights, seder tables are also being set as far afield as Bangkok and Nepal.

Almost 6 000 guests are expected across 22 seders in Thailand alone. All of these guests will have an experience quite unlike any other.

From the expanses of Croatia to the heights of the Himalayas, Chabad's network enables Jews to celebrate Pesach no matter where they are in the world. "Whether a Jew is in Nepal or Croatia, Kathmandu or Thailand, he will be provided for," said Rabbi David Masinter, the director of Chabad Johannesburg.

For more than 30 years, Chabad has held its world-famous seder in the Himalayas in the capital city of Nepal, Kathmandu, reaching a peak of about 2 000 guests in 2018.

The largest of Thailand's seders last year was held on the island of Koh Samui, where about 2 500 Jews from around the world participated. They were seated in five separate sections, allowing Nepal to lay claim to having the largest seder in the world under one roof.

This year, however, the total number of seder participants on Koh Samui could exceed 2 800, all of whom will be accommodated in one place, with an added overhang of six tent sections divided by language, including English and Hebrew.

No matter where it is held, the goal of each seder is the same: unity. "Our seders are about increasing Jewish participation, education, and unity," said Rabbi Yosef Chaim Kantor, Thailand's chief rabbi and the country's head Chabad emissary.

"Youth from Israel post-army, whole families, the young and the old, we do our best for all of them," he said. This is indeed the case in Thailand, where those in attendance hail from countries around the world. Though most come from Israel, countries such as Australia, France, and the United States are also represented.

"At the seder, we meet people from all backgrounds," said Rabbi Nechemia Wilhelm, who has directed

Bangkok's Chabad centre for the past 24 years with his wife, Nechami. "This includes people from the completely non-religious to the haredi. You see elderly and young, single people and whole families from every part of society. In short, copy the diversity of Israel, and paste it here."

Unlike the seders in Kathmandu, which reportedly tend to draw backpackers and enlightenment seekers, seders in Thailand are attended by more local Jewish community members and businesspeople, as well as travellers. The latter commonly include many from Israel, among them a strong contingent of young soldiers recently out of the army.



Rabbi Nechemia Wilhelm stirring soup for the Pesach seder in Bangkok



Students preparing food for the seder

Beyond Koh Samui, large public seders are planned this year for Chiang Mai, Phuket, neighbouring Laos under Thailand's direction, and Pai, a Thai city being added this year for the first time.

Said Wilhelm, "Part of the beauty of the seder here is to see the unity of the Jewish people, with individuals from different backgrounds sitting together. It's inspiring to see such a crowd here in Thailand. There is a place for personal seders, but there is a special power to being with so many people."

"You can't imagine the feeling when 200 children go up on stage and say the *Mah Nishtanah* (Why is this night) together, or when 800 men sing the Pesach favourite, *Echad Mi Yodea* (Who knows one).

"We will have more than 6 000 people for Pesach in Thailand. It is a unifying energy that is hard to describe."

With numbers like these, there is no question that Chabad's required amount of kosher le'Pesach supplies is astronomical. Last year, Chabad of Kathmandu alone required more than 1 500 pounds (453kg) of matzah and 1 000 bottles of wine to accommodate the Pesach-seder crowd. The amount of cooked food is equally staggering. To accommodate the number of projected guests across Thailand this year, Chabad reports that an estimated 7 416 portions of chicken, 7 362 portions of beef, 7 353 portions of salmon, 2 220 bottles of wine, 3 210 kilograms

of matzah, and 4 056 kilograms of salad varieties will be required.

The logistics of such mammoth preparation involve a dedicated fleet of forklifts, warehousing, high-tech food production conducted around the clock using industrial cooking equipment, trucking schedules, tent construction, electrical work, and the exhaustive co-ordination that accompanies such quantities of supplies and people. Collectively, 415 waiters, 150 security personnel, 41 rabbinic students, and four rabbinic couples will care for those in attendance this year.

Wilhelm said that as daunting as the logistics of such an operation may be, Chabad manages to perform wonders every year. "Products and supplies come

mostly from Israel. We bring in several containers of matzah, wine, and plenty of other kosher le'Pesach products. Meat comes from Argentina, and chicken is slaughtered in Thailand. We even have plates and dishes coming from China. The logistics are difficult, but we pull it off."

No matter where a Jew finds himself on Pesach, he can therefore be assured of good food and a memorable experience. "Jews find themselves up in monasteries, on mountain ranges, and in ashrams on their travels," said Masinter. "Wherever they go, Chabad will meet them. People go back home inspired. Unbelievable stories have emerged from experiences in the furthest of locations."

Masinter points out that if Jews can be looked after as far afield as Cyprus, the local Jewish community can certainly take care of people in Johannesburg. "You don't need to go to Asia to find a seder," he said. "There are people here right under our noses who could be in need of a seder in spite of being in the heart of a Jewish community."

Chabad will host a public seder in Johannesburg, ensuring that no Jew will miss out on the meaningful occasion. "The chief rabbi of England put it so well," said Masinter. "He said that where Hitler sought out every Jew to kill him, the Rebbe sought them out to bring them back to their roots."

"No matter where we find ourselves, our mission is the same," he concludes. "We need to make sure that every Jew has a seder to go to."

Chag Sameach

CONTINENTAL
linen

WHITEHOUSE

Teach your children well for a better life

RABBI LORD JONATHAN SACKS



What creates freedom? A revolution in the streets? Mass protests? Civil war? A change of government? The ousting of the old guard and its replacement by the new? History, more often than not, shows us that the hopes raised by such events are often dashed sooner rather than later.

"Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive," wrote Wordsworth about the French revolution, but the mood did not last long. It rarely does. Sometimes all that happens is that the tyranny of the minority is replaced by the tyranny of the majority; sometimes not even that. The faces change. The suffering remains.

The books of Exodus and Deuteronomy take a different route altogether. It's astonishing how, reflecting on the Israelites' journey from slavery to freedom, Moses keeps returning to one subject above all others: how we teach our children. "When your children ask you this, you should answer them that." "Teach your child on that day." "Say to your child..." Four times Moses speaks about the duty of parents to educate their children, handing on to them their people's story until it becomes their own.



Liberty is born not on the battlefield but in homes, schools, and houses of study.

That's what we do each year on Passover as we gather in our extended families to re-enact the night long ago when our ancestors readied themselves to leave Egypt, and begin the long walk to freedom. It's a remarkable ceremony, the oldest continuously observed religious ritual in the world, going back thousands of years. We still eat the matzah, the dry unleavened "bread of affliction", and taste the maror, the "bitter herbs" of slavery. And children are still at the heart of this celebration. For we can only tell the story in response to questions asked by a child. That's why, for many of us, our earliest Jewish memory is of asking the "four questions", beginning with, "Why is this night different?" We remain faithful to Moses' mandate: first teach the children.

Much has been written since Moses' day about freedom. Even today it is the key word of politics, especially in those parts of the world under repressive regimes. Still the talk is of politics and power, armies and militias, tactics and strategy, regime change and international

intervention. Still we are surprised when the new guard turns out to be as bad as the old guard. The faith religious believers have in G-d is small compared to the faith people put in politicians, knowing how many times they have been disappointed in the past but still insisting that this time it will be different.

Moses taught us something else entirely. The world we build tomorrow is born in the stories we tell our children today. Politics moves the pieces. Education changes the game. If you want a free society, teach your children what oppression tastes like. Tell them how many miracles it takes to get from here to there. Above all, encourage them to ask questions. Teach them to think for themselves. Get them to continue the heritage not through blind obedience – the world's worst preparation for liberty – but through active, challenging conversation across the generations. That's how we learned, as children about the long walk to freedom. It's how we came to take our ancestors' story as our own.

Amid all the talk about the challenges facing the world in the twenty first century – climate change, the global economy, political turmoil, the impact of new technology – far too little is said or thought about education, and even when it is, it focuses on the wrong things, such as technical skills. Education is the single most important determinant of the future of the human race, and what and how we teach our children is the most important decision we can make.

We have to teach our children that freedom comes only when you respect the freedom of others, that it involves responsibilities as well as rights, and that it means making sacrifices for the common good. G-d, the supreme power, intervened in history long ago to help the supremely powerless, a nation of slaves, and ever since, His work must be ours. Nor can we teach these things without giving children the space to ask, question, and challenge, thereby learning the dignity of dissent, itself one of the elements of freedom.

Liberty is born not on the battlefield but in homes, schools, and houses of study. That is the message of the world's oldest ritual, Passover, and its force remains undiminished today.

• Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks served as the Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth from 1991 to 2013. The article is taken from www.rabbisacks.org

Christian community takes on Ramaphosa over downgrade

>> Continued from page 7

Political analyst Professor Sipho Seepe told Political Analysis South Africa that, "It will affect us [South Africa] in terms of the technology that we would have found in exchange with Israel," and "Other countries will sympathise with Israel... If we [South Africa] take a stance like that, we should also not be surprised when some of those countries begin to take the same posture [against South Africa], out of solidarity with Israel. Our actions may be principled, but they may also have repercussions."

The South African Zionist Federation (SAZF) launched a petition calling for the reinstatement of South Africa's ambassador to Israel and a halt to the downgrade. It was signed by more than 60 000 people.

"Such a move will be contrary to South African foreign policy, which has always called for engagement with all parties in a conflict. We note further that efforts to downgrade the South African Embassy in Israel will have a deeply negative impact on the South African Christian community. A direct consequence of such a change in diplomatic relations with Israel will in addition violate South Africans' constitutional rights with regards to freedom

of movement, free choice, and matters of faith," says the petition, amongst other points.

The SAZF's Rowan Polovin summed it up in *Business Day*: "There is something foul about South Africa's foreign policy. It stands continuously with the anti-Western bloc of dictators, fascists, and human-rights abusers.

"On the issue of cutting ties with Israel and allowing the anti-Semitic BDS fringe movement to capture foreign policy, Sisulu and the ANC should proceed with extreme caution. South Africa is focusing on rebuilding its standing in the international community and being taken seriously on international affairs. Moreover, South Africa needs Israel's help to solve local problems such as water scarcity, access to electricity, and [the provision of] agricultural solutions that would take millions out of poverty and turn our deserts into fields of plenty. Millions of South Africans would not take kindly to their future being stolen by petty short-term interests. Nor will they appreciate the negative effect this will have on local job creation and our already struggling economy. Cutting out Israel only cuts out South Africa's future."

FOUR QUESTIONS ON ISRAEL PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT,

YOU NEED ONLY ASK HOLD REAL ESTATE.

Wishing you all a meaningful Pesach

HOLD REAL ESTATE

SECURING YOUR FUTURE IN ISRAEL

info@hold.co.il | Visit hold.co.il

LOAD SHEDDING ESSENTIALS

WISHING YOU A HAPPY PASSOVER



Energizer

Vision 100lumen Headlamp

R150

RED-E

RS40 LED Solar Powerbank

R399

ALVA

Single Burner Stove

R450

ULTRA-TEC

Max 2pc Rechargeable Emergency Lantern

R999

SHOP THESE AND MORE LOAD SHEDDING ESSENTIALS AT WWW.CAPEUNIONMART.CO.ZA



CAPE UNION MART
Est. 1933

Explore

SHOP ONLINE at www.capeunionmart.co.za | FREE delivery on ALL online orders over R500 | f t Fans find out first.

Visit www.capeunionmart.co.za or call 0860 3333 29. Applicable online and in-store. Products subject to availability. Stores nationwide. All our products are covered by our famous 5-Way Guarantee, ensuring that you always get the best price and advice along with the fairest return and exchange policy.

5 Way Guarantee

Pesach brings post-fire learnings to Morasha community

RABBI SAM THURGOOD



The story goes that in a small town, some shrubbery in the garden caught alight from a discarded cigarette. The rabbi quickly called the fire department, but the fire chief asked incredulously, “Rabbi, let me get this right, there is a burning bush on the shul property, and you want me to put it out?”

As the Rabbi of Morasha (Beit Midrash Morasha in Sea Point), the community that experienced a devastating fire on the third night of Chanukah, I think about this story somewhat wistfully. If only our fire could have been discussed in so cavalier a fashion. If only it had indeed been simply a tree that was burned instead of six *atzei chaim*, trees of life, our six beloved Torah scrolls. And yet there are unique lessons that my community and I have learned in the four months since the fire, lessons that I reflect upon as Pesach approaches.

The essence of Pesach is a leap of faith, a supreme act of faith in the unknown, both on behalf of the Jewish people, and in a way even on behalf of Hashem Himself. Hashem tells us about this leap through His prophet Jeremiah when he says to the residents of Yerushalayim, “I remember the kindness of your youth, your bridal love, when you walked after Me in the wilderness, in a land not planted.”

I often ask people to imagine that I would arrive at shul one day, declaring that Hashem has delivered a message through me that it is time for us to pack our bags and head off into the unknown. Apart from the question of my own reliability as a messenger (a question that Moshe himself grappled with), the fact remains that people do not easily move into the unknown; but that nonetheless, that is the key to all true growth.

As Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks points out, the decisions to marry,

to have children, to begin a new job, or move to a new place – all of these and more are acts of faith, decisions that show a willingness to trust in Hashem to support and guide us through our unformed future.

This was especially true in the case of our ancestors in Egypt, a

– compassion. The word Pesach means not only “Passover” but also “compassion”, and shows that Hashem had compassion upon the Jewish people in Egypt, saving us from our affliction, and redeeming us from servitude.

Our community, too, has been the recipient of Hashem’s

The Torah emphasises that Pesach should instil in us compassion as well. “Love the stranger, for you were strangers in Egypt”, “Give rest on Shabbat to your workers and animals also, since you know well the pain of slavery.” It is one thing to lose so much, but another thing entirely

we too will follow our ancestors and make aliyah, for now our task is to rebuild and restore our shul to what it was before, and with Hashem’s help, something even greater.

But moving forward brings challenges. Our Sages tell us that “all beginnings are difficult”, but the Chassidic Master Rabbi Tzadok HaKohen (Tzidkat HaTzadik 170) explains that this is because we live in an imperfect world, and even the blessings that Hashem showers upon us are first expressed through challenges. However, through work and prayer, we are able to reveal the concealed blessing that was the intended purpose all along.

Finally, I think back to the burning bush, which many of our rabbis comment is a symbol of the Jewish people. “The bush burned in fire, but the bush was not consumed.” The Jewish people have been “burned in fire” many times, through unbelievable challenges and difficulties, persecutions and disasters, and yet miraculously, we were never consumed. *Am Yisrael Chai* (the people of Israel live)!

We are here and, in many ways, stronger than ever. Morasha too, burned in fire, but we are equipped with the lessons of Pesach. With faith in Hashem, compassion from our friends, and commitment to the future, our community, too, will not be consumed. Instead it will transform the raging flames into the light of hope and Torah, shining as a beacon for all seeking a spiritually home and connection.

May Hashem bless us all with a *Chag Pesach Kasher VeSameach*, and may we merit complete redemption.

• Rabbi Sam Thurgood is the rabbi of the Beit Midrash Morasha congregation in Cape Town.



Beit Midrash Morasha fire on 4 December 2018

slave nation which was in a position uniquely unsuited to embracing the unknown. As Alexander Solzhenitsyn writes about a prisoner in the Soviet Gulag, “That bowl of soup – it was dearer than freedom, dearer than life itself, past, present, and future.” Our community was thrust into an unknown future, not through choice. The message of Pesach and the experiences of our ancestors teach us that Hashem will take care of us as He did them.

We experience that love and care in the second pillar of Pesach

remarkable compassion, expressed through His children here on earth. On one of our first Shabbatot after the fire, I remarked that we were in a situation in which we seemed to have nothing – our shul was destroyed, our Torahs were no more, and the books and furniture that did survive were all with the restorers to salvage what they could. And yet, we had everything – praying in a beautiful hall from lovely Siddurim, sitting comfortably at seats and tables, and reading from a Sefer Torah – all gifts and loans from our friends.

to have loving friends to help you when you do, to make manifest Hashem’s compassion in the world.

Pesach is also the festival of the future – in which we left the darkness of Egypt, entering the uncertainty of the wilderness, but with a vision of our ultimate destiny in the Land of Israel. The task of our ancestors was not only to leave slavery, but to embrace our new role in redemptiveness.

At Morasha too, we are aware that our displaced state is simply the journey between past and future reality. Although, ultimately,

YOUR ANCESTRAL LINK TO LITHUANIA AND POLAND

THE GATEWAY TO YOUR FUTURE OBTAINING AN EU PASSPORT

Your ancestors who were born in Lithuania and Poland emigrated to South Africa, Israel or elsewhere to start a new life and broaden their horizons.

In so doing, they have GIFTED you the chance of receiving citizenship of the country of their birth. The Lithuanian and Polish governments are restoring citizenship. They are giving you the opportunity to broaden your horizons. With over a decade of success, with clients in South Africa, the UK, Australia, the US and Israel, we look forward to sharing our knowledge and expertise with you to obtain your EU passport.

Contact me:
Rose Lerer Cohen
rlerercohen@kinsearch.com
www.kin-search.com



Where to eat out on Chol haMoed

Johannesburg
Feigel's Kosher Deli
BluBird Shopping Centre
22-25 April 07:30 to 11:00.

KosherWorld PopUp Store
1 Long Avenue, Glenhazel
22, 23, 24 April 09:00 to 21:00
25 April 09:00 to 15:00.

Jozi Blue
17 Northfield Avenue, Glenhazel
22 to 25 April 07:00 to 18:00.

Kosher Nando's
27 Aintree Avenue, Savoy Estate
22, 23, 24 April 11:00 to 21:00
25 April 11:00 to 15:00.

Burger and Brew
53 Ridge Road, Glenhazel
22 to 24 April 12:00 to 21:00
25 April 12:00 to 14:00.

Cape Town
Avron's Place
19 Regent Road, Sea Point
21 April 17:00 to 22:00; 22, 23, 24 April 11:00 to 15:00 and 17:00 to 22:00; 25 April 11:00 to 15:00.



We couldn't grow your trust without first growing your money.

Since 1993, we've grown the long-term savings of millions of South Africans by doing one thing and one thing only, investing with a long time horizon. Never losing focus and never giving up on our goal, we grow our clients' money into real long-term wealth.

To invest your money today, speak to your **Financial Adviser** or visit **coronation.com**

CORONATION

TRUST IS EARNED™

Coronation is an authorised financial services provider. Trust is Earned™

717419



Sheer
Driving Pleasure

A CELEBRATION OF FREEDOM.

To all our Jewish customers, as you commemorate Israel's Exodus from Egypt, JSN Motors would like to wish you and your loved ones a happy Passover.

May it be filled with peace, prosperity and joy that blesses you throughout the year ahead.

JSN Motors

Corner Ormonde Street and William Nicol
Dr Bryanston, Sandton
Tel. 011 700 9000
www.bmw-jsnmotors.co.za

Finding freedom

RABBI YOSSY GOLDMAN



“Free at last, free at last, thank G-d Almighty, we are free at last!” Who said these words? No, it wasn’t Moses. It was American civil-rights leader, Dr Martin Luther King. But it could have been Moses, or for that matter any one of the millions of Jews who were liberated from Egyptian bondage.

Pesach recalls the great exodus. What was the almighty’s famous call

that message became world famous. All too often, we forget the rest of the sentence, “that they may serve me”.

Now, if the purpose of leaving Egypt and Pharaoh’s whip was to be able to serve G-d, we might ask where is the freedom? We are still slaves, only now we are servants of G-d instead of being servants of Pharaoh?

Indeed, countless individuals continue to question the merits of

thou shalt better not do that, or else! Do’s and don’ts, rules and regulations are the hallmark of every belief system. But why conform to any system at all? Why not just be me? These arguments have been heard for generations, but perhaps more so in our own time when freedom of thought is taken for granted.

Many Jews argue similarly. Mitzvahs cramp my style. Keeping kosher is a serious inconvenience. Shabbos really gets in the way of my weekend. And Pesach has got to be the biggest headache of the year.

But long ago, the rabbis of the Mishna said it was actually the other way around. There is no one as free as he who is occupied with the study of Torah. (Pirkei Avot 6,2). But how can this possibly be? The Torah is filled with rules of law, morality, ethics, and exhortations, even expectations that we take the high road and behave beyond the call of duty. How can the rabbis say that Torah makes us free? Surely it is inhibiting rather than liberating?

Let me share an answer I once heard on the radio while driving in my car. It was a BBC interview with Malcolm Muggeridge, the former editor of *Punch*, the satirical British magazine. *Punch* magazine was arguably England’s most irreverent publication. It mocked and ridiculed the royal family long before they did it to themselves. In his latter years,

Muggeridge became religious, and the interviewer was questioning how this sultan of satire, the prince of *Punch*, could make such a radical transformation and become religious? How could he stifle such a magnificent free spirit?

Muggeridge’s answer was a classic, which I still quote regularly. He said he had a friend who was a famous yachtsman, an accomplished navigator of the high seas. A lesson he once gave him in sailing would provide the answer to the BBC man’s question. He taught him that if you want to enjoy the freedom of the high seas, you must first become a slave to the compass.

A young novice might challenge the experienced professional seaman’s advice. Why should I follow that little gadget? Why can’t I go where I please? It’s my yacht! But every intelligent person understands that without the navigational fix provided by the compass, we will flounder and end up sailing in circles. Only by following the lead of the compass will the wind catch our sails so we can experience the ecstasy and exhilaration of the high seas and actually get to our destination. Indeed, If you want to enjoy the freedom of the high seas, you must first become a slave to the compass.

The Torah is the compass of life. It provides our navigational fix, so we may know where to go and how to

get there. Without the Torah’s guidance and direction, we would be lost in the often-stormy seas of confusion. Without a spiritual infrastructure, we flounder about, wandering aimlessly through life. It’s fine to have a job, a business, or a career, but what is my real purpose in life? Why am I here in the first place, and what is my life’s mission statement? Just look at our kids when they’re on holiday from school and “free” from the disciplines of the educational system. Unless they have a programme of some kind to keep them busy – like a summer camp – they become frustrated in their “freedom”.

Within the infrastructure of a Torah lifestyle, there is still ample room for spontaneity and freedom of expression. Not all rabbis are clones. To the untrained eye, every *yeshiva bochur* looks identical – a black hat, glasses, and a beard. The truth is that everyone is distinctive; an individual with his own tastes, attitudes, personality, and preferences. They may look the same, but each is unique.

We can be committed to the compass and still be free spirits. Indeed, there are none as free as they who are occupied with Torah.

• Rabbi Yossy Goldman is the senior rabbi of Sydenham Shul, and president of the SA Rabbinical Association.



to Pharaoh back in Egypt? “Let my people go that they may serve me!”

That divine message was transmitted by Moses to Pharaoh again and again in the drama that took place in the king’s court. Somehow, only the first four words of

religion in general. Who wants to submit to the rigours of religion when we can be free spirits? Doesn’t religion stifle the imagination and stunt our creative style? Religion forever shouts instructions, and lays down the law. Thou shalt do this and



Don't go to Mars for space...

Speak to the space experts – conveniently located right here on earth.

- ▶ **Shelving** – Bolted, Boltless, Library, Gondola (Supermarket).
- ▶ **Racking** – Conventional, VNA, Drive-in, Flow Rack, Pushback, Shuttle etc.
- ▶ **Mezzanine** – Structural and Rack supported.
- ▶ **Lockers** – Steel, Wire, Plastic etc.
- ▶ **Bins** – All storage containers.

Johannesburg | Tel: +27 11 827 5555 | sales@krostshelving.com
 Durban | Tel: +27 31 700 2020 | kznsales@krostshelving.com
 Cape Town | Tel: +27 21 705 7808 / 29 | cptsales@krostshelving.com



Manufactured in South Africa since 1965

KROST
SHELVING & RACKING

www.krostshelving.com

Blessings and good wishes to you and your family on Passover.

Chag kasher v'sameach.

Pesach in a new land



OPINION

Rahla Xenopoulos

I have come to believe that Jews are genetically predisposed to have the ability to pick up their pekalah and move along with crisis. We are good movers.

Asked why Judaism survived when the Aztecs, Babylonians and so many other cultures were decimated, historian Simon Sharma said, "We don't need buildings or temples or tombs. We need our stories. We can pick up our scrolls and run."

There is a saying that G-d created humanity, because G-d loves stories. I often think, therefore, that Pesach must be G-d's favourite holiday, since it is so much about the telling of our stories. It is in the telling of our stories that we transfer not just the facts, but also our personal ideology and value systems.

I have come to wonder, am I the only person who feels like my generation, "the X's", is very much about making Pesach personal? Making the seder resonate with a narrative of liberation, feminism, and family truths. An authentic, meaningful seder has to have a strong political and ideological intention.

Of course, there are other necessary elements. A competitive chicken soup and, of course, an overpopulated table. If people aren't awkwardly perched off the corner precariously reaching out for their food, and if guests don't have table legs digging uncomfortably into their thighs, it isn't Pesach.

When my children, who are triplets, were in pre-primary

school, I decided that I wanted them to engage with the Pesach service in a meaningful manner. I wanted the haggadah to question more. I decided to pretend that the death of the firstborn wasn't in the book, because, aargh!, and because my children were so small.

To that end, I adapted and wrote a tongue-in-cheek "family haggadah". The first year, it created much excitement and interaction. The second year, we were still laughing and loving it. After eleven years of this *verkakte* home-made haggadah, I realised that actually, my family were growing tired of repeating the same jokes every year. I knew, it was time for a new service.

Last year on Pesach, I promised my husband that this year, the seder would be meaningful. We would have a modern, personal, and above all, real haggadah. I made the promise, and then got distracted.

To be fair, the distractions were both dramatic and unavoidable. I launched a new book, took my kids out of school and bummed around Europe with them for three months. And also, made a very sudden decision to pack ourselves up and move, five months ago, to New York.

This was not a year of being distracted by an arbitrary Instagram feed, these were legitimate reasons not to focus on finding the right haggadah.

So, I did with Pesach what I do with all urgent crises, I stored it at the very back of my brain where no one will ever spot it.

That was, of course, until about a week ago, when my mother-in-law confirmed her travel arrangements. My mother-in-law, stepfather-in-law, as well as two of my husband's brothers and their families, are all schlepping across America to sit at

our table. Plus, of course, the locals, the friends, the kids, and their friends.

Everyone confirmed their Pesach plans to sit at my table, which actually is all we ever want. Needless to say, in my excitement, I took the panic and stored it in that place at the bottom of my brain where no one, most especially me,

perfect. And I made an order for a looooot of Maxwell House coffee capsules.

In the meantime, all has been well in our world. On Friday, I walked along the aqueduct near our house and marvelled triumphantly that we, my family, have triumphed over our first American winter. Spring in all its ardent beauty is

perhaps, to get the Jonathan Safran Foer haggadah, maybe I will even find my childhood haggadah.

Also, I've decided that Pesach is not just about stories, but stories and the ability to make that schlepp. The most important thing, the thing I have learnt for the first time, is that our family has managed, happily, to pick up our



The Xenopoulos family

can possibly access it.

To be fair, it's not like I forgot or anything. I just didn't do anything about it.

That was until my husband, who fortunately knows me better than even he realises, casually mentioned last week that he saw on Facebook that there is such a thing as a *Marvelous Mrs Maisel* haggadah.

That got me inspired. I knew the *Marvelous Mrs Maisel* haggadah would be the spine of my seder. Like the television show, it would be stylish, curious, liberal, and, above all, funny. Also, it would be pink, so perhaps that could be the colour of the flowers.

After checking at my local book store and running to Barnes & Noble, it occurred to me where I would find it. My search for a *Marvelous Mrs Maisel* haggadah took me, of course, to Amazon (because the series is made by Amazon Prime). But there is a catch that I have not yet explained to my husband. *The Marvelous Mrs Maisel* haggadah comes as a free gift with a purchase of Maxwell House coffee capsules.

The capsules, I am told in the advert, are kosher for Pesach. They are traditional New York Pesach coffee and also, they are capsules for a Keurig coffee machine. We do not own a Keurig coffee machine, but hey, I thought, nobody's

most forcefully upon us.

What a state of giddy delight I have been in. Which is fortunate, since I would need some giddy delight to deal with all the undrinkable coffee that arrived at my doorstep. Yesterday, the Amazon truck arrived with, oh my word, who will drink 284 cups of Maxwell House coffee?

Wherever we have our books, our paintings, and one another is home. Our Pesach will be a matter of muddled through perfection, since it will be in our new home.

Underneath the boxes and boxes of coffee, I found a slim pile of black and white, photocopied haggadot with a sad drawing of Mrs Maisel and her parents. In fact, this drawing must be the very only time Mrs Maisel has been captured looking unstylish and fat! As for the actual haggadah, well, the haggadot at my local supermarket are more politically woke than this one. It is a most miserable affair.

I've made a few decisions. I've decided to try making my own chicken soup. I've decided to bring the tables in from outside so that we don't have to squash awkwardly into one another. I've decided,

pekalah and move.

This is our first Pesach away from beloved friends who have celebrated at our table for years. It will be our first Pesach where we are responsible for cleaning up afterwards, and preparing beforehand. It will be the first Pesach where, fearing the cold, I do not move the entire table outside, then inside, then outside again.

But, I have realised, it will not be our first Pesach away from home since we are home. Wherever we have our books, our paintings, and one another is home. Our Pesach will be a matter of muddled through perfection, since it will be in our new home.

It might not achieve all of the lofty liberal ideals we hold so dear, but it will be achieve conversation and laughter. It will be a family gathering and, for the first time, my kids are not filled with dread. You see, chatting to my brother-in-law yesterday, I casually mentioned that since his kids are younger than mine, perhaps they would sing *Ma Nishtana* (Why is this night different from all other nights?). My triplets have waited fourteen years to rid themselves of that burden.

As for the coffee, I'll find someone with a Keurig machine and if not, well, it'll be part of our pekalah.

• Rahla Xenopoulos is an author.

FRANK SOLOMON HEARING CENTRE

Hearing aids that easily connect to any cell phone and your TV

- Affordable Hearing Aids for Pensioners
- 2-Year Warranty
- No Follow-Up Charges
- Latest Technology
- Small and Discreet Hearing Aids
- Extensive Wireless Communication Portfolio Available
- Supplements for Tinnitus Treatment approved by the American ENT Association

SPECIAL PRICE

FOR PENSIONERS

PHONAK
life is on

CONTACT US TODAY:
(011) 849-6256

Fairmount 6 George Avenue,
Sandringham, Johannesburg

Additional Branches: Bedfordview • Benoni • Germiston



Dear customer we wish you happiness, peace, prosperity and a kosher passover.

cash converters®

Getting the leaders we deserve

RABBI YOSSI CHAIKIN



I was driving on a quiet country road in the Free State recently on my way to supervise the *shechita* (slaughter) at one of our abattoirs. My journey was delayed by a flock of sheep crossing my path.

It was quite a large gathering of animals, making me late, but with no choice, I could only sit back, relax, and observe as the skilful shepherd managed to get the animals to move.

The trick, it appeared, was simply to get the first sheep to go in the desired direction. The others just followed. Each member of the pack faithfully followed the creatures in front.

As could be expected, one of the flock did its own thing, and ran away. As I waited patiently, I thought of the famous Midrashic account of Moses tending his sheep in the Midianite desert.

At one point, one of the animals got away, and the faithful shepherd followed it down to the stream. The sheep had gone to quench its thirst, and was now too tired to join the rest of the flock. So, Moses gently lifted the animal and carried it back up the hill.

From above, G-d watched and decided to choose Moses as the leader of the future Jewish nation.

But back to reality. On this April morning in the Free State, the impatient shepherd smote the stray animal with his staff, and sent him back to the flock with a kick.

Pesach this year falls between two elections in which our South African Jewish community has a keen interest. Last week, Israelis went to the polls to (re)-elect a leader for their/our country. And soon after the holiday, voting will take place here in South Africa.

Are humans that different to sheep? Do we just follow the crowd when it comes to choice of leaders? Are there lessons from Pesach about what a true leader is, and how he must be elected?

Moses is the obvious hero of this story, although his name barely features in the Haggadah, the official account of the exodus.

Raised in Pharaoh's palace, he had actually spent the bulk of his years in exile in distant Midian. How did this stranger gain the trust of this people, and successfully convince them to follow him out into an inhospitable desert on a journey to a promised land?

In our culture, leaders run for office. Moses, on the other hand, did everything he could to run from office.

The Torah relates the exchange between G-d and the about-to-be-anointed leader at the Burning Bush. For seven days, Moses advanced every argument against his appointment. He felt he was not up to the task, that he lacked the communication skills required, and had a speech impediment.

He went as far as suggesting that his brother, Aharon, would make a better candidate, being older and also having spent previous decades among the suffering Israelites. He said Aharon would thus be better received. None of these objections prevailed, and as we say the rest is, literally, history.

As we become familiar with the profile of our first leader, the first quality that emerges is of absolute humility. He is described in the Torah as the humblest of men ever to have lived.

Not to say that he lacked stature, personality, or leadership skills. In fact, he excelled in all of the above. But never did he become haughty, and he was always

convinced that any other human with the same talents would do as good, if not better, a job.

Just as he had in the Midianite hills with his ovine charges, he showed total love, dedication, and care for each member of his human flock. He gave himself selflessly, trying to assist everyone personally. Hence his father-in-law, Jethro's, advice that he must appoint subordinates, and G-d's eventual election of 70 elders to assist him.

In the 21st century, altruism and humility are both rare, in particular in our

elected leaders. Sadly, Moses was not on the ballot in Israel last week, nor will he be a candidate on 8 May.

Cynics often say that countries get the leaders they deserve. May G-d bless us to be worthy of humble and dedicated heads of state.

Wishing you Chag Pesach Kosher Vesameach!

• Rabbi Yossi Chaikin is the rabbi of Oxford Shul, and the chairperson of the South African Rabbinical Association.



UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG



WHY WITS?

WITS HAS A GLOBAL FOOTPRINT

Amongst Wits alumni are illustrious artists, lawyers, politicians, business leaders, accountants and scientists who reflect the significant difference that our graduates make in the world today.

Over 170 000 alumni

5

FACULTIES



Commerce, Law & Management



Engineering & the Built Environment



Health Sciences



Humanities



Science

Wits is the only South African university to be ranked in the Global University Employability Ranking published by Times Higher Education. According to this survey, Wits has the most employable graduates on the African continent. Wits is also ranked in the top 2 in South Africa by the Centre for World University Rankings 2018.



The only globally ranked university in Johannesburg, the economic heartland of the continent.



Vibrant sports culture
over 30 active clubs
5 high performance sports codes



A solid history of nearly 100 years

- Wits has a culture of academic excellence, ground breaking research and civic engagement
- Wits is the largest producer of medical specialists and subspecialists in southern Africa
- Wits has a diverse student population and offers an holistic student experience
- Wits has a host of facilities including counselling and careers development, residences and a free bus service
- Wits is the benchmark for disabled student facilities and programmes
- At Wits, safety is taken very seriously, with 24 hour security personnel available on patrol, or for personal escorts



Be part of a winning University
YOUR DESTINY AWAITS ...

www.wits.ac.za/applications www.wits.ac.za/askwits

Pesach at home or shul?

Pesach and the story of the exodus celebrate the national birth of our people, Israel. The storyline of the book of Genesis deals with fathers and mothers, brothers and children, and the trials and tribulations of families. By contrast, the book of Exodus deals with leaders and followers, tribes and communal structures, and the complexities of nationhood. It deals with the birth, emergence and journeys of a liberated people – Am Yisrael.

One would imagine that the annual celebration of the birth of a nation would entail a gathering in the public domain. It would seem that the shul service would be the most appropriate avenue to rally the masses to express pride and gratitude for the national achievement. Surely, the guarantee of preserving and perpetuating the structure of nationhood is through the broadest participation of the community.

Yet, the celebration of Pesach – the emancipation and birth of our people – takes place in the home. The Seder night facilitates interaction between parents and children. We celebrate and perpetuate the emergence of our people, Israel, sitting around our dining room tables. Even the Pascal lamb – sacrificed on the fateful day of the birth of our nation – was brought and eaten within the context of families. Its sign was not placed on the doors of the shul or communal institutions, but on the door posts of the Jewish home.

By stark contrast, the Yizkor service on the last day of Pesach, which deals with a family's personal pain of loss, does not take place in the private embrace of one's loved ones at home, but in the public domain of the synagogue.

Why is nationhood commemorated at home with the family? Why is family loss and trauma addressed publicly through the formality of the shul service?

Perhaps the answer lies in the fact that the preservation of our people, our traditions, our heritage, and our core values is best achieved by wholesome families and inside the haven of healthy homes. We communicate and teach our principles to our children by the example we set at home. The eternal chain of Jewish continuity takes place when a child is surrounded by the taste, feel, and smell of a Pesach Seder and the scrupulous attention to the details. The perpetuation of the morals and beliefs of our people is guaranteed when our children experience the undivided attention of their parents, who encourage questions and dialogue and share precious time together involved in meaningful conversation.

National monuments do not preserve nations. Public parades do not ensure continued pride and joy. Mass gatherings do not link the succession of generations. It is our homes, more than our schools or our shuls, that are the key generators of values and ideas, and



the incubators of fresh hope for tomorrow.

Pesach emphasises the extraordinary role that our home and family life play in moulding the priorities of our children and grandchildren. As parents, do we listen with our eyes? Do we speak through our actions? Do we set the example by walking the talk and living with optimism, faith, and hope?

Do our conversations treasure freedom – our own and that of others? Does our family life pulsate with an attitude of gratitude for life itself, and for the gift of being able to choose to live as proud and confident Jews? No school or shul

experience can impact as largely on our children as the serenity, peace and harmony of a family living the ideals and tenets of our faith.

Our personal Pesach is more than a journey recalling historical events in ancient Egypt. It implores us to achieve and celebrate current, newfound freedom. It inspires the quest to unshackle ourselves from the confines of habit and the stunted and limited aspirations of yesterday.

Each day is a new opportunity to grow, to reach beyond our grasp and aspire to achieve successes that supersede the dreams of yesterday. The oppression of

Pharaoh is closer to home than the dictates of an ancient despot.

It is found in the suppressive debilitation of peer pressure, conformity, lifestyle dependency and substance abuse, loss of confidence, apathy, and despondency. There is no more dependable, effective means to escape these ills than by experiencing the acceptance, warmth, motivation and inspiration of a happy, integrated family.

Our nationhood is nurtured and guaranteed by the strong structures and loving ties of family.

On the last day of Pesach, notwithstanding our heightened awareness of the power and

indelible influence of family, we specifically leave our homes and go to shul to deal with loss in a public, communal Yizkor service.

To preserve the memory of a loved one, it is not enough to have shared nostalgia within the embrace of family. Building a memory requires an insight and vision that extend beyond the warmth of our homes. Souls descend into this world to impact on society, to address the needs of a stranger, and to make this world a holier and kinder place.

When we stand amid the congregation and pledge generously to charity – as we do in the Yizkor service – and we plough our grief into addressing the needs of others, we consequently bring merit and strength to the journey of departed souls.

At the same time, we best assuage our own pain and fill the vacuum of our loss when we address the pain of others. We cannot find personal healing when we are self-absorbed. The Yizkor service at shul challenges us to stretch beyond our comfort zones, join the structures of community, and participate in addressing its needs.

This Pesach 5779, let us celebrate and perpetuate our nationhood and emancipation by strengthening our Jewish home.

Let us utilise the bonds of family and the moving moments of memory to commit ourselves to community, shul participation, and the building of a better world.

Let us harness the complementary powers of home and shul.

• *Rabbi Dovid Hazdan is the dean of Torah Academy and the rabbi at Great Park Synagogue.*



RABBI DOVID HAZDAN



Pesach in the presence of Hashem

REB ZEVI CHAITON

There are so many beautiful lessons we can learn from the Haggadah and Pesach in general. Every single word, intricacy, and nuance embedded in the seder night can serve as an inspiring lesson to incorporate into our life.

Among all of this, it is important to remember that Pesach is also a holy *chag*, one where we feel the presence of Hashem in a more real way. This is highlighted through various passages and customs observed on Seder night.

We start Maggid, the recounting of the Pesach story, with an Aramaic invitation to anyone who needs a seder and does not have one. It is often asked why this paragraph is in Aramaic while the rest of the Haggadah is in Hebrew? What differentiates this passage from all the others?

One of the answers given is that Aramaic was once the global language of the world, while only the very learned knew Hebrew. Aramaic was the equivalent of English today.

When we invite guests to the seder, our intention isn't only to invite learned scholars to join us. On the contrary, our main target is those not as educated about Pesach, those unfamiliar with all the customs. That way, we can give them the opportunity of a rich,

meaningful seder experience.

However, there is another answer that goes a little bit deeper, beyond a language technicality. Every time we pray, our words are brought before Hashem by angels.

These angels act as advocates for us on high. For them to advocate for us to the best of their ability, it's preferable that they understand our prayers so that they may present our case before Hashem.



The Pesach story is not only an event in our history, but an experience that we relive every year.

It's for this reason that most of our prayers are in Hebrew, the language of the angels, helping them to understand what we are saying. G-d Himself, however, isn't limited by language barriers like the angels, and every single prayer, whatever the language, is understood.

When we start off the seder with a paragraph in a language that the angels don't understand, we are demonstrating that tonight, we are speaking one on one with Hashem, without

the need of any advocates, messengers, or interpreters.

On the seder night, we speak to G-d directly. His presence is felt in a more tangible way, so there is no need for any intermediary to intervene on our behalf.

This point is also clearly alluded to later in the Haggadah. While recounting the story of Exodus and the might of Hashem, we expound upon many verses from the Torah.

One of these teachings uses various words from the verse to prove that Hashem didn't use any intermediary to redeem the Jews. Instead, Hashem descended in all His glory to take the Jews personally out of Egypt.

The Pesach story is not only an event in our history, but an experience that we relive every year. This is clearly illustrated on the first night of Pesach, called *leil shimurim* (the night of guarding) because G-d Himself protects the Jewish people on this night. Just as G-d was with us, personally, on the night He took us out of Egypt, so too each year, Hashem joins every family for their Pesach seders.

Let's take advantage of this auspicious time, and really maximise the tremendous spiritual potential of Pesach. Chag Sameach!

• *Rev Zevi Chaiton is a rabbinic intern at Sydenham Shul.*

*Amelia Mary Earhart,
first female aviator to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean.*



Fitch & Leedes

BESPOKE MIXERS

**Pursue excellence.
Embrace the pioneering spirit.**

Do you know the difference between good and exceptional?
Fitch & Leedes. We know.

   [fitchleedes](#)

Why is this chicken different from all the other chickens?

While we're flattered by all the imitations out there, there is still only one Kosher restaurant in the entire world where you can get the authentic taste of PERi-PERi, flame-grilled chicken that fires your senses and feeds your soul.

WE WILL BE OPEN DURING CHOL HAMOED PESACH

▼ Wishing you and your family
a happy and kosher Pesach.



Nando's

Limited menu available. Terms and conditions apply.

Social media: a survivor's guide to Pesach

TALI FEINBERG

Social media has its pitfalls, but for finding the best Pesach prices and products, there is nothing to beat it.

"This is definitely about the power of community. It's all about pooling resources, and it makes a big difference. What we did before chat groups, I don't know!" says Lynne Lewis. She is part of a chat group on the platform "Telegram", where Jewish people share tips, products, pricing, and specials ahead of Pesach.

"The advantage of Telegram is that it has a significantly higher limit on the number of people who can join the group [than WhatsApp], and even if you join it late, you still have access to everything that was said before you joined. Both of these aspects are limited on WhatsApp," she says. There are about 140 members on the Telegram group she belongs to.

The founder of the group, Tehilla Ozeri, agrees that Telegram is extremely useful. "It has better security and allows admins to go in and delete posts. We don't allow naming and shaming. We also have suppliers on the group who offer real-time information. They can tell the group if they are ordering more of something, and so on. There is also other information – everything from how to boil dishes to Pesach markets."

According to Ozeri, "Pesach is a shock for everybody every year – it's just one of those things. So I hope this helps people. We don't allow Halachic queries, and we are not replacing the kosher department! It's just a service."

Lewis sees chat groups like these as a highly useful forum. "If someone is looking for a specific product, they can ask if anyone has seen it. We share lists of food prices, or even take photos of the shelves. Stores often have

exclusive ranges of Pesach products, so there is the element of sharing those as well. We share prices, but to avoid *loshen hora* (evil tongue) we shouldn't say 'this is cheaper/more expensive'. People can draw their own conclusions."

Lewis says the group is also useful for sharing and understanding ingredients. Some people don't eat certain things on Pesach because of their *minhag* (family tradition) – for example sunflower oil or peanut butter. So, if there is a certain margarine on the shelves, group members can ask what oil is in it. Then, some eat certain certain *kitiniyot* (grains) and some don't, so it's important to share those details. In addition, not everyone reads Hebrew, so with imported products from Israel, members can help decipher the *hechsher* (kosher stamp)."

In addition, Lewis says that the group includes suppliers like Jonty Kantor at Pick n Pay Hypermarket Norwood in the capacity of customer liaison. "He is on the floor, and whenever new stock comes in, he posts on the group. Anyone can also message him directly. This is the power of technology!"

Lewis believes these groups are helpful in combating the financial stress of Pesach, because not only do they provide the best prices, they give people the ability to spread out costs up to three months in advance. However, she says people often get carried away with buying expensive Pesach products like cake mixes or sauces.

"You need to assess realistically what you are buying to use for Pesach. Often it is also about stocking up for the rest of the year. For example, Chalav Yisrael Lancewood cheese is available only at Pesach, so if you buy it now for the rest of the year, it can add up to a lot. But it's not a Pesach cost – it's a cost you lay out at Pesach.

"Creativity goes a long way in keeping things

simple and financially manageable," she advises. Instead of spending time running around the shops to find something that costs an arm and a leg, you can often make something similar at home, such as mayonnaise, chutney, or pasta sauce. With the internet, there are hundreds of recipes out there, and the world is your oyster."



"So much falls on the woman, and often she arrives at the seder a wreck! And she still has to serve people with a happy face."

About five years ago, Lindy Fohrman started a WhatsApp group called Pesach Preparation. What began as a tiny group now has 300 members, and it is basically a free course in getting ready for the *chag*.

"A few years ago, I was in the car the whole time before Pesach, and I felt so fragmented! On Erev Pesach I thought, there has to be a way to make this easier." So the next year, Fohrman started preparing for Pesach in January, sharing her advice with the group.

Every week, she posts simple tips for people to follow. "We begin with buying non-perishables, and we start slowly. Every week, we look at buying disposables, looking at what you have left over from last year, and we begin the cleaning six weeks before. We do the change over a week before, and start the cooking early." The group also includes links to recipes and price lists.

Fohrman says this really is a labour of love,

and it's all about helping each other. "So much falls on the woman, and often she arrives at the seder a wreck! And she still has to serve people with a happy face. By preparing early and slowly, she can arrive at the seder happy and relaxed, and actually enjoy it. It's all about bringing calm and *shalom* (peace) into the home. We also have to remember that she has been dealing with the first term and Purim – it's a lot to handle."

Fohrman says that there are challenges to running such a group, which is why she uses the WhatsApp setting of allowing only the admin to post. "Before that, it was incredibly overwhelming, and I was always telling people what they could and couldn't post – for example, asking for a baking recipe at midnight!"

She says that a huge advantage of the group is spreading out the costs of Pesach over three months. "Pesach is expensive, so we encourage people to store things – double wrap and freeze. They are encouraged to write things down, and buy for next year. It's about adding onto your weekly shop so that when you get to Pesach, you don't have a hefty bill."

Fohrman says that anyone is welcome to join the group, even just before Pesach, and they can stay on. She even has people from Israel, the United Kingdom and Australia on the group. "It's the power of community and technology coming together. It's really bridged the gaps, and brought us closer. It's a support service, and about making it easier for the women, which is truly liberating!"

She says people think she has Pesach preparation down to a T, but "I am only human, I also find myself rushing around at the last minute sometimes! But it's a real honour and brocha to be able to help people. It's a way of saying, 'Let me help you out, let's do this together.'"



Shabbat Toilet Paper



Scan to visit
www.upap.co.za

Inquire at your local
Shul or Judaica shop

***R6-75** incl.
per pack VAT

*Recommended Retail Price

BENEFITS:

- ♥ PRE-CUT, EASY TO USE
- ♥ FLUSHES WITH NO FUSS
- ♥ MORE ECONOMICAL
- ♥ EASY FOR KIDS TO USE



The mark of
responsible forestry
FSC® C114716



Answering our kids' toughest questions

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

There's a reason why children ask the four questions at the Pesach seder. For most children, one of their favourite words is "why". In fact, *ma nishtana* (why is this night...) is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to answering your kids' questions.

The first question to ask, is why children ask so many questions. "Children are little philosophers, they're intrigued by life because curiosity drives learning," says Nikki Bush, creative parenting expert, speaker, and the co-author of *Easy Answers to Awkward Questions and Tech Savvy Parenting*.

"Curiosity is behind their 'why, why, why?' We may get irritated, but they're trying to work out how the world works, and what impact they can have on it. Children are born curious. We don't just have to answer their questions, we need to help them to find meaning and an understanding of the world and their place in it."

Bush and Chabad Rabbi Ari Kievman discuss how to address four of your kid's toughest questions.

Why do people die?

"Be straight with them," says Kievman. "We're born, and we die. It's part of the cycle of life. It's a matter of presenting it in a delicate way. Explain that that's why we must take advantage and enjoy every moment we have. My kids and I discuss [the notion of] *carpe diem* – living life to its fullest in a meaningful, purposeful way."

Bush echoes his advice, saying that we need to speak the truth in a gentle, calm, and matter-of-fact way. "We tend to try to avoid death," she says, "but that leaves our kids completely unprepared for the reality when it does happen. Tell your children that everything that's born and grows and lives

eventually dies – including pets and people. We don't want to scare them, so we must do it very gently and in context. Children need concrete examples. Some people die because they get sick, some get old, and some have accidents. You also need to couch it within your religious value system and beliefs surrounding death. Religious rituals around death can help ground them in the reality that the person is not coming back. It's normal for them to keep asking until they get the answer that satisfies them."

an appropriate way – we're arguing, we're debating something, we're going to reach a conclusion that works."

"Tell them we're all different, we come from different backgrounds, and that's what makes life interesting," says Bush. "We need to understand each other, which can sometimes lead to misunderstandings and an argument. But having an argument is a way of understanding each other and a different point of view."

kids are about two years old to bring sexuality into mainstream conversation in an age-appropriate way. It's better to have lots of different conversations over time than to sit down and have one discussion. 'The talk' is scary for a parent, and is too scary and overwhelming for a child. Do it here and there where they see birds hopping on each other or lions mating on *National Geographic*. Introduce the concept that it takes a male and a female to make a baby.

"Children are fascinated with their own stories, how they were born, but ultimately, they ask, how they got into mommy's tummy. You don't need to get to the nitty gritty immediately. Build it up and wait until they're old enough to understand. You need to talk about the fact that making a baby happens within a loving relationship. Say, 'you were made out of love'. If you don't put sex out there, someone else will, and not necessarily in the way you'd like. With social media, YouTube and so on, your child can inadvertently get a very graphic depiction of sex. You have to get in first."

Kievman reaffirms the importance of ensuring that the information comes from

you, the parent. "They're going to find it out one way or another. It's important for the parents to talk about it. It's not something you want to hide. We can't shelter our kids from reality. Maybe years ago it was more possible but today, they're going to be exposed to all types of things. It's better that it comes from the parents in an appropriate, refined way."

Why does my friend have an Xbox [insert appropriate gadget] and I don't?

"That's part of the major debate: do we have to have all these extras in life?" says Kievman. "I'd talk to my kid and ask whether it's necessary for them to have it. Say that maybe your friend's parents have more money to spend, and we, your parents, choose to spend our finances differently. We want to ensure that you have the best, and maybe that's not a priority for us. [But] you don't want your kids feeling deprived that other kids have things and they don't. Say that if it's important to you to have an Xbox, maybe we can get you the chance to play on one sometime. Give kids the message that you love them, you care for them, and you'll get what you think is important for them. They'll probably accept that, and appreciate that you're looking out for their best interests."

Use it as a chance to teach your kids some life lessons regarding budgeting and saving, says Bush. "It's the same with cell phones," she says, "Say we as your parents believe you can have a cell phone only by age X, and until then, you can use ours with supervision. Offer alternatives for now. Be the authority. We have to lead our children; we cannot let our children lead us. We also must have sound reasons for why the answer is no, children don't just accept 'because'."



Why do mom and dad fight?

"While one should try to avoid fighting in front of the kids, we can't shield our kids from reality," says Kievman. "Just as they're going to be exposed to death, they're going to be exposed to fighting. Say that people sometimes have disagreements with each other. Mom and dad love each other, and because they love each other, they want to work out their differences. The kids could learn from you to fight in

Where do babies come from?

While every family is different in terms of when they talk about sex, Bush and Kievman coincidentally both mention the age of eight. "Every child will ask the question," says Bush. "It's very important that parents answer it within the context of their value system, and that they use their own family words to create understanding. Parents need to find teachable moments from the time their

KILLARNEY MALL

CONVENIENTLY YOURS!

FINAL FRIDAY FOODIE MARKET

#GrabNGo

26 APR

10am - 3pm




FOOD&HOME

ENTERTAINING





T: 011 646 4657 • KILLARNEYMALL.CO.ZA





Three life lessons from the exodus

RABBI GREG ALEXANDER

How many Jews will sit down to a seder this year? Well, first we would have to agree on how many Jews there are in the world. Some say 14 million, and some 16 million and everything in between. And then we have to guess how many know it's Pesach. And of those who know, how many will choose to sit and retell the greatest story ever told – the exodus from Egypt.

Sociologists say that along with fasting on Yom Kippur and circumcising their children, a Pesach seder is one of the few Jewish rituals that most Jews, whatever their affiliation or involvement, continue to do. So, let's go for about 10 million? That's a lot of matzah balls!

But back up a bit, and ask who is a Jew? By doing this, you open up a heated debate. Gatekeepers differ in their requirements for all reasons. For Israel, it is one Jewish grandparent. For rabbis, it is your parents' or grandparents' *ketubah*, or a valid conversion. For community organisers, some kind of involvement in a Jewish



organisation. For many out there, who don't need any paperwork, just an inner sense of knowing.

Which makes it remarkable that the exodus itself makes an amazing observation on the number of Jews in the world at the time. After the dramatic 10 plagues, when the Israelites finally left Mitzrayim (Egypt), the Torah tells us that, "the children of Israel went out *chamushim* from the land of Egypt". (Ex 13:18) Only it doesn't explain what the word *chamushim* actually means. It could come from a root meaning "five", but it is usually translated as "armed".

This ambiguity is picked up by our greatest commentator, Rashi, who lived a thousand years ago in France, and actually gives both definitions. (By the way, I love the fact that our ancestors were confident enough in their Judaism to hold two or more competing explanations as equally valid and true). "*Chamushim* means armed." Another interpretation is that one in five – *chamesh* – among the children of Israel came out of Egypt; four-fifths died during the three days of darkness [because they did not want to leave Egypt]."

Let's look at each of the interpretations that Rashi cites. The first is that they had weapons, and we see that indeed, throughout their 40 years of wandering the desert, they would be called upon to fight battle after battle. The second interpretation is more startling – that only one-fifth of the total number of Jews left Egypt. That is astonishing.

The overwhelming majority did not choose to leave their place of slavery!

What is that about? Surely anything was better than slavery. Apparently not. Who can begin to understand what it takes for someone whose family has lived 400 years in one reality to decide to risk change? To step into the unknown. To walk away from everything they ever knew, even if it was grim. According to Rashi, the majority did not.

There is actually a third midrashic explanation that uses the "five" root of *chamushim*. Rabbi Joshua interpreted it thus: fivefold they came out of Egypt, for five times their number in converts were gathered into the people of Israel upon their departure from Egypt. (Midrash Tanchuma)

This is equally astounding! It appears that a whole mass of Egyptians and others (freed slaves, political asylum seekers, opportunists, Egyptian civil-rights activists, lovers, poets, dreamers?) walked out of Mitzrayim alongside the Israelites.

Were they accepted by Moses and other leaders? It seems they were. In fact, many

commentators point out that more than any other mitzvah, the Torah tells us no less than 36 times to love the stranger among us, "because you know the feelings of a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt". (Ex 23:9)

If we take these three midrashic readings, we have a powerful teaching for Pesach. First, we walk out into the world armed to face the challenges we will meet. Pesach is a time

to assess which of our defences are fitting and serve us, and which are created by fear and lack of correct information. Once we know the difference, we choose to enforce the former, and break down the latter.

In terms of the second reading, we remind ourselves that coming out of slavery is not easy. In fact, in 2019, besides the very real scourge of human trafficking, most of our slavery is internal and self-imposed. And even if the solution is clear and available to us, it doesn't mean that we pursue it.

It comes from bad habits that settle into their own groove, and before we look around, they are part of the furniture in the rooms of our lives. Whether it's the food we eat, the relationships we fail to fix, or the addictions we live with, as we clean the *chametz* from our cupboards, may we clean the *chametz* of our lives too.

Lastly, in terms of the third reading, may we consider that the notion of who is "in" our community and who is "out" as variable, as it always was. The boundaries of Judaism are permeable to allow for many and varied pathways and interpretations, and to allow for those who choose to enter our community to do so with gracious welcome. This Pesach, may we look beyond our own circle to see who is on the periphery wanting admission, and let us welcome them in. *Kol dichfin*. Let all who are hungry come and eat.

• Rabbi Greg Alexander is one of the rabbinic team at the Cape Town Progressive Jewish Congregation.



NOOVO
REAL ESTATE SHOWROOM

The Gefen Tower,
Ramat Gan

Located in a family oriented modern neighborhood next to Park HaYarkon, just minutes to Central Tel Aviv

Only 15% Due at Signing - The Rest at Completion!

2 - 4 Bedroom Units + Custom Layouts Available

Interested in more details?

Contact us today!
Tel: +972.3.504.3400
office@noovo.co.il
www.noovo.co.il

49 Rothschild Boulevard · Tel Aviv

Noovo Real Estate
Showroom

Buy Different



What Pesach teaches the youth

South African Jewish youth movements talk about what Pesach means to them, and the lessons their particular organisation's *channichim* learn from this *chag*.

Habonim: social justice, freedom, and equality

EDEN PLEIN, SGANIT MAZKIRA KLALI, HABONIM DROR SA

Pesach offers so many lessons for Habonim youth. In the Pesach story, the Jewish people are confronted with the issues of social justice, freedom, community, self-restraint, and more. It is essential that we take advantage of these lessons as diaspora Jewry in 2019.

For Habonim, Pesach is, of course, an undeniable message about the importance of *kehillah* (community). The story of the entire nation being discriminated against in exile, and then experiencing the hardships of nomadic life together as a unit, emphasises our bond with one another as Jews. From the Pesach story, we learn that Judaism is central to a Jew's identity, no matter where or when.

We are even confronted with the complexities of separation within the *kehillah* when we reflect on the account of the encampment of the tribes of Israel in the book of Bamidbar. To protect the tabernacle, they travelled in an ordered, uniform formation, with each tribe having its own role to play. It reminds us how in our community, there are different internal tribes with differing cultural, political, and perhaps religious beliefs. However, we all work towards the same goal, namely the preservation and advancement of our people. Testament to this message is the fact that, ultimately, each tribe received the same Torah, transcribed by Moshe on *Har Sinai*

(Mount Sinai).

This focal point in our history solidifies the fact that we are, and will always be, a people distinct from the rest of the world, tasked with the responsibility of shedding light in the world.

Just as our ancestors ate unleavened bread when exiting the land of Egypt, we refrain from eating leavened grain on Pesach. Even this mitzvah is directly linked to the above message of *kehillah*, that we carry with us our ancestor's blessings and burdens in the preservation of the culture and essence of our people.

Moreover, in 2019, the mitzvah of refraining from various common food products teaches us about self-restraint, and contextualises our privilege in the land of Israel and the diaspora.

The way that the Jewish nation fought for its freedom in the Pesach story implicitly teaches us that as Jews, we believe in the right to autonomy of all people. With this in mind, Habonim's Pesach story is a present-day call to form alliances with those without autonomy. With independence in our own state of Israel, it becomes our duty to advocate for all those who still face persecution, and to act always in the image of justice, freedom, and equality.

Netzer: our progressive seder

RACHAEL SARA, HEAD OF NETZER CAPE TOWN

Pesach is all about freedom, right? The story goes that we were slaves in Mitzrayim (Egypt) and then Pharaoh let us go and thus, we were free... or were we?

Today, though many of us have woken up and realised what our role is in creating a better world, there are still oppressors evident in our lives, Technology? Discrimination? Unkindness? Unfavourable laws? Child labour? Closed-mindedness? How can we celebrate freedom when there are so many who do not have this privilege? These are the questions we must ask at our seder.

So how is our seder different from all other seders?

In progressive Judaism, we not only have the *kos Eliyahu* (cup for Elijah the prophet), but also the *kos Miriam* (cup for Miriam). Miriam, as we know, saved Moses' life by giving him to the

waters, allowing the flowing streams to take him to where he needed to be to rise up and become the leader that he was.

This theme of water stuck with Miriam even in the desert. A well, filled with *mayim chayim* (life sustaining waters), followed the Israelites through the desert only while Miriam was alive. The *kos Miriam* symbolises these life-sustaining waters on our seder table. We, as South Africans, know all too well how valuable this resource is.

The tradition that accompanies the legend of Miriam can take on many forms at the progressive seder. One of these is to bring an empty *kos Miriam* to the table at the start of the seder. Each guest at the table is required to pour a little water from their own glass into the *kos Miriam*. As each person pours into the cup, they talk about how someone or something has nurtured them and given them life-sustaining guidance.

This honours Miriam and the life-sustaining impact she had on us in the desert. It also symbolises the fact that we all need to contribute to sustaining this world. It must be the work of many to truly achieve the freedom for all that we so desperately seek.

The *kos Miriam* also allows us to celebrate women in Judaism. The Pesach mitzvah is not only to tell the story, but to ask questions. So, we tell the legend of Miriam, and ask what else can be done in this world to enhance women's rights.

There are so many struggles that need our attention, so many people still in chains. The question is what we choose to engage with and tackle, because none of us are free in a world where there is but one person in chains.



Habonim Johannesburg's chocolate seder

Bnei Akiva: learning so much from so little

ILLAN BIDDLE, NATIONAL CHAIRPERSON, BNEI AKIVA

Pesach teaches us powerful lessons which relate to Bnei Akiva's commitment to the Jewish people, the land of Israel, and the Torah.

These come from a *mishne* (commentary), which states, "He begins with shame and concludes with praise." The Talmudic sage Shmuel explains it as follows, "he begins with shame" refers to *avadim hayinu* (we were slaves) and "he concludes with praise" refers to "Hashem our G-d took us out from there".

Why was it necessary for us to begin with the shame of humiliating, backbreaking labour in servitude to Pharaoh? What lessons can we learn as Bnei Akiva?

Rav Soloveitchik explains that only through brutal slavery were the Jews able to truly understand the cruelty of human suffering. Consequently, a feeling of compassion and sensitivity toward their fellow man was engendered within them. Without being enslaved, they would never have been able to reach true levels of empathy and sensitivity toward others. Slavery allowed the Jewish nation to become a truly free nation with the ability to comprehend the difficulties of others and act mercifully toward one another.

The question can also be answered with the analogy of a bow and arrow. If we attempt to shoot an arrow without pulling back the bow string, what will happen? Most likely it will stay put. However, what will happen to the arrow if we pull the bow string back and release it? It will travel a great distance. The same is true for the Jewish nation. It is through being pulled back so greatly by harsh slavery that we can blossom into the strong, united, successful nation we are today.

This is also true of *eretz Yisrael* (the land of Israel). Following a brutal exile, you might think it best to give up on the dream of returning to your homeland. However, in spite of and perhaps because of our suffering and exile, many Jews have returned to Israel, and many others continue to pursue the dream of returning to their homeland.

We can apply this lesson to our personal lives. In spite of our failure or suffering, we must never give up. Rather we should use our setbacks to push us forward.

The final lesson comes from the fact that from just one statement in the *mishne*, and one simple question regarding the statement, we have learned two incredible, relevant lessons. It is one small example of the limitless depth of Torah, and the overflowing lessons within.

Betar: Pesach is further proof of our connection to Israel

YOSSI MALHERBE, SGAN ROSH HANHAGA, BETAR

Pesach is a special *chag* for Betar, a Zionist youth movement, as it is the story of how we gained our freedom from slavery, and began our return to the land promised to Abraham and the Jewish people. It shows a more than 3 000-year-old connection with Israel.

Pesach offers proof that without a Jewish state, the Jewish people will be weak and at risk. Since Israel's independence in 1948, Jewish people have been persecuted less than at any time in history since the destruction of the second temple. Instead, it has helped to save Jews around the globe. As Betarim, it is our duty to stand by Israel, and to encourage Jews to move to Israel so that the country can flourish even further.

Our claim to Israel is religious and legal. Following the Ottoman Empire, an international agreement called the Sykes-Picot Agreement (1916) divided Arab lands under the empire's control into French and British spheres, giving them rights to areas such as Syria, Lebanon, parts of Iraq and Turkey, Israel, and Armenia.

In the hope of creating a peaceful relationship between Jews and their Muslim neighbours, the British Mandate of Palestine

set out only 22% of the territory for the Jewish state. The rest became Jordan.

Israel is both our ancient religious soil, and a legally designated area for Jews whose borders were shaped by international votes and defensive wars.

People argue that Jews have no claim to Israel, a country in which the majority are Jews and there are democratically elected officials. No one discusses the Alawite minority rulers of Syria, the Muslim rulers of Persian Iran, or Saudis receiving Jordan. If no-one has a problem with other Sykes-Picot land distributions, why take issue with Israel? Palestinians are banned from working in various fields in Syria, not in Israel. Why target Israel for "apartheid" when Syria is guilty of it, not Israel?

Today's anti-Semitism is being rebranded as anti-Zionism.

For the love of our people and the love of our religious/legal/just homeland, Betar sees the Jewish land and the Jewish people as one, knowing that Israel is just, and Zionism and Judaism are connected. On Pesach, Betarim around the world reiterate their commitment to stand up for Israel and Zionism, to help protect our eternal homeland, and to keep Jews around the world connected through Zionism.



RESTONIC®

**SUPPORTING DREAMS
SINCE 1938**

Move towards the ocean breeze, living at ease, a new age of independent living.

EIGHTONN, 8 Norfolk Rd, Sea Point
Now Selling

Blok's latest development encompasses a new boutique approach to independent living by providing highly accessible and spacious apartments for a more mature clientele who are looking for a future-facing modern home to retire to in the Atlantic Seaboard.

Contact us for more information on this exciting new development or visit our website for floor plans and pricing.

Pesach heroines lead the way for today's abused women

WENDY HENDLER

In the Pesach story, it is women who bring about the salvation of the Jewish people.

When Pharaoh aims to destroy the Jewish people through systematic and barbaric slavery and by the killing all first-born male children, it is the women who flout his decree.

First, the midwives refuse to obey him, and they let the boys live. As Pharaoh commands that all the male children be thrown into the river, a mother hides her son in a watertight basket.

Moshe's sister, Miriam, approaches the princess, Pharaoh's daughter, at the river, and finds a way to connect with her sense of compassion.

Then, in an act of rebellion against her father, the Egyptian princess saves the baby, Moshe, and brings him into the palace as her adopted son. This paves the way for Moshe's evolution into the spiritual leader and saviour of the Jewish people.

Across all ethnicities and divides, women collaborate to affirm life even at the risk of their own safety. Their triumph is one of the human spirit – the courage to defy immoral orders and injustice, and stand up against abuse. It speaks directly to all women today who find themselves in abusive relationships.

How tremendously difficult must it have been for these women to find their inner strength and act to obstruct tyranny in a world that conspired to crush their humanity?

And how difficult is it for women today to speak out or to defy their abusers? How do women reach the turning point of saying no, and putting themselves first in the relationship?

The first step is for her to recognise that what



she is experiencing is abuse. The next step is to understand the cycle of abuse, and to be able to pinpoint her position in the cycle.

The cycle of abuse starts with a rise in tension in the relationship. There may be angry outbursts, demeaning comments, and threatening behaviour. These escalate until there is a violent explosion, sometimes physical, more often verbal and emotional.

The woman is terrified, disempowered, and made silent. The next stage is the honeymoon stage. The partner, fearing that she may leave him, apologises profusely, brings gifts, proclaims his undying love, and commits to never repeating the behaviour.

The woman feels confused, but needs to believe him and trust in his promises. She drops her guard, and lets him back into her heart.

Things may remain calm for a period but, soon enough, there is another rise in tension and the

cycle repeats itself.

The danger of this pattern is that the abuse becomes entrenched, and the level of violence tends to escalate with each cycle.

The damage to the woman's psyche is enormous. Her sense of self is eroded. She is made to take the blame for his abusive behaviour, and lives in fear of another outburst.

She lives her life on high alert, watching every step of her behaviour to avoid "provoking" him. Her sense of safety in her home, as well as her world, is destroyed.

Recognition of the fact that she is a victim of abuse is extremely empowering. Knowledge that it is not her fault, and that nothing she does or does not do causes his behaviour, is liberating.

It frees her to regain her sense of self, and the knowledge that she matters. The way is now open for her to make some healthy choices.

While it has always been taboo for women to talk about the abuse they were suffering at the hands of their partners, the tide is turning.

With the advent of movements such as the #MeToo movement, it has now become more acceptable for women to find their voice and share their stories without fear of blame or guilt.

Women worldwide are leading the way in highlighting abuse and its consequences. Zero-tolerance to all forms of abuse is being assimilated into society's norms and values.

Just as the women in the Pesach story took a stand for the dignity of human life, so women today are taking a stand for the dignity of women.

No longer is it safe to hold a woman hostage in an abusive relationship through fear and intimidation. Jewish women, too, are finding their voices, standing up to injustice, and following the example set thousands of years ago by the courageous women who ensured the continuity of the Jewish people.

• Wendy Hendler is the co-founder of Koleinu SA.

How to keep children – and adults – at your seder table

TALI FEINBERG

It's a tall order: set a beautiful seder table, prepare an amazing Pesach meal, get through the haggadah with everyone's full attention... and keep the kids at the table. Meanwhile, the attention of the adults may wander too. So, how do you keep the seder fun and entertaining for kids and adults alike?

Props, décor, and dress up

Your first port of call is your local Jewish Mommies Facebook group. There, you will find a number of clever entrepreneurs selling cheap and cheerful Pesach props that will bring the seder story to life. Buy a couple of "packs of plagues" for adults and children, and encourage them to go wild. You'll have adults enjoying their "darkness plague" sunglasses and the kids loving the squeaky frogs. You can even ask your guests to dress up beforehand – think desert robes and pharaoh attire.

Décor is your chance to create an atmosphere. You can continue the desert theme with drapes, lights, and everyone sitting on the floor. You can even add in some sand and palm leaves.

Another idea is to use kitchen paper as tablecloths, and invite guests to draw Pesach images during the seder.

Make it real

Ultimately, if you bring the story of the Exodus to life, you have done your job. So, make it as real as possible. Turn off the lights to get a feeling for the plague of darkness, or put red food colouring in water for the blood. Make sure that real children stand in for the four sons, and allow them to dress up in those roles. You can even get everyone to run outside and go for a brisk walk to get a feel for how it was for the Jews to leave their homes in a hurry!

Get the kids involved

To keep the children at the table, make them lead the way. Encourage them to sing every Pesach song they know, and bring the haggadot they made at school, if they made them. Or you can have simple haggadot for

them to colour in and decorate. The older kids can plan the afikomen hunt for the younger kids, and you can have competitions for best dressed, best singing, best reading, and so on.

Choose a good haggadah

Amazing haggadot are coming out all the time. There is even a Harry Potter one! This year, the Jewish parenting website kveller.com created its own one, free to download. A haggadah with great pictures or a special theme can make all the difference, especially for adults who don't know the seder well.

Have food on the table

The downfall of any seder is hungry guests. Counter this with nuts, dried fruit, or some kind of edible centrepiece on the table. Add in matzah and charoset, and you are good to go.

Make sure guests look forward to the end

Seders are notorious for fading after the main meal. So, give your guests a heads up that the best is yet to come. Perhaps serve dessert after the end of the seder. Or plan a talent show where groups have to perform their own version of *Chad Gadya* – including sound effects!

Have fun and be inclusive

Ultimately, if guests feel that they belong, that they are part of this special gathering, and that they are having fun, then no one will want to leave. One way to give your guests "ownership" of the seder is to get them involved beforehand. Perhaps they could all bring a "show and tell" item that represents what Pesach means to them.

Then, read your audience and do what makes them feel included. The mom who never went to a Jewish school? Get her to read an easy paragraph – she will love to be included. The wild kid who is always getting into trouble? Make him dress up as the wise son, and see his face light up. The father who can't wait to get the seder over with? Put him in charge of the talent show or the afikomen hunt, and he will be too busy to leave! By the time everyone has traipsed out the door, you will have given them a fun and educational seder that they are unlikely to forget.

Chag Sameach

Wishing you and your loved ones a happy Passover!

VOTE  **DA**

to build One South Africa for All!

Call 0861 22 55 32 | Whatsapp 084 000 2019
www.OneSouthAfricaForAll.co.za

Cartoon matzah character is huge in Holland – and not just among Jews

CNAAN LIPSHIZ – JTA

Anywhere else in Europe, a muscular cartoon character named Max the Matzah would have amounted to little more than an inside Jewish joke.

But in the Netherlands, where matzah for many non-Jews is a household item year-round, Max became an unlikely hit with the general population. Since his creation about 15 years ago as the unofficial mascot of the Children's Museum of Amsterdam's Jewish Cultural Quarter, Max has proven popular beyond the country's 40 000 Jews.

Max is a frog-eyed figure, whose head, rising straight from the waist of a pair of green trousers, is a round matzah. His beefy bear arms wouldn't look out of place on a Marvel superhero.

He was born in the early 2000s as a drawing designed by Israeli artist Ram Katzir and Petra Katzenstein, the manager of the Jewish Children's Museum, which is the only one of its kind in Europe.

Since then, Max has been made into thousands of puppets by the museum. He stars and acts as a guide in the animated films accompanying the displays at the children's museum, which receives about 20 000 visitors each year.

He has been featured on taxi cabs as part of the museum's advertising campaign, and on tens of thousands of boxes of Hollandia, the matzah factory in the Netherlands located in the eastern city of Enschede. (It is largely thanks to that factory, which used to be owned by Jews, that matzah became so popular here.)

In 2010, Max received his own comic book, published by the museum, and available in children's libraries across the country.

On the 10th anniversary of the children's

museum, in 2017, Max made appearances with the Netherlands' best-known host of a children's television show, Siemon de Jong. The museum also made a Max rap video that year, cementing the cartoon's status as Dutch Jewry's undisputed ambassador to children.

Max would not have resonated with large numbers of children anywhere else in Europe, according to Katzenstein.

"If you don't know what a matzah is, then you just don't get it," she said. In the Netherlands, however, "on Easter, everyone eats matzah, even though they don't really know what matzah means for us Jews."

Katzenstein said this makes matzah – and Max – a good place to start teaching about Jewish tradition and history. Which is why Max has an elaborate backstory.

He lives in a dollhouse in the attic of a Dutch Jewish family called the Hollanders with other members of his multicultural family of pastries, including one chocolate chip variety. Max is related to Benny the Bagel, Ayalah the Challah, and Gita the Pita, among others.

The family's story, told in animated videos at the museum, "actually tells the story of the Jewish diaspora," Katzenstein said.

Not surprisingly, Max is a smashing success with Jewish families here, many of which have the puppets at home. Max features annually in the Passover display of this city's main Jewish kindergarten, Simcha.

The parents there appreciate how Max's

own character is an attempt to approach the vulnerability of Jews throughout the ages as well as their determination, through Zionism, to limit it by returning to their ancestral home.

"He's brittle and vulnerable on the one hand, but strong and robust on the other," Katzenstein said.



Petra Katzenstein holds a Max the Matzah puppet

Photo: Cnaan Lipshiz

with Max in a billboard and matzah-box campaign to celebrate the museum's 10th anniversary. De Jong, whose partner is Israeli, also hosted a matzah decoration contest at the small kitchen of the children's museum, where visitors can make challah and matzah.

In one episode, he hosted an Arab child who declined to eat from the challah they had just baked because "that's how the Jews poisoned Arafat", De Jong recalled.

"It showed me that there is a lot of work that needs to be done."

Katzenstein said an equally shocking conversation with a child prompted her to create the museum she now runs.

She was working at the time as a guide in the main Jewish museum, which is now one of five adjacent institutions comprising Amsterdam's Jewish Cultural Quarter. The complex receives about 380 000 visitors annually, and includes the Portuguese Synagogue and the National Holocaust Museum.

"The girl was shocked to discover I was Jewish," Katzenstein recalled. "When I asked her why, she told me, 'I thought all the Jews had died.'"

Katzenstein's young interlocutor wasn't that far off. The Nazis and their collaborators killed 75% of the Netherlands' 140 000 Jews – the highest death rate in Nazi-occupied Western Europe.

That means that outside Amsterdam, "Dutch non-Jewish children can no longer visit the homes of Jewish ones," Katzenstein said. "This is part of the reason we designed the children's museum to resemble a Jewish home so it would serve that purpose."

But, she said, "We needed to find a host. And I think Max does a great job."



Remax is recognised locally and internationally as Israel's leading real estate group. Remax Netanya has the largest and most diverse spread of properties in Netanya and Poleg. Measuring up to the highest levels of professionalism, reliance and integrity, we will find the property that matches your unique spec.

- 3 Branches focused in the key English speaking strongholds of Netanya-Poleg; Nitza and Kiriyat Hasharon
- For over 22 years, more than ten thousand customers have relied upon us
- More than 65 professional active agents and over 600 sole mandates

For more information visit our SA website: www.remax-n.co.il/sa

POLEG IR YAMIM PROPERTIES +72 MORE	DUPLEX HOUSE 6 ROOMS, 370 m ²	 ₪5,500,000	APARTMENT 5 ROOMS, 140 m ²	 ₪2,995,000
--	--	----------------	---	----------------

KIRYAT HASHARON PROPERTIES +87 MORE	APARTMENT 4 ROOMS, 110 m ²	 ₪1,890,000	MINI PENTHOUSE 5 ROOMS, 135 m ²	 ₪2,290,000
---	---	----------------	--	----------------

NITZA BLVD PROPERTIES +12 MORE	APARTMENT 3 ROOMS, 80 m ²	 ₪2,050,000	APARTMENT 4 ROOMS, 147 m ²	 ₪2,770,000
--	--	----------------	---	----------------

Bankfin

Bankfin represents Remax Netanya exclusively in South Africa. This unique partnership offers a one-stop service providing the South African investor and oleh with complete holistic tax and financial services in both the South African and Israeli jurisdictions.

Services offered:

- Financial emigration and SARB compliance
- Tax compliance and advisory (SA and Israel)
- Financial planning and set up-pre and post aliya
- Working with Israeli-South African lawyers and family offices

Contact information:
 Jeremy Bank
 CPA (IL); CA (SA); Registered Estate Agent (IL)
 Email: Jeremy@bankfin.biz
 Tel: +972 52-912-5052
 Whatsapp: +972 58-455-8332

Egyptian Jews after the exodus fearful and needy

TALI FEINBERG

Although the Pesach story began in Egypt, there are only about 12 Jews living in that country today – mostly elderly and primarily concentrated in Alexandria.

There are a few community members left in Cairo, but outside of those two cities, Jewish life in Egypt is non-existent.

According to the World Jewish Congress, the Jewish population in Egypt topped 80 000 people in 1948. This was followed by a decade-long decline, mainly because of the establishment of the state of Israel, during which Egyptian Jewry dwindled to near extinction.

Both synagogues in Egypt – Sha'ar Hashamayim and Eliahu Hanabi – are Sephardic and orthodox leaning. There is no official rabbi in the country, and kosher food is extremely scarce. Yet, there are many Jewish historical sites throughout Egypt, including the Maimonides Synagogue and Bassatine Cemetery in Cairo. The latter is considered one of the oldest Jewish cemeteries in the world.

In 2013, Egyptian Jewish community leader Magda Haroun told the *Egyptian Independent*, “I used to say a lot that [my late sister] Nadia and I will be the ones to close the door on the history of Jews in Egypt... the burden is heavy. The elderly live in fear because of the [prevailing] image of Jews as traitors and spies. They fear people finding out they're Jewish. I



Magda Shehata Haroun at the Shaar Hashamayim Synagogue in Cairo

Photo: Khaled Desouki/AFP

Weinstein succeeded her mother in 2004 as the leader of the community. Since the late 1990s, the community has been headed by women as the male population has dwindled.

Speaking to *The Cairo Scene*, Haroun said, “There used to be no anti-Semitism in Egypt. Many Jews came here from European and Arab countries because it was a tolerant, abloom place, it was a society that accepted everyone.”

From fashion to cinema, Jews were at the top of their respective industries making sizeable contributions to the development of the country. “It is partially thanks to Jewish families like Mosseiri, Rolo, and Sawares that we even have a banking sector”, reported the paper.

“Minorities tend to excel, they always want their kids to be the best, as far as education and such. I'm not boasting, but many of the best scientists, doctors, economists, and businessmen are Jewish; they want to be the best they can be,” said Haroun.

Thinking back to the “Arab Spring” uprisings that took down dictator Hosni Mubarak, Haroun says: “That year was both a blessing and a curse. A blessing because the Egyptian people now know who their rulers were, and know about their fascist dictatorship. But also a curse because of the economic problems Egypt faced that year.

“But there is still a chance to fix things. The Jewish community in Egypt has donated money to the Support Egypt Fund in spite of its difficult living conditions. All members of the community have agreed to contribute to the fund. Hopefully, a new phase in the history of Egypt will begin, one where there will be no difference between Muslims, Christians, and Jews. I hope this good spirit returns, and we build our country together.”

Haroun is also concerned about the determination of Jewish property in the country. “So far, I do not have all the required documents for that, and I also fear my position will be politicised even though it is purely humanitarian,” she said.

But she insists that, “The Jewish synagogue has to remain open and receive people just like mosques and churches. If there are security concerns that result from ignorance, such as fears that someone might walk into the synagogue and bomb it thinking he will go to heaven, the whole of Egypt will lose. “Everyone should be open to everyone. I hope that one day, I will see a Jewish Museum in Egypt, one that will contain artefacts and tools of daily life so that people will learn that we are not different. We eat, drink, and pray, and have common traditions even when it comes to burial rituals. Coming generations need to know that we were part of this country. We have Islamic and Coptic museums, and I hope there will be a Jewish one.”

Haroun has an encyclopaedic knowledge of Cairo's remaining Jews-“My babies, I call them” – their health, their living situation, and the health of their children. She is anxious to give the remaining Jews in Cairo proper burials. She would like to hire a rabbi. For all of this, she needs the approval of the Egyptian government – and money.

Soon after she was elected president, she wrote a letter to the Shura Council demanding that the interim government reinstate a monthly allowance of 7 400 Egyptian pounds (about R14 950) for the Jewish community, which Morsi had abolished.

“We explained that it's a duty in Islam to help the needy, and these people are needy,” Haroun said. “And it's an honour for the Egyptian government to take care of these old women who refuse to leave the country. Although they have family all over the world, they want to die here.”

fear I will not be able to provide them with a decent ending to their lives, or to fulfil my pledge to safeguard the Jewish legacy and restore it. This legacy is part of me as an Egyptian Jew.”

Her predecessor, Carmen Weinstein, passed away in 2013, and her death was

heavily covered in Egyptian newspapers. President Mohamed Morsi, in a statement published in *The New York Times*, mourned Weinstein as a “dedicated Egyptian, who worked tirelessly to preserve Egyptian Jewish heritage and valued, above all else, living and dying in her country, Egypt”.

Rocking in the free world

SIMON APFEL

If there is one word to describe the countercultural milieu ushered in during the 1960s, it's “freedom”.

Free expression. Free association. Free movement. Free love. Freedom all round. Martin Luther King had a dream. Thirty-two African countries gained independence from their European colonial rulers. Democracy began to take a decisive hold. Presidents were turfed out, and wars terminated simply on the basis of public opinion.

limitations were revealed as self-imposed, self-perpetuated hoaxes. In effect, we became true masters of our destiny.

A process kick-started during the renaissance reached its zenith, as “enlightenment” took hold on a wide scale. Christopher John Penrice Booker, an English journalist and social commentator, described the 1960s as a classical Jungian cycle, “in which a rigid culture, unable to contain the demands for greater individual freedom, broke free of the social constraints of the previous age through extreme

Victorian etiquette. On top of this, the free and easy access to and availability of information (which ended up going into overdrive with the internet and social media a few decades later) meant we were free to pursue truth and expand our knowledge like no other generation before.

We had arrived at a unique moment in human history. Free choice was ratcheted up to maximum amplitude, and for the first time since the Church had come to power, we had the opportunity to choose to do the right thing for its own sake. We were freer that we'd ever been before, a momentous opportunity.

It's the world we're living in today.

And yet, just like mankind after Adam, we're blowing it. Just like the first time we tugged into fruit from the Tree of Knowledge, we're abusing our free choice to the point of catastrophe.

Indeed, “freedom” has meant little more than society bringing out into the open – without shame or humiliation, and even with pride – what previously we felt we needed to keep hidden. Now everything is permissible.

At root, the problem might be a misunderstanding of the value of freedom. Today it is upheld as an end in itself – perhaps the ultimate end – as opposed to a necessary means to an end. We've become so caught up in the euphoria of being able to do anything and get away with everything – and often to be lauded for it – that we've lost sight of the big picture.

Perhaps it's time to take our freedom and move forward with it. To live virtuous lives and pursue spiritual pleasures for their own sake. To make tough moral choices now that we have one. To acknowledge that now that we have the luxury of freedom, it's time to put it to good effect.

After all, isn't that the point?

Three thousand three hundred and twenty-eight years ago, the children of Israel recognised this. Freed from the straits of Egypt, and notwithstanding a few hiccups along the way, they resolved to use their freedom in the best possible way – they chose to bind themselves to boundlessness. In so doing, they made the ultimate choice. They chose to limit themselves to limitlessness. The path of higher living. The path ascribed by our holy Torah.

It's a path we've never been more free to choose.



Men grew their hair, rocked out, rebelled against the system. Any system. Women asserted themselves publicly, and effected social parity. Artists and thinkers began to test the limits of the mind, and to go places that had never been explored – that nobody had ever thought of exploring. At the same time, technology exploded, and suddenly people were free to go anywhere – even the moon – and to reach anyone, anywhere, anytime.

George Orwell's bleak vision of absolute government control failed to materialise, Aldous Huxley's fears proved premature. We could call this our “brave new world” without a hint of irony.

Borders and boundaries dissolved. Many

deviation from the norm”.

Finally, our minds were free. We could decide for ourselves what was right and wrong; what to do and what not to. Individual choice became real.

And so it was, that, for the second time in history, man ate from the Tree of Knowledge. The first time, Adam discovered that evil was possible – or, alternatively, caused it to be so. By doing so, he also discovered “good” – a concept which can have real meaning only relative to its counterpart.

This, the second time round, we no longer felt beholden to religious and political authorities; no longer subject to cultural oppressiveness or bound by inalienable social mores and meaningless

Freedom Seders – from revolution to revelation

HOWARD SACKSTEIN

It was the heady days of South Africa's revolution. The townships were in flames, and tens of thousands of people were in detention without trial. South Africa was burning in the 1980s, and democracy seemed like an impossible dream.

In 1985, Jews for Social Justice (JSJ), the South African Jewish anti-apartheid movement, decided that the story of Passover, the historical exodus from slavery to freedom, held a universal message for all of those in the anti-apartheid struggle.

Determined to inspire hope and share the message of freedom with others, JSJ decided to host a series of Freedom Seders with the leadership of the anti-apartheid movement to celebrate the universal message of liberation.

I approached Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris with the idea, and he immediately committed himself to support and attend the seder.

He also committed himself to designing a universal Haggadah that would not only share the story of Passover, but also Jewish teachings on freedom. The Haggadah would include universal writings on liberty from Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi, and other icons of liberation.

Maxine Hart and I undertook to get as many activists involved in the proceedings. We invited, among others, the leadership of the United

Democratic Front (the UDF was the internal wing of the ANC); the trade union movement, including Cosatu (Congress of South African Trade Unions); the End Conscription Campaign; the National Union of South African Students; the Five Freedoms Forum; the Detainees Parents Support Committee; the Black Sash; the Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee; the South African Council of Churches; and the National Educational Crisis Committee. The response from anti-apartheid activists was overwhelming.

As usual, the attempt to cajole the leadership of the South African Jewish community into attending was left to me. Their response was significantly more mooted than that of the political activists.

The participation of Chief Rabbi Harris, whom Nelson Mandela would later refer to as "my rabbi" and his activist lawyer wife, Ann Harris, gave some cover for some communal leaders to attend.

Logistics for the operation was handled by Judy Froman Cowan, whose parents Colin and Penny Froman were always willing to offer their home for JSJ functions. My father, Maurice Sackstein, made charoset and chrain for the event. My mother, Helen, offered her kneidlach recipe, because no activist should ever have to suffer through someone else's underwhelming kneidlach.

And so, each year for a number of

years, we gathered at the Froman home, and shared Jewish lessons on freedom with those who risked their lives, every day, for the liberation of South Africa.

Among those who attended were the Reverend Beyers Naudé (Oom Bey as he was affectionately known), the Afrikaans cleric and theologian who was one of the few Afrikaners willing to stand up to the National

Thabo Mbeki; and UDF activist Murphy Morobe, who later headed South Africa's financial and fiscal commission.

JSJ Chairperson Franz Auerbach, who had grown up in Nazi Germany, spoke of his family's escape to freedom from Hitler. JSJ executive Ursula Bruce spoke passionately about her son, David Bruce's, imprisonment for refusing to be

of oppression – could enter the land of Israel.

For years, the JSJ Freedom Seders would be among the most sought after events for those in the anti-apartheid community.

Politically orientated Passover seders are not unique, however. The President of the United States, Bill Clinton introduced a Pesach seder in the White House in 1993.

President Barak Obama started the tradition of seders while on his first election campaign in 2008 by celebrating in the basement of the Sheraton Hotel in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Once in office, Obama would host the annual gathering held in the White House residence's Old Family Dining Room. Attendance by Obama's daughters, Malia and Sasha, was compulsory, and the first children searched for the afikomen (a piece of matzah hidden during the seder) through the halls of the White House. Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel even wrote a specific piece of the Haggadah to be recited at the Obama seder.

Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump have continued the tradition of Passover seders for White House staff, although President Donald Trump is yet to attend.

The South African Jewish community needs to realise it still has so much to share on the lessons of freedom, and the rest of the country needs to understand it still has so much to learn.



Party; Popo Molefe the United Democratic Movement activist who later became premier of the North West Province; and current Transnet Chairman Mosiuoa ("Terror") Lekota, the former premier of the Free State and the current leader of COPE (the Congress of the People). It also included the Reverend Frank Chikane, who became director general of the Presidency under President

conscribed into the apartheid army.

Chief Rabbi Harris skilfully steered the evening's discussion on the meaning and importance of freedom. Freedom was a process, he explained, and that is why the Jews wandered in the desert for 40 years. It was important that those with memories of slavery could pass on, and that only free people – those born in freedom unburdened by generations

Most Jews of Polish, Lithuanian & Latvian origin are entitled to EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP AND ACCORDINGLY, AN EU PASSPORT

A common misconception is that South African Jews of Ashkenazi heritage are of Polish, Lithuanian & Latvian descent, and that only those who are able to prove their eligibility for Polish, Lithuanian & Latvian citizenship are able to obtain a European passport. The fact is that most South African Jews do qualify for European

European citizenship which will result in them obtaining a EU passport.

Ashkenazi: It is important to understand that until 1918, all of Eastern Europe was divided between three empires: Russia, Prussia, the Austro-Hungarian empire. Neither Poland nor Lithuania and Latvia existed until 1918.

changed, resulting in cities changing nationality. The resultant effect for descendants of Jews who were born in Vilnius, for example, is that their application for Lithuanian citizenship will be declined, but an application for a Polish passport may very well be successful.

Sephardi: the descendants of Sephardi Jews (who were exiled 500 years ago) are most likely eligible for a Portuguese passport. If applicable, Horesh is able to obtain an official certificate confirming such eligibility, on the basis of which an application for European citizenship can be made and will most likely be successful. Portuguese citizenship enables one to enter the United States without the need to apply for a visa.

In addition, Horesh is filing many applications for descendants of Sephardi origin who arrived in South Africa from Greece, Turkey, and North Africa. Descendants from other countries in the Middle East – even Holland – are also potentially eligible.

Horesh resides in Israel, but has spent seven



years in Poland, and is recognised as a leading lawyer in the field of European citizenship, with a full understanding of local immigration laws.

Living in Israel – a four-hour flight from Warsaw and Vilnius – offers him quick and easy access to Poland, Latvian and Lithuania. Accordingly, he is able to work closely with local professionals who assist him in tracing the documentation required for successful applications for European citizenship.

In addition, and as a result of his close ties with Portuguese authorities, to date he has had a 100% success rate with applications for Portuguese citizenship.

Horesh is available to discuss your specific details. He is often in South Africa, and can meet you in person to discuss your specific needs.



Destroyed Warsaw, January 1945

Avi Horesh

citizenship, whether they can prove their Polish, Lithuanian & Latvian lineage or not, and most South African Jews of Sephardic heritage are also eligible for European passports.

Adv. Avi Horesh has in-depth knowledge of the applicable legislation and in his experience, the majority of South African Jews have ancestors who were illegally deprived of citizenship. As their descendants, these Jews are eligible for

At the end of the WWI, the territory was divided, and countries like Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, and others were born/reborn. Only then did residents become citizens of these countries. As a result, people who, for example, were born in Riga (nowadays Latvia) could actually be Polish, Lithuanian or Latvian.

Horesh advises that eligibility for a Lithuanian

Latvian or Polish passport depends on the city from which your grandparents (or their parents) hailed.

Horesh says many South African Ashkenazi Jews of Lithuanian origin have been refused Lithuanian citizenship because their heritage is actually Polish. They would, accordingly, be entitled to Polish citizenship and a EU passport.

After World War II, the borders in Europe



**I will be in Johannesburg from June 13th till June 19th, and then in Cape Town till June 24th
My South African phone number is +27 64 745 5273 • Email me on adv.avi.n.horesh@gmail.com**

Mallorca's chueta close circle on history of persecution

CNAAN LIPSHIZ – JTA

Like countless Jewish children in Europe, Toni Pinya was routinely subjected to anti-Semitic bullying at school.

Growing up in the 1960s on this island south of Barcelona, Pinya would be beaten up and called “Christ killer” and “dirty Jew” at least once a month, he told the *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* in a recent interview.

But unlike most other victims of such abuse, Pinya was sure at the time that he was Catholic.

“I asked my grandfather why the other children were calling me a Jew,” Pinya said. “It made more sense after he explained.”

The explanation was that Pinya is a chueta, the name in Mallorca for about 20 000

people whose Jewish ancestors converted to Christianity centuries ago during the Spanish Inquisition. Devoutly Catholic but widely

distrusted by fellow Christians, chuetas ironically retained their distinct identity

because hostility to them forced them to marry mostly among themselves.

Mallorca's tiny Jewish community is now stronger for this turn of events.

Last year, Pinya, a chef, and Miquel Segura became the first two chuetas elected to the

four-person executive board of the Jewish Community of Mallorca, finally giving

representatives from that minority a place at the communal table.

This development “means the world to us, it gives us pride, a sense of belonging and, I guess, also closure”, said Iska bat Valls, Pinya's wife,

who is also a chueta.

The couple are among several dozen people from that group who have returned to Judaism

in recent years. Most chuetas today do not consider themselves Jews.

Pinya, whose parents were forced to marry in

secrecy because his non-chueta grandparents opposed the union, and Bat Valls underwent

an orthodox conversion to Judaism about five years ago. Other chuetas, like the sculptor

Ferran Aguilo, had a reform conversion.

The conversions and the election of chuetas to the community's board are part of a growing

recognition of the tragic Jewish history of Mallorca, a mountainous mass of land in the

Mediterranean about the size of Rhode Island.

Last year, local authorities unveiled a

memorial plaque at the Palma square where 37

people were publicly burned alive in 1691 for

being Jewish in what is locally known as “the

bonfire of the Jews”. Following resistance to the

plaque by some residents and municipal leaders,

the unveiling was the first recognition of its sort

of the murders that transpired here.

In 2015, the city helped build a tiny Jewish

museum in what used to be the Jewish

quarter. Located on a cobbled street inside the

sandstone labyrinth that is the old city centre,

the surrounding alleys are so quiet and well

preserved that it is easy to imagine life here

centuries ago, when crypto-Jews ran virtually all

of the tanneries, shoe shops, and butcher shops.

The Jews are gone, but the buildings that

once housed their three synagogues in Palma

are still around and in good condition. One



Photo: Cnaan Lipshiz

Toni Pinya enters the synagogue of Palma de Mallorca, Spain

of chueta heritage.

“The Inquisition is still a dirty and painful secret here,” said Dani Rotstein, a New Jersey native who settled here in 2011 and now gives tours on the island's Jewish history. But it's alive in people's minds today also because it was especially brutal in Mallorca, Rotstein suggests.

Elsewhere in Spain and Portugal, municipal administrators would often drive out their Jews and steal their property. It was faster, cleaner, and easier than holding trials and gruesome executions.

But in Mallorca, “going away wasn't an option because it's a small island”, said Rotstein, who

last year helped launch Mallorca's popular Limmud Jewish learning conference.

Today, Palma de Mallorca, a coastal city of

about 400 000 residents, is one of Spain's most cosmopolitan places. Discovered in the 1970s by

sun lovers from colder climates, Mallorca now

receives more than 10 million tourists annually. Tourism changed Mallorcan society, which for

centuries had been rural with strong isolationist tendencies.

“Suddenly we were not the foreigners anymore. Being chueta became irrelevant, an

anecdote,” Forteza Rei said.

Six hundred years ago, the islanders were

among the first in the Iberian Peninsula to embrace the persecution of Jews.

Members of that minority were

slaughtered here a century before the official

implementation of the Inquisition in 1492.

Mallorca was one of four Spanish regions where Jews were murdered on the street in the 1391 pogroms, and the slaughter was accompanied by anti-Jewish measures that would culminate in the Inquisition.

Against such radical persecution, many chuetas were determined to demonstrate their detachment from Judaism. They would make a point of working on the Sabbath in violation of Jewish law, to the point that the phrase for doing chores in Mallorcan dialect to this day is “doing Sabbath”.

And they turned their kosher challah breads

into what is now known as ensaimada – a

dessert that, bizarrely, is made of pork lard,

according to ensaimada connoisseur Tomeu

Arbona. Last year, Arbona, who is not Jewish,

began selling in his Fornet de Sa Soca bakery a

kosher variant of this circular national food in

what he called a “literally closing of a circle”.

Indeed, closing circles is to many chuetas

the main motivation for converting back to

Judaism.

Pinya and his wife are now regulars at

Mallorca's only synagogue, a small but inviting

space downtown located next to an Asian

massage parlour and boasting a Star of David on

its metal gate.

On Friday nights, about 50 locals from all

walks of life, including some Americans, Brits,

and Israelis, gather here for Sephardic-style

prayers punctuated by singing and clapping.

Pinya is the local kosher chef, a role that echoes how he deepened his knowledge of

Judaism by studying the origins of Mallorca's

Jewish cuisine.

Some chuetas, including Rafael Aedo Pons, a

father of one and an executive at a local energy

firm, say they don't need to convert to be a part

of the Jewish community because their “roots

are as Jewish as any other Jew”, as he put it

during a communal event in February.

That vision is not unique to chuetas like Aedo

Pons.

Nissim Karelitz, an Ashkenazi haredi

Orthodox rabbi from Bnei Brak, Israel, ruled in

2011 that chuetas need not convert to Judaism

because they are already Jewish – a rare

concession from one of Judaism's strictest and

most respected interpreters.

It was a good call, according to Rabbi Joseph

Wallis, a descendant of Rabbi Rafael Valls,

the last Jew burned at the stake in Mallorca in

1691. Wallis, who runs the Bnei Brak-based

Arachim group devoted to increasing unity

among Jews, visited Mallorca in February to

meet members of its Jewish community.

“Laced into the history of this island is the

determination of its Jews to stay Jewish at the

face of one of history's most brutal attempts to

eradicate Judaism,” Wallis said. And that, he

added, “is a testament to the resolve of Jews

everywhere”.

Passover Haggadah now in graphic novel form

MATT ROBINSON – JTA

At Passover each year, we are reminded that even though the original story is generations old, we are supposed to engage with the narrative as if we were slaves in Egypt. Unfortunately, most Haggadahs are about as engaging as a Maxwell House percolator.

This year, however, two Jewish artists have created a vibrant addition to the alternative Haggadah

canon: a graphic novel version of the Passover story that also takes

readers through the seder.

It's the creation of Jordan B

“Gorf” Gorfinkel, a former *DC Comics* editor (he oversaw the

Batman franchise for a decade), and Israeli artist Erez Zadok. The

pair met at a Limmud event in

Britain.

“When Gorf told me about his

concept for this Haggadah, I was

hooked,” says Zadok, a Bezalel

Academy of Arts graduate who is

known for his autobiographical

series *Bundle of Joya*.

The Haggadah has traditional



Photo: Koren Publishers

A page from the 'Passover Haggadah Graphic Novel'

order seder text on the right-hand

pages, while the left-hand pages

contain an action-packed graphic novel that expands on the Passover

story and alternates between modern and ancient times. Zadok suggests

that the goal was to engage readers and seder participants of every age.

While many still see graphic novels as kids' stuff, Zadok and Gorfinkel

tried to make sure that the Haggadah was able to deal with some

mature issues – slavery and inhumanity, for example – in a way that was

appropriate and approachable.

“This book is for everyone,” Zadok says, “but it would make me very

satisfied to know that a mature audience enjoys it as well.”

While this is not the first collaboration between Zadok and Gorfinkel

(who also co-created the *3 O'Clock Club* comic series), Zadok says it

was still difficult to orchestrate.

“This project was very

challenging to illustrate because

we had so many restrictions,” he

says, noting that the multi-era

illustrations involved considerable

research to ensure accuracy and

authenticity. “We wanted readers

to feel like the book was made

especially for them, regardless

of their knowledge or religious

practice.”

Perhaps this is why Zadok is

looking forward to spending

Passover with family and

friends, and then returning to

other projects that may be more

personal in nature.

“I have nothing against illustrating other traditional biblical stories,”

he said, “but right now, I prefer... to create worlds based on my own

imagination. Let's see what the future holds.”

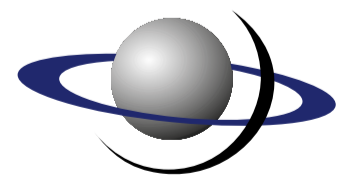
CHAG SAMEACH

*Wishing you peace,
health & prosperity
on Passover*



Connect. Enable. Empower.

www.bluelabeltelecoms.co.za
salesenquiries@blts.co.za | 0861 411 411



BLUE LABEL
TELECOMS



Chag Sameach

to all our Jewish Customers



Pick n Day

The long road to kashering for Pesach

RABBI DOVI GOLDSTEIN



This is my first Pesach as the managing director of the Beth Din's Kosher Department, and it is incredible to see the amount of work that goes into Pesach production, from our department to manufacturers, retailers, and *mashgichim*.

The Kosher Department provides the highest level of kashrut for Pesach and all year round, and our *hashgocha* (rabbinic product certification) is on par with international kosher leaders. Our ingredients team scrutinises every Pesach product, our highly qualified inspectors inspect every factory, and our full-time *mashgichim* (kashrut supervisors) supervise every production run.

Our team works with close to 80 local manufacturers, retailers, restaurants, catering companies, and hotels to ensure that the Jewish community has access to many essential kosher products, and a kosher Pesach experience.

To make products kosher for Pesach, we begin eight months before the *chag* (holiday). We start by engaging with industry to offer assistance with the products the community needs and wants. Two years ago, we ran a survey to establish the top 50 products that South African Jews want for Pesach, and our aim is to ensure that these items are readily available.

After retailers place their orders with local manufacturers, we assist the manufacturers to source kosher for Pesach (Pesadik) ingredients and substitutes for their recipes.

Once the ingredients have been scrutinised and approved by our ingredient team, we send our rabbinic field representatives to conduct a full site inspection, which all goes on the company's file. This file includes important details about how to run the factory for Pesach, including kashering instructions, and which areas must be "sealed off" for Pesach production.

Once our compliance manager has signed off the application, the file goes to the Beth Din to make sure that all processes are aligned with our policies, and for a contract to be drawn up and signed. We then arrange to send a kasherer, labels (if required), and a *mashgiach* so that production can take place in good time to hit the shelves ideally three to four weeks before Pesach.

Peanut butter is one example of the partnership that exists between the Beth Din Kosher Department, retailers, and manufacturers to bring

ingredient to be sourced and air freighted from the other side of the world. A special production run was scheduled, and our field representative and *mashgiach* were present to ensure that all the necessary requirements for Pesach were adhered to.

People often ask me why Pesadik products are more expensive than regular counterparts. The cost of a Beth Din licence for kosher for Pesach – which includes all the services provided above – is on average less than 99c per unit, which is

which often have to be brought in from overseas;

- The small runs that manufacturers have to do are often not cost effective;
- The need to kasher equipment, which often requires a 24-hour period when the facility cannot be used and the manufacturer cannot produce; and
- The need for a full-time supervisor/*mashgiach* to be present during production.

However, many products such as Nescafé coffee, Five Roses tea, Hulets sugar, and Black Cat peanut butter to name but a few, are on a par price-wise with their non-Pesadik counterparts.

This year, to make more products accessible and affordable, we spent many hours researching the common products used over Pesach, and combed through ingredients, recipes, and manufacturing processes to establish what would be suitable for Pesach without ingredient changes, extra supervision, and a special kosher-for-Pesach *hechsher*. We evolved a Green List, which includes more than 30 common items that do not require a special *hechsher*. We hope to keep growing this list in the coming years. The list can be found on the UOS (Union of Orthodox Synagogues) website.

We also totally revamped the Pesach guide brought to you by Pick n Pay. It's an easy-to-use companion for all your Pesach needs, with a comprehensive kashering guide, medicine and pet food list, seder companion, sale of *chametz* (leaven food) form, Pesach times, and more. This too can be found on our website in the Pesach section.

Other initiatives to make the most up-to-date information available to the community include the launch of our WhatsApp hotline for Pesach, and all year round. Message us on 063 693 9417, and we will do our best to answer your questions as speedily as possible.

May you and your families be blessed with a Pesach filled with joy, unity, and freedom.



Pesach to the community.

It started when Pick n Pay placed its order for kosher for Pesach Black Cat peanut butter from Tiger Brands, and we received the application for certification. After some investigation, we found an ingredient which wasn't kosher for Pesach, and our ingredient team did research on possible alternatives for a reformulation.

The alternative required the particular

used to cover costs. We don't get involved with the actual production or pricing of products. This is completely in the hands of manufacturers and retailers, but we do assist in getting the best possible products and information to the community.

There are four major reasons why *Pesadik* products are often more expensive than their non-Pesadik equivalent.

- The high cost of Pesadik ingredients,



RANDS FOR RANDS

The South African Gold Coin Exchange
— THE MARKET LEADERS —

SMS "SWAPIT" to 30129 to speak to a broker today.

Swap your Rands for Krugerrands or Swap your Krugerrands for Rands Exchange your depreciating paper Rands for gold Krugerrands



Visit your nearest Scoin Shop, Open 7 days a week country wide | T&C's Apply | www.scoinshop.com | 011 784 8551

KWAZULU NATAL

CAPE TOWN

PORT ELIZABETH

GAUTENG

LIMPOPO

NELSPRUIT

Gateway Mall
La Lucia
Pavilion
Midlands Mall

Canal Walk
Somerset West
Cavendish Mall

Walmer Park

Sandton City
Eastgate
The Glen
Rosebank
Brooklyn Mall

Mall of the North

Ilanga Mall

An overeating-free Pesach



ON NOURISHING NOSH

Hilitt Milner

Pesach is here, the house has been cleaned of *chametz*, and you are prepared for the seder and the week ahead.

Everywhere you look, you see foods like kneidlach, sweet braised beef, and chocolate coated matzah, and you start to think of how you always seem to pack on the weight during Pesach. Don't panic! It's simple and possible to enjoy Pesach while still eating healthily.

Let's start from the beginning, the seders. There are ways to stop the food-anxiety, overeating, and inevitable regret:

Drink water. This will not only keep you hydrated, but sometimes we tend to overeat because we are thirsty, not hungry.

Watch your portion sizes. Although your aunt's kneidel is delicious, it's equally good when halved.

Balance. A good tip is to consider the matzah and kneidel as your starches for the evening and fill the rest of your meal with fibre-filled green vegetables and salads, and a delicious protein once the buffet is served.

Mindfulness. It is important to focus on intuitive and mindful eating, eating according to your "tummy hunger". Pace yourself, and chew your food well, allowing yourself to fill up on nourishing chicken soup and protein-rich egg. Dish up quality over quantity. Stop when you are 80% full, even if it means leaving food on your plate.

The truth is, it's not necessary to have a six-course meal. Unfortunately, though, we always go beyond bitter herbs and before we know it, we have turned ourselves into matzah balls.

It's not just the seders that challenge people. Often, when we have restrictions, we feel as if the wheels come off and there is nothing to eat.

Eating healthily during Pesach is no different from eating healthily every other day of the year, besides a few minor changes, and there is plenty of food that you can eat.

Many of us rely on pre-packaged foods during Pesach. Replace these packaged foods with ingredients such as raw vegetables, fresh fruit, lean proteins, fresh herbs, and homemade dressings. Healthy starch alternatives to matzah include low GI sweet or baby potatoes, butternut, pumpkin, quinoa, cauliflower rice, or zucchini noodles.

Restrictions on whole-grain products, pulses, and legumes (for Ashkenazis) and overeating matzah, can be constipating. To combat this, drink lots of water throughout the day, increase physical activity and your fibre intake by eating vegetables, seeds, nuts, and homemade fruit compote.

Meal planning is a fantastic way to ensure you have a stress-free, healthy Pesach, as it stops you from reaching for the go-to, lying around matzah:

Breakfast. Replace your matzah braai (egg matzah) or high-in-sugar Crispy-O's with a homemade grain free muesli, rich in fibre and healthy fats. Alternatively, have an egg with vegetables, a muesli and yoghurt filled papaya boat or make yourself sweet potato toast, by putting thin slices of sweet potato in the toaster, with a variety of toppings. Quinoa is known as the "mother of all grains", as it is high in minerals, vitamins, fibre, and protein. A great idea is to make an overnight soaked quinoa porridge or cook up a quick apple and cinnamon quinoa oats.

Snacks. Are you snacking on *gesmirte* matzah and Bissli snacks? A better option is to make your own snack plate with homemade oven-baked kale, sweet potato or eggplant chips, vegetable crudites, and an avocado dip. You can also bake your own apple and

cinnamon almond-flour muffins, or keep it simple by having fruit, nuts, a yoghurt, or even a boiled egg.

Lunch and dinner.

Lunches and dinners shouldn't change. Matzah pizza is fun to make, and your matzah lasagne is always a hit, but don't make these daily routines. Start off your meals with a green vegetable soup. Have some lighter meals like fresh salads with a protein or frittata with greens. Nourish yourselves with basil and mint pesto chicken with zucchini noodles; seared salmon with Asian cauliflower fried rice; mince and ratatouille eggplant boats; butternut-mash cottage pie; or Moroccan mushroom and quinoa stuffed pepper. Remember to fill your plate with fresh greens, fresh herbs and homemade dressings, and always choose good quality proteins.

Dessert. If you have a sweet tooth, dip apples in a raw cocoa drizzle; make your own no-bake,

raw cocoa macaroons; or have a portion of berries or the last summer fruits.

This Pesach ask, "Why is this Pesach different to all other Pesachs?" To which you can now answer, "This Pesach I did not overeat; I made healthier food choices, and most of all, I freed myself from matzah meals by realising that

there are so many wholesome meal and snack options at my fingertips."

• For more recipes for the delicious meals mentioned above and more, go to www.sunrisebyhm.com or follow @sunrisebyhm on Facebook or Instagram.



Chicken and Zucchini Noodles with Basil and Mint Pesto

Grain-free kosher-for-Pesach muesli

Ingredients

(Makes enough for eight days for two people)

- 1½ cups kosher for Pesach nuts (walnuts, pecans, almonds, hazel nuts)
- ½ cup flaked almonds
- 1 cup coconut flakes
- ½ cup unsweetened desiccated coconut
- 1 teaspoon ginger
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- 2 tablespoons coconut oil
- 1 tablespoon honey
- ½ teaspoon salt

Method

- Pre-heat the oven to 180 degrees centigrade.
- Roughly chop the nut mixture, and add it to a large mixing bowl.
- Into the bowl, add the flaked almonds, desiccated coconut, coconut flakes, ground ginger, nutmeg and cinnamon.
- Place a small saucepan on a medium-heated stovetop, and add the coconut oil, honey and salt. Mix until melted and pour the liquid over the spiced nut and coconut mixture.
- Mix the wet and dry ingredients together until the nuts are evenly coated with the honey and oil.
- Line a baking tray with baking/parchment paper. Pour the muesli mixture onto the tray spreading it evenly with the back of a spoon.
- Bake in the oven for 15 minutes until golden brown.

Serve with kosher-for-Pesach yoghurt, fruit, or even on top of quinoa porridge.

Chicken and Zucchini Noodles with Basil and Mint Pesto

Ingredients

(serves 3-4)

Chicken and zucchini noodles

- 1 packet chicken breasts (400g)
- 1 packet fresh zucchini noodles (250g x grams)
- ½ carton Rosa tomatoes (100g)
- 1 small packet tender stem broccoli (125g)
- 1 small packet asparagus spears (170g)
- 1 teaspoon coconut oil
- Salt and pepper

Basil and mint dressing

- 1 handful fresh basil
- 1 handful fresh mint
- ½ clove garlic, grated
- ¼ teaspoon mustard
- ½ teaspoon honey
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice



- 1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons water
- Salt and pepper

Method

Chicken and zucchini noodles

- Cut the chicken into even-sized cubes. Cut the tomatoes into halves, as well as the asparagus and the broccoli.
- Place one medium-sized non-stick pan and one small non-stick pan onto medium-heated stovetops.
- Put the coconut oil into the medium-sized pan. Once it is hot add the pieces of chicken as well as 1½ tablespoons of the basil mint dressing and cook for 10 minutes.
- Add the cut tomatoes, asparagus and another tablespoon of the mint and basil and cook for another five minutes.
- In the smaller pan, put the zucchini noodles, a dash of salt and a tablespoon of mint and basil dressing. Using tongs, turn them every 30 seconds for four minutes until they soften slightly.
- Add the broccoli into the pan with the chicken and vegetables and cook for another two minutes.
- Remove the zucchini noodles from the pan, portion them out into bowl and place the chicken, asparagus, broccoli and tomatoes onto the noodles. Drizzle the remaining dressing over the dish.

Basil and mint dressing

- Chop the mint and basil and add it to a tall jar.
- Into the jar grate the garlic and add the mustard, honey, lemon juice, white wine vinegar, olive oil, water, salt and pepper.
- Using a stick blender, blend the ingredients together to form a herby pesto-like dressing.

A time to redeem the splits in our community



OPINION

Adina Roth

We are about to gather with friends, family, and community to celebrate the Jewish festival of freedom. We will sit around our seder tables, grandparents and children, believers and sceptics, and together, we will tell the story of Passover.

In between the games, the songs, and the kneidlach, we are all invited to explore the deeper meaning of freedom, and to contemplate clues about redemption.

It strikes me that this Pesach, Jews around the world exist in a morally complex time. We are sandwiched, as it were, between the Israeli and South African elections, with Trump's wall seemingly on the rise, and Brexit teetering between "yay" and "nay".

Never have our Jewish communities been more divided about who is a modern-day Pharaoh, and who is Moses. For some, Benjamin Netanyahu's fifth term feels like the rise of a powerful autocrat in Israel, while to others, Netanyahu symbolises the strength, security, and indeed freedom of the Jewish people.

Some rabbis will visit the Mexican-American border during Passover, and raise voices of conscience against Trump's legislation against

foreigners, while others will remark that Trump has been so good for Israel and therefore, for the Jewish people.

In the Haggadah, we are presented with a clear foe and a convincing saviour. Pharaoh is a rigid tyrant, who casts the Israelites as "other". Moses is the best kind of leader – reluctant and humble. He defends those in a weakened position, be it an Israelite who is being beaten, or Midianite women.

Throughout history, we have had stories that echo with the moral clarity of the exodus narrative. Consider those Jews in the Soviet Union who could not practice Judaism or move to Israel. Indeed, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was seen as a modern Egypt, and Israel was the Jewish people's saviour.

Or consider the fight for civil rights in America in the 1960s. When Abraham Joshua Heschel joined Dr Martin Luther King at the Conference on Religion and Race, he made an explicit link between our Jewish story of slavery and the modern struggle for civil rights. He said famously, "At the first conference on religion and race, the main participants were Pharaoh and Moses... the exodus began, but is far from having been completed. In fact, it was easier for the children of Israel

to cross the Red Sea than for a negro to cross certain university campuses."

The story of Pharaoh and Moses becomes such a useful trope when there is a clear "bad guy" and "good guy". Indeed, even today there are perhaps some groups that we would all agree fit in the category of a Pharaoh. ISIS comes to mind!

But this year, it is more than likely that at some seders, certain world leaders will be hailed as modern day Moses, while those same leaders will be typed as



Pharaohs at other tables. We are in a tricky space as a Jewish community, where the left and the right point fingers at each other, each group convinced of their moral uprightness.

Pharaoh's oppression and slavery of the Israelites started with a need to cut down our being *rav* or "too much". *Pen yirbeh* (in case they become too many), he said. On a literal level, Pharaoh feared our numbers, our birth rate. But metaphorically, *rav* becomes a trope

in the Egypt story for that which is "too much", that which doesn't quite fit in... that which is different.

Perhaps, Pharaoh's fear of the Israelites is something we all do to each other today. Indeed, each community has its box of what is too much or too little, too different or too other, and we stretch people and cut people down, in our minds and in our social spaces, in order to say, "fit in or leave".

In this sense, Pharaoh today is not one identifiable group or leader, but a consciousness that resides in us all which labels those who think differently as "too much".

In order to deal with his fear of our being too much, Pharaoh turns to two midwives and commands them to kill Israelite male infants. We read that these women "feared G-d", and they did

not listen to what the king of Egypt ordered them to do. Perhaps the oldest instance of civil disobedience, these women do not share the king's fear that the Israelites are "too much". What's more, they refuse to obey the most powerful man in their world.

Their courage is gobsmacking! The rabbis are not clear as to the nationality of these women. Some suggest Shifrah and Puah were Egyptian midwives who assisted with Israelite births, while others suggest they were none other than Yocheved

and Miriam, an Israelite mother-daughter team.

Perhaps the ambivalence around their nationality is meaningful, for voices of moral conscience and acts of exemplary courage can be found among all of humanity. Some might say that the midwives do not choose the side of either Egyptian or Israelite, they simply choose to prioritise the protection of children. In so doing, they bypass the mutually exclusive dichotomies, and affirm the value of life itself.

As we contemplate freedom this year, let us remember that our freedom was curtailed by someone who labelled us "too much". Perhaps in searching for freedom for ourselves and others, we might want to challenge ourselves when we label others, and rather find paths to empathy, to listen to where people are coming from.

In so doing, we invoke the spirit and memory of the midwives who clung to humanity and the life force in the face of great evil. What if these unsung heroes of the story were the clue to our modern-day "redemption song"?

• Adina Roth is a clinical psychologist in private practice, and a teacher of Jewish Studies. She runs an independent Barmitzvah and Batmitzvah programme in Johannesburg, and teaches Tanach to adults. She is also a teacher at Melton in Johannesburg.

Most South African Jews of Sephardi origin are entitled to EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP AND ACCORDINGLY, AN EU PASSPORT

A common misconception is that South African Jews of Ashkenazi heritage are of Lithuanian descent, and that only those who are able to prove their eligibility for Lithuanian citizenship are able to obtain a European passport. The fact is that most South African Jews do qualify for European citizenship, whether they can prove their Lithuanian lineage or not, and most South African Jews of Sephardic heritage are also eligible for European passports.

empires: Russia, Prussia, the Austro-Hungarian empire. Neither Poland nor Lithuania existed until 1918.

At the end of the WWI, the territory was divided, and countries like Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, and others were born/reborn. Only then did residents become citizens of these countries. As a result, people who, for example, were born in Riga (nowadays Latvia) could actually be Lithuanian or Polish.

Horesh advises that eligibility for a Lithuanian or Polish passport depends on the city from which your grandparents (or their parents) hailed.

Horesh says many South African Ashkenazi Jews of Lithuanian origin have been refused Lithuanian citizenship because their heritage is actually Polish. They would, accordingly, be entitled to Polish citizenship and a EU passport.

After World War II, the borders in Europe changed, resulting in cities changing nationality. The resultant effect for descendants of Jews who were born in Vilnius, for example, is that their application for Lithuanian citizenship will be declined, but an application for a Polish passport may very well be successful.

Sephardi: the descendants of Sephardi Jews (who were exiled 500 years ago)



Avi Horesh

are most likely eligible for a Portuguese passport. If applicable, Horesh is able to obtain an official certificate confirming such eligibility, on the basis of which an application for European citizenship can be made and will most likely be successful. Portuguese citizenship enables one to enter the United States without the need to apply for a visa.

In addition, Horesh is filing many applications for descendants of Sephardi origin who arrived in South Africa from Greece, Turkey, and North Africa. Descendants from other countries in the Middle East – even Holland – are also potentially eligible.

Horesh resides in Israel, but has spent seven years in Poland, and is recognised as a leading lawyer in the

field of European citizenship, with a full understanding of local immigration laws.

Living in Israel – a four-hour flight from Warsaw and Vilnius – offers him quick and easy access to Poland and Lithuania. Accordingly, he is able to work closely with local professionals who assist him in tracing the documentation required for successful applications for European citizenship.

In addition, and as a result of his close ties with Portuguese authorities, to date he has had a 100% success rate with applications for Portuguese citizenship.

Horesh is available to discuss your specific details. He is often in South Africa, and can meet you in person to discuss your specific needs.



Adv. Avi Horesh has in-depth knowledge of the applicable legislation and in his experience, the majority of South African Jews have ancestors who were illegally deprived of citizenship. As their descendants, these Jews are eligible for European citizenship which will result in them obtaining a EU passport.

Ashkenazi: It is important to understand that until 1918, all of Eastern Europe was divided between three

I will be in Johannesburg from June 13th till June 19th, and then in Cape Town till June 24th
My South African phone number is +27 64 745 5273 • Email me on adv.avi.n.horesh@gmail.com

Pesach fun and easy recipes

Easy Fun Tasty

Almond and Coconut Macaroons

- 4 egg yolks
- 1 cup sugar
- Half a teaspoon almond extract
- 1 cup ground almonds
- 1 cup coconut

Beat egg yolks, sugar, and extract together. Add the almonds and coconut. Chill for half an hour. Roll into balls. Place on a lightly oiled baking tray, and top with a slice of flaked almond. Makes about 35.

Matzah Meal Muffins

- 2 eggs
- Half a teaspoon salt
- 1 cup water
- 1.5 cups matzah meal
- 4 tablespoons schmaltz

Beat eggs. Add salt and water. Stir in matzah meal to make a smooth batter. Heat the fat, grease muffin pans, and stir in remaining hot fat into batter. Fill muffin pan two thirds full, and bake at 180°C for 30 minutes or until golden brown. Serve with clear soup, roast chicken, or meat. Yields eight large or 16 small muffins.

Variation 1: For sweet muffins, use butter instead of fat, and milk instead of water. Add sugar and cinnamon, grated rind of lemon. Bake in same manner.

Variation 2: For a more delicate muffin, omit water and use matzah cake flour. Add half a cup of apple sauce or drained and chopped canned peaches. A dash of nutmeg or cinnamon gives added flavour. Serve with canned sliced peaches or with apple sauce.



Variation 3: Use 1 cup of soaked and pitted prunes, sliced or cut finely.

Variation 4: Finely cut dates, raisins, chopped nuts, or a mixture of all three make delicious fruit muffins. Sprinkle with powdered sugar or top with frosting.

Apple Kugel Muffins

Filling

- 5 Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, and diced
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons sugar

Topping

- Half a cup ground almonds
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- A quarter of a cup sugar

Batter

- 5 eggs
- Pinch of salt
- Half a cup matzah meal
- Three quarters of a cup oil
- 1 cup potato starch
- Three quarters of a cup sugar

- Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease or line muffin pans; set aside.
- Prepare the filling: Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl. Set aside.
- Prepare the batter: Combine all ingredients in a second medium bowl. Whisk until smooth. Set aside.
- Prepare the topping: Combine all ingredients in a small bowl. Stir to combine. Set aside.
- Fill muffin cups with apple filling until they are two-thirds full, then pour batter over apples until cups are full. Sprinkle with almond topping.
- Bake muffins for 30 minutes, until the tops are set and lightly browned.

Nut Tart

- 165g butter, softened
- 250ml (1 cup) sugar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 420ml (1²/₃ cups) fine matzah meal
- 80ml (one third of a cup) cake meal
- Approximately 60ml (5 tablespoons) water

Topping

- 190ml (190g) butter
- 300g flaked almonds
- 60ml (quarter of a cup) cream
- 190ml (three quarters of a cup) sugar

Base: Combine all ingredients in mixer. Press into 26cm springform tin. Bake at 180°C for 20 minutes. Topping: Place all ingredients in a pot and bring to the boil. Pour over base. Bake at 190° for 20-25 minutes. This tart freezes well.

Chocolate Swiss Roll

- 4 eggs, separated
- Half a cup castor sugar
- Quarter of a cup cocoa
- Quarter of a cup sifted matzah meal
- Jam and beaten cream (Orley Whip)

Line swiss roll tin with greased paper. Beat egg yolks with sugar until white. Add cocoa and sifted matzah meal and mix well. Fold in beaten egg whites. Spread mixture in pan – right into corners. Bake at 180°C for 10 to 15 minutes.

While cake is baking, dampen a tea towel and sprinkle well with sugar. As soon as cake is

ready, invert onto towel. Carefully remove paper and roll up. When cool, unroll, spread thinly with jam and thickly with cream. Roll up again and place on serving platter.

Scrumptious Peanut Butter Biscuits

- Three quarters of a cup sugar
- Three quarters of a cup syrup
- 1 tablespoon vanilla essence
- 250g peanut butter
- 5 cups farfel or Passover cereal
- 2 slabs dark chocolate
- Coconut

Boil sugar and syrup together. Remove from heat and add peanut butter and vanilla essence. Mix in the farfel or cereal. Press onto baking tin. Pour over melted chocolate and sprinkle with coconut. (Peanut butter can be substituted with chocolate spread.)

Pesach Lasagne

- Matzah sheets (as many as needed)
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley
- 2-3 garlic cloves
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 500g mince
- 1 large onion
- 3-4 tomatoes
- Quarter of a cup oil
- 2 Bay leaves
- Half a cup water

Tomato sauce: chop and brown the onion and garlic in oil. Add the mince and brown. Use a fork to separate the mince meat. Skin and chop the tomatoes. Add the tomatoes and the rest of the ingredients to the mince meat. Simmer for about 25 minutes.

White sauce: fry one finely chopped onion in four tablespoons of oil. Add three tablespoons of cake meal. Add two cups vegetable stock slowly. Cook over low heat until sauce is thickened. Add two lightly beaten egg yolks very slowly to the sauce. Add salt.

To assemble: soften the matzah sheets by quickly passing them under running cold water. Grease a casserole dish. Make layers, starting with matzah, then the sauce, end with the sauce. Bake for about 20 minutes in a 180°C oven.

Chicken in Liquifruit

- 1 packet of chicken breasts
- 1 packet Telma chicken soup
- 1 large apricot Liquifruit

Sprinkle half the chicken soup in a roasting dish. Put in chicken breasts. Sprinkle over the rest of the chicken soup powder. Pour Liquifruit over chicken. Bake in oven for two hours at 180°C.

COLCACCHIO



Wishing all our customers

CHAG SAMEACH!

a happy Passover.

colcacchio.co.za

Sorbet

SK-N

NEW CONCEPT STORE
OPENING SOON

FACIALS, PEELS, LASER, AESTHETIC TREATMENTS

HYDE PARK CORNER

Measles outbreak – a modern-day plague?

TALI FEINBERG

As we begin the festival of Pesach, the Haredi Orthodox Jewish community in Brooklyn, New York, is facing an unprecedented measles outbreak.

There have been 285 confirmed cases of measles in Brooklyn since October, and last week, New York City Mayor Bill De Blasio declared it a public health emergency.



If we compare measles to other “modern-day plagues” like HIV, the difference might be that there is more awareness of how to prevent HIV, even though there is no cure.

He also made it a requirement by law to vaccinate children who reside in four Brooklyn areas with the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. If the parents refuse, they can be required to pay fines of up to \$1 000 (R13 986).

“This is the epicentre of a measles outbreak that is very, very troubling, and must be dealt with immediately,” De Blasio said. “The measles vaccine works. It is safe, it is effective, it is time-tested. The faster everyone heeds the order, the faster we can lift it. We cannot allow this dangerous disease to make a comeback here in New York City. We have to stop it now.”

The order came a day after the New York City Department of Health

threatened to fine or even close yeshivas in Williamsburg if students who are not vaccinated against measles are allowed to attend classes, reports the *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*.

Last Friday, a New York state judge lifted the state of emergency imposed by Rockland County that would have barred minors not vaccinated against the measles from public places.

There have been warnings of “disastrous consequences” for children if the disease continues to spread unchecked. A worldwide survey by the United Nations Children’s Agency, Unicef, said 98 countries around the globe had reported a rise in measles cases in 2018 compared with 2017, according to *The Guardian*.

That total includes a number of countries that had previously eradicated the disease. Highly contagious, measles spreads more easily than Ebola, tuberculosis, or influenza.

The outbreak in New York has been tied to an unvaccinated child who contracted the disease during a trip to Israel, the *Washington Post* reported. But how did it spread so easily?

“These outbreaks happen in pockets of communities where the levels of immunisation drop. Vaccine hesitancy, or vaccine rejection, is a feature in very conservative religious communities and the ultra-orthodox Jewish community is no exception,” says Professor Barry Schoub, the former executive director of the National Institute for Communicable Diseases and Emeritus Professor of Virology at the University of the Witwatersrand.

“Measles is a potentially serious disease with a

significant incidence of serious complications such as pneumonia, otitis media, blindness, deafness, brain damage, and even death.

“Unfortunately there is a lot of ignorance and suspicion about modern science in these communities and vaccine hesitancy is high, resulting in a substantial build-up of community susceptibility to

vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles,” he says.

“There have been similar outbreaks in conservative religious communities, both Jewish and Christian. Measles is on the one

enlighten parents about the ease of vaccination, and the risk to their own children as well as others, should they fail to vaccinate,” says Schoub.

“There is a religious Halachic obligation



hand a highly contagious disease, but on the other very easily preventable by a safe and effective vaccine.”

Why does it take something like this outbreak to make the MMR vaccine compulsory? “Making vaccination compulsory and [non-vaccination] punishable by law is a very necessary public health measure when one has outbreaks such as the current measles outbreak in New York,” says the professor. “Anti-vaccination doesn’t only harm children who are not being vaccinated, but threatens those who, unfortunately can’t be vaccinated for medical reasons, or who have not been successfully vaccinated – a small percentage of those vaccinated fail to respond successfully.”

The professor says outbreaks of measles could certainly occur in South Africa, and have occurred here recently. “It happens when immunisation levels drop. They need to be high to prevent outbreaks, particularly for measles.”

If we compare measles to other “modern-day plagues” like HIV, the difference might be that there is more awareness of how to prevent HIV, even though there is no cure. “Clearly there is a need for a vigorous educational effort to

to take active steps like vaccination against preventable diseases. The esteemed sage, the Tiferet Yisrael [Rabbi Israel Lifschitz 1782-1860], encouraged his community to be vaccinated during a smallpox outbreak even though the vaccine in those days itself carried a risk, obviously very much smaller than the disease itself.”

Schoub says that vaccines, as well as the provision of clean water, have done more for human health than any other intervention. “Whether you are ‘pro’ or ‘anti’, vaccination is a no-brainer. It is equivalent to asking if one is pro or anti-science. Vaccines have saved millions of lives since 1798, when the first human vaccines were introduced.”

Schoub doesn’t like to use the word “plague”, but says that the illnesses affecting millions include tuberculosis, HIV, and multi-resistant bacterial infections. Other “modern-day plagues” could include starvation, poverty, natural disasters caused by climate change, malaria, and even lice (taken more seriously here than in Israel!). But when science and medicine can stop an epidemic such as measles, perhaps we should use it to prevent such a plague.



How to navigate an ethical minefield

DUNCAN GREENBERG

The Torah is the ethical lodestar for any observant Jew. But what does that mean in practice? Do we understand the Torah and the commentaries of our sages as a simple compendium of ethical rules? And should we put aside our critical reasoning skills and simply follow the directives of Torah law?

Rabbi Dr Akiva Tatz, who spoke recently at Sinai Indaba 2019, said that the role Torah plays in our ethical lives is more subtle and profound than a simple list of do’s and don’ts.

“Torah is not meant to override your basic humanity,” Tatz told the jam-packed conference hall at the Sandton Convention Centre, “it’s meant to cause it to flourish”.

Tatz told the crowd that humans possess moral intuition, which we are obliged to develop.

Our innate sense of morality is more than an abstract intellectual

goal, as Tatz demonstrated with a thought experiment.

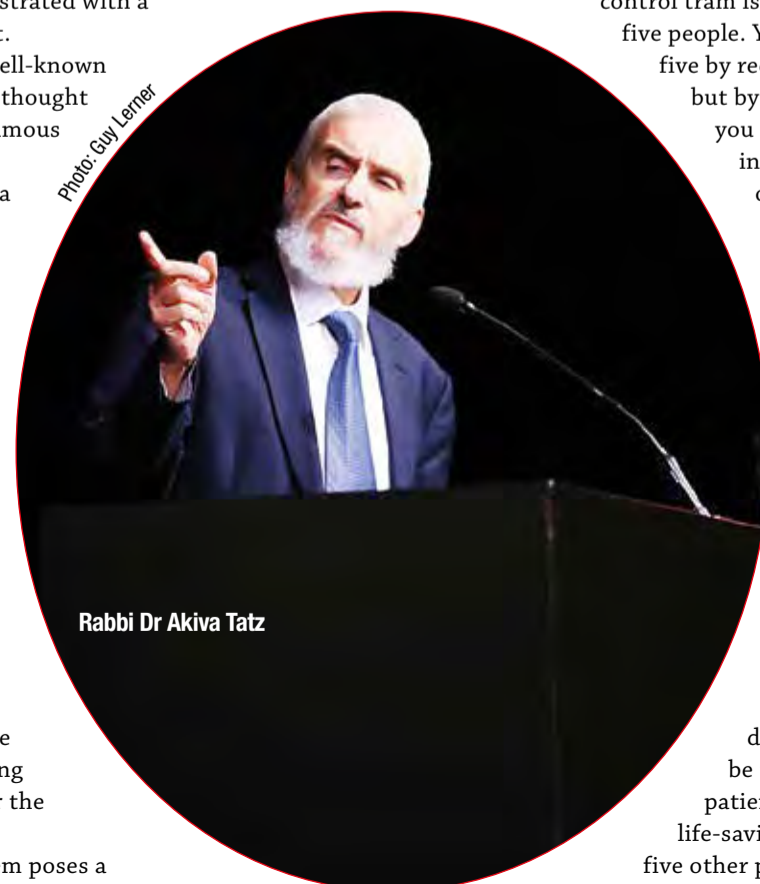
Drawing on the well-known “trolley problem”, a thought experiment made famous by Oxford moral philosopher Philippa Foot, Tatz helped the audience to understand the non-rational sources of our moral judgement. Faced with difficult moral dilemmas, we often have strong moral intuitions about the right way to act without necessarily being able to articulate the reasons for preferring one alternative over the other.

The trolley problem poses a hypothetical situation: an out-of-

control tram is hurtling towards five people. You can save the five by redirecting the tram, but by intervening, you would kill an innocent person on the alternative track. Is it right to intervene?

Such thought experiments may sound like abstractions that have little to do with day-to-day situations, but they can help us to clarify our thinking in real-life cases.

Think of a doctor who might be tempted to let a patient die to harvest life-saving organs to save five other patients. Or the decision to give palliative care



Rabbi Dr Akiva Tatz



“Torah is not meant to override your basic humanity... it’s meant to cause it to flourish”.

that could risk the patient’s life. Many of us would abhor the former decision and accept the latter. But why? Thought experiments such as the trolley problem can help us to clarify and distinguish the moral principles underpinning these intuitions.

Of course, we can’t simply rely on our casual judgements from situation to situation. We need to cultivate our moral sensibilities with the guidance of the Torah. But, ultimately, Tatz said, we should recognise that we bear a deep sense of moral truth. “Children need to know that their sense of fairness is a reliable thing at root,” he said.

From Producer to the World



AGT Foods Africa is a value-added **PULSE, STAPLE** food and **INGREDIENT** processor for **export** and **domestic** markets.

Through its offices and processing **facilities** located in some of the **best agricultural growing regions** in Canada, the U.S., Turkey, China, Australia, South Africa, U.K., the Netherlands and Spain.

AGT Foods produces a full range of **PULSES** and **SPECIALTY CROPS** including lentils, peas, chickpeas, beans as well as **FOOD INGREDIENTS** such as pulse flours, proteins, starches and fibres.

In South Africa AGT Foods represents the **Retail, Hospitality, Spices, Ingredients, Popcorn, Bakery** and **Protein Divisions** as well as **Pouyoukas Foods**, which falls under the Retail Division and is sold through all major supermarkets in South Africa.



FRESHPOP



hi-harvest
SELECTED SEED
KEURSAAD



Johannesburg: 8 Jacobs Street, Chamdor, Krugersdorp, South Africa, 1740 • Tel: +27 11 762 5261 • Fax: +27 11 762 4111

Cape Town: Tel: +27 21 552 0456 • sales@advanceseed.com • www.advanceseed.com

Kwa-Zulu Natal: 5 Edison Place, Mkondeni, Pietermaritzburg, 3212 • Tel: +27 33 346 0639 • kzn_natal@advanceseed.com

And the winner is...

In the run up to our Pesach edition this year, Jewish schools around South Africa have been hard at work to find the best way to portray the *chag* photographically. It wasn't for marks, it was for a competition for best cover for the SA Jewish Report's

special Pesach edition. In the end, the choice was incredibly tough, as there were some incredibly innovative and original contributions. Our winner, Minnie Bersohn Nursery School, came up with a quirky concept that really took us into 2019 with

the selfie generation. *Kol Hakavod!* However, we don't have any losers, we have runners up and other amazing entries, whose work you can see below. Thank you for all the contributions. Chag Sameach! – Editor

RUNNERS UP



Torah Academy



King David Victory Park Primary School



King David Sandton



Sydenham Pre-Primary School

OTHER ENTRIES



Herzlia Primary School



King David Sandton



King David Ariel



Rosabelle Klein Nursery School



King David Linksfield Pre-Primary School

THE 10 PLAGUES
As portrayed by King David Victory Park's Grade R's



Chabad Sandton



King David Victory Park High School



Herzlia Middle School

Combating anti-Semitism with love and matzah

ARIELLE KAPLAN – JTA

Joyce Fienberg was a connector. Bringing people together for a holiday meal was incredibly important to her. This didn't just apply to her family. She invited people she met on world travels, her students from the University of Pittsburgh, colleagues. She loved connecting people of all different backgrounds, and they'd have riveting discourse over Thanksgiving or Rosh Hashanah meals and, especially, Passover seders.

"It always made a very different sort of conversation, and [was] something you would look forward to," Marnie Fienberg says about holidays hosted by her mother-in-law. "It was always very exciting, and we were always talking about things from a different perspective."

But that all came to a screeching halt on 27 October 2018. While praying in the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, Joyce was one of 11 victims murdered in an anti-Semitic mass shooting. As soon as Marnie and her husband heard about the attack, they threw some clothes in a bag and drove as fast they could from their home in Washington DC, to Pittsburgh.

Marnie, a mom of one, knew Joyce was there because since her husband died in 2016, she went to synagogue every day to say kaddish, the mourner's prayer.

"It was a nightmare, it was

terrifying," Marnie said of the massacre that took her mother-in-law's life. "To this day, I have this awful feeling of sadness and loss."

Part of Marnie's grieving process included writing. She penned a

moving tribute in *Hadassah Magazine*. Inspired by Joyce's generous spirit, Marnie ended the article with a suggestion: invite someone from a different background to your seder.

"This is a way we can fight anti-Semitism in our own homes," she wrote. And thus, the initiative 2 for Seder

was born, with a very simple idea: invite two non-Jewish guests to your seder. "Knowledge is power, right?" asked Marnie, who started 2 for Seder with long-time friend

Lauren Kline. "If they know a little bit more about us being Jewish, two years from now, or 10 years from now, they could be in a conversation where someone says something very negative about Judaism and they say, 'You know what?' I think you're wrong."

The two friends founded

Pittsburgh Idea Evolutions, a new non-profit with the mission of encouraging American and Canadian Jews to combat anti-Semitism. Its first initiative is 2 for Seder, which

gives Jews the tools to "push back on anti-Semitism with love and matzah" with help from the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh.

Over the past 12 years, Marnie co-hosted seders with her mother-in-law, though she had been a guest at Joyce's seders long before

that. Reminiscing on two decades of Passover with her mother-in-law, Marnie said the seders were "glorious chaos".

"There's so much energy, and it's overpacked," she said. "For someone who doesn't understand who we are, attending Passover is that key moment when you can really see what it means to be Jewish."

The goal is to have 1 000 2 for Seder participants. So far, more than 450 people have ordered a free, downloadable "seder kit" that includes Passover recipes (including Joyce's "Passover Popovers" which are essentially baked matzah balls), an introduction to the seder, a history of anti-Semitism in North America, and nuanced questions to weave into existing Haggadah traditions.

If Joyce were here today, Marnie says, she would be overjoyed by the initiative. Never wanting to be the centre of attention, her goal was always to bring an energetic dynamic to the table with people of all cultures and perspectives. Combating anti-Semitism begins with conversation, and that's what 2 for Seder aims to facilitate.

"The idea that this could happen to anyone, and that it happened to someone as gentle as Joyce... this was the reason I had to take some action," Marnie said.

• This article originally appeared on *Kveller*.



SPIRITS OF FESTIVITY.

Celebrate with 100% Agave tequila.

Norman's Kosher Offers

El Jimador
Reposado
R249

Herradura
Reposado
R529

Valid until 12 May



CIRCLE JR/4379E



FINE WINE AND SPIRIT MERCHANTS

VISIT OUR STORES OR SHOP ONLINE AT ngf.co.za

Not For Sale to Persons Under The Age of 18. Drink Responsibly.

Titanic's many Jewish victims coming to light

JORDAN MOSHE

In August last year, the pocket watch of Sinai Kantor, a Russian Jew who was on the Titanic when it sank, was sold on auction for \$57 000 (R796 000).

This watch, which includes Hebrew letters and an engraving of Moses with the Ten Commandments, was originally recovered from Sinai's body after it was pulled from the icy waters and joined other artefacts in a Californian museum dedicated to the memory of those who lost their lives.

Kantor was one of many Jews who died when the RMS Titanic sank.

This past Sunday, 14 April, marked the 107th anniversary of one of history's most well-known maritime tragedies. In spite of being called unsinkable by many, the Titanic met with a disastrous end when she collided with an iceberg four days into her maiden voyage from Southampton to New York City in 1912.

As familiar as many of us may be with the narrative, the effect of this disaster on world Jewry is perhaps less well-known. This is because the stories of the Titanic's Jews have come to light only in recent years.

Although it occurred shortly after the turn of the 20th century, 1912 was no easier a time for the Jews of Europe than the 1800s had been. Religious oppression, poverty, and the infamous pogroms in Russia were constant threats to the lives of thousands of Jews. From the 1880s to the early 1900s, many Jews fled Europe, a majority of them from Russia, in an effort to secure a more stable future. Often landing on the shores of America, these Jews hoped to find better prospects in circles which displayed none of the animosity to which they were accustomed

in Europe.

One of the larger ships which promised deliverance to the new world for Europe's Jews was the Titanic. According to Eli Moskowitz, the author of *The Jews of The Titanic*, the White Star Line company's list of the 2 222 passengers indicates that there were a couple hundred Jews on board, representing Jewish sects from across the religious spectrum. Reform, Orthodox, and even offspring of some Hasidic families were on board, including names such as Gurshon Cohen, Abraham Hyman, and Jenie Drapkin. Says Moskowitz, "Some of them were in first-class cabins, but most were in the third class, which was reserved for immigrants and where men had the lowest chances of surviving. The exact number of Jews in third class is still unknown."

In addition to these immigrating Jews, the ship also carried multi-millionaires. Among the Jews, the second wealthiest person on board the ship was mining magnate Benjamin Guggenheim, as well as New York's famous Macy's department store owner Isidore Strauss, who was returning with his wife, Ida, from a vacation in Europe to the United States.

While names which are clearly Jewish do appear on the list, Moskowitz suggests that there may have been more, since some Jews altered their names and registered a forged identity before boarding the ship.

Photo: Beit Hatfutsot Museum



A copy of Solomon Small's musical compositions

through the darkness of the lower-floor cabins towards the upper deck. The loss of life was exceptionally heavy and disproportionate among third-class passengers, and of the 710 third-class passengers on board, only one fourth escaped, with the records of the Hebrew Immigration Aid Society showing that just 27 Jews survived.

Both Guggenheim and Strauss are said to be among those who acted heroically until the end. Guggenheim was reportedly offered both a life belt and the opportunity to climb into a lifeboat but refused, saying, according to the *Jewish Chronicle*, "No woman shall remain unsaved because I was a coward." The paper also added that after he "assisted the officers... in getting the women in the boats", he died "with a jest upon his lips".

A similar tale is told of Mr and Mrs Strauss. After seeing that their maid, Ellen Bird,

"One of the only ways to leave [Russia] was by forging documents," says Moskowitz. During that time, an estimated 2.7 million Jews fled Russia to escape increasing religious persecution, bloody Kishinev pogroms, and the dreaded Cantonist decree."

However many Jews there were aboard the famed vessel, it is known that they formed a close-knit community while at sea. They spent a considerable amount of time together, dining and praying, and were often given the same quarters.

According to both Moskowitz and historian Charles Haas, artefacts from the Olympia, the sister ship of the Titanic, proved that there was a separate kosher menu and dishes for the Jews of the Titanic.

The two ships shared the same utensils, and some remaining artefacts discovered include plates labelled "meat" and "milk" in English and Yiddish. Even the standard menu made mention of separate kosher accommodations. According to Haas, an individual by the name of Charles Kennel was the appointed Jewish cook and supervising rabbi of the Titanic.

Whether in first-class or steerage, all passengers were forced to fight for their lives on the ill-fated evening of 14 April. Harrowing accounts of rushing for lifeboats and acts of heroism are recorded from among the Jewish passengers.

Those in third class who tried to escape their watery grave had to grope

had climbed safely into a lifeboat, Strauss and ship officers instructed his wife to do the same. She refused, saying that she would rather remain with her husband, come what may.

"We have been living together for many years," she is said to have replied. "Where you go, I go." The couple is said to have stood aside, calmly observing the deployment of lifeboats as the ship went down. Neither they nor Guggenheim are accounted for until today. The disaster sent ripples around the world, especially among Jews. Yiddish lyricist Solomon Small composed the song *Der Nasser Kever* or "The Watery Grave" in honour of the victims. Cantor Yossele Rosenblatt recorded a *kel malei rachamim* (a prayer for the souls of the departed) in dedication to the victims, raising

\$150 000 (R2.1 million), from sales of his album which was given to the fund for families who lost loved ones on the Titanic. Halachic questions surrounding men presumed dead and the status of their wives abounded. The Jewish world reeled as much as broader society.

We may never know exactly how many Jews died when the ship sank and the many stories that died with them. But the next time someone mentions the Titanic, it will have a slightly different significance for us.



Photo: Heritage Auctions

The pocket watch of Sinai Kantor

Balfour Mall
MAKE YOUR MOVE

WARM WISHES FOR PESACH!

May you and your family be blessed with happiness, prosperity and good health.

Facebook icon | @BalfourMall | www.balfourmall.co.za
Cnr Athol & Johannesburg Roads | Highlands North | Johannesburg

Minister Sisulu defends downgrade in face of backlash

>>Continued from page 3

He said he was perplexed by Sisulu's comment that she was not aware of countries with human-rights violations that would warrant an embassy downgrade. "We recommend that the minister review the Amnesty International Human Rights Index. If the minister's international-relations policy has changed from engagement to punitive responses, these are some of the countries that she should focus on."

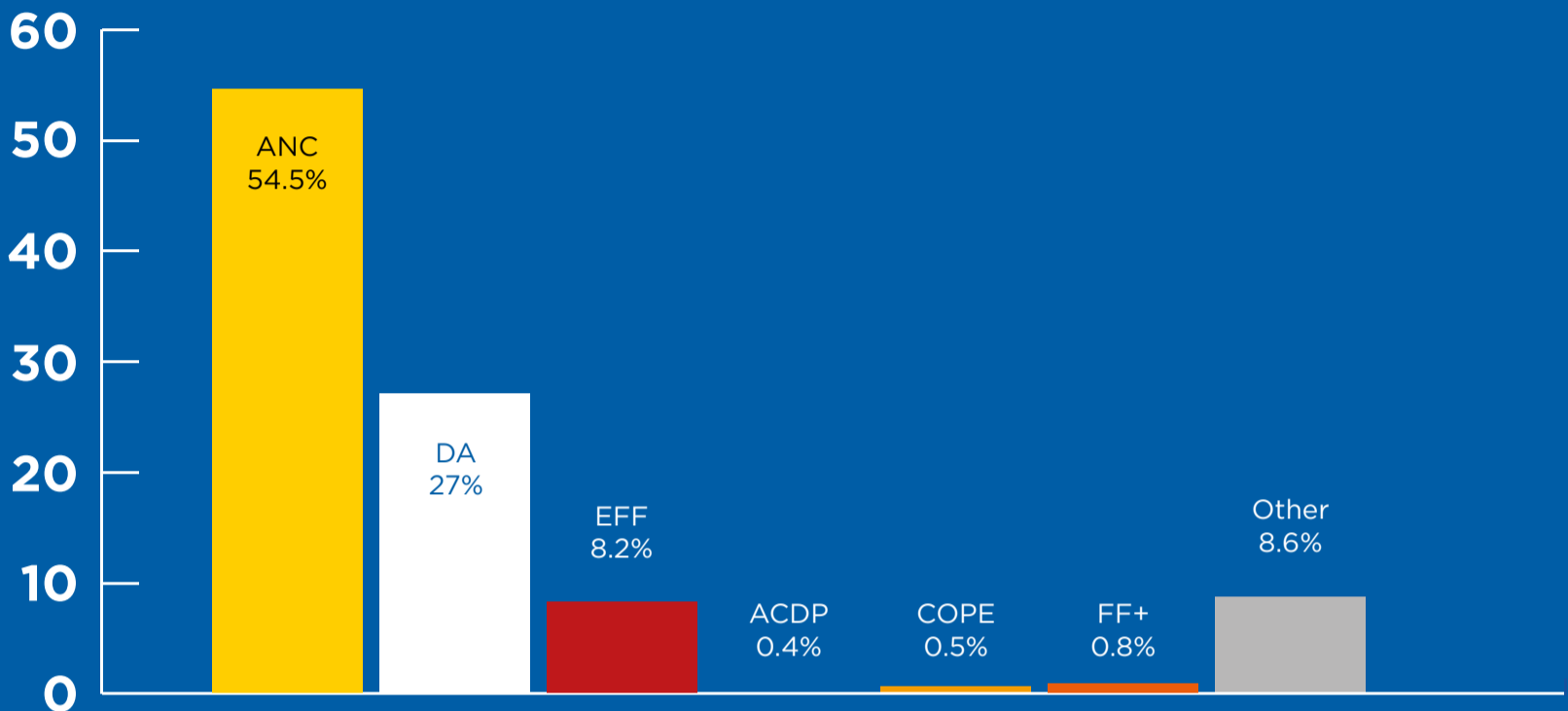
He also agreed that in abdicating responsibility for the resolution, the minister was displaying inconsistency with the remarks she made on 4 January 2018, only two weeks after the 54th ANC conference.

"In 2018, she was minister of human settlements, yet even then, she was making commitments on issues completely irrelevant to her portfolio. The clear overreach she displayed even then demonstrated a long-term obsession with this resolution," he said.

This advert was paid for by the Democratic Alliance

Only the DA is strong enough to beat the ANC

The DA has grown in every election since 1994



Official IEC election result, 2016 Local Government Elections

Now, we are beating the ANC across South Africa – in cities like Tshwane, Johannesburg, Cape Town and Nelson Mandela Bay.

With your support, we can keep growing and beating the ANC in more and more places so that we can protect your rights, and build a country we can all be proud of!

Remember: A vote for a small party simply splits the vote and strengthens the ANC.

**Don't waste your vote on a small party.
Vote DA on Wednesday, 8 May.**



Call **0861 22 55 32** | Whatsapp **084 000 2019**
www.OneSouthAfricaForAll.co.za

The exponential growth of artificial intelligence

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is at a critical point, said Alison Jacobson, a global strategy advisor and thought leader on emerging technology.

Jacobson was discussing the impact of AI on education and the job market among other things at the Rabbi Cyril Harris Community Centre at the Great Park Synagogue in Johannesburg recently.

We're already much further along in the development of AI than many think. "We're never going to get to some elusive end point, we live in exponential times," said Jacobson. "Exponential means that it doesn't look like much is happening when it begins, but it's growing and multiplying. As it gets into the double digits, it doubles and doubles, and so on. This is what it looks like when technology and its capability halves in price, but doubles annually in power."

"Donald Trump did us a favour when he started talking about post truth," she said. "We're about to become post truth. Thought leaders say that our children – those who are already born – will be the last generation of humans that are unaltered."

"In other words, AI will no longer be out there anymore, but in here – inside of us. Chinese scientists last year already carried out gene editing on live human embryos. The world went mad, but they did it anyway, and two little girls were born. The chief scientist removed a certain gene that makes people HIV resistant, but it's thought in studies that removing that gene also increases intelligence."

AI is at the crux of what's changing our world so quickly, but it's not doing it alone, said Jacobson. "It's exponential because we're at the convergence of robotics, gene editing, artificial intelligence, renewable energy, nanotechnology, and space exploration. Although we may feel insecure, uncertain, or fearful of AI, we all want what it offers. That's how technology progresses." We all use AI every day. Uber, Waze, and your Apple watch or Fitbit are all examples of AI. "AI makes things nicer, more convenient, faster, cheaper, and easier – we're not stopping this thing."

AI's impact on the job market is undeniable, causing much concern. "South African banks have already shed thousands of jobs," said Jacobson. "Robots don't take sick days. This is happening in huge numbers across businesses in South Africa today. When Discovery Bank announces behavioural banking, we know we're there. In most cases, we're actually a bit behind." AI is, however, also having an impact on auditors, lawyers, doctors, and accountants. "Law firms in South Africa have introduced AI for contract management and due diligence. AI is helping anywhere where there are repetitive rules."

She points to drones as another example of the exponential nature of AI. "Drones used to be military tools. Now, you can go onto Takealot and buy a drone for a few thousand rand. You can stand there and send a drone three kilometres away using a remote control, and control it through its camera. That's an intense piece of

technology, and it's getting better and more affordable."

AI can come right into our homes. "You can now buy a gene-editing kit online, and do gene editing in your kitchen. They're calling it biohacking. It's impossible to control."

Google Assistant can now make a phone call on your behalf. This has been proven with an online call to a hairdresser to book an appointment. "Google Assistant can have an unscripted conversation with a human," said Jacobson. "No one programmed that conversation, and no one understands exactly how it's doing this. The AI was trained using huge sets of data from English conversations, and by ingesting that data, it worked out patterns. Humans gave it a start and end point, and it worked out the rest. This process is called deep learning, which results in unsupervised AI, you don't have to programme the in-between bit. Unsupervised AI is faster, cheaper, and surprisingly more reliable than supervised AI."

The rise of AI gives rise to many questions. It may be making things more efficient, but what of the ethical ramifications? "Google tried to set up an AI ethics council saying that AI must be accountable and unbiased. But it's not accountable," said Jacobson. Yet, she argues that we're better off now than we've ever been.

"There's less poverty, more disposable income, and widespread internet access."

In an ever-changing world, where does South Africa stand? Are our schools preparing our children adequately? "Eighty percent of 10 year olds in South Africa cannot read," said Jacobson. This naturally puts us on the back foot. Even private schools can't possibly prepare our kids. "Most schools are operating on a model circa 200 years ago." At one talk she gave, Jacobson said, the parents were asked to raise their hands if they were happy with the quality of their children's education and if they thought that their children were being prepared for the future of work. "One person put up her hand, and she was a parent from King David!"

South Africa may be behind in many ways, but we've produced one of the world's leaders in AI – Elon Musk. "Musk is from Pretoria. He set out to disrupt Mercedes-Benz, and he did it," said Jacobson.

"He's outcompeted NASA with reusable rockets. Through one of his companies, he's creating a device and a capability that will allow AI to interface with the human brain because he believes that otherwise, we're going to get left behind. We're going to have to become AI to keep up."

With numerous notable AI innovators and companies currently in South Africa, it's clear we have the brain power to be among the world's best. "There's a huge amount happening here, there are pockets of excellence," said Jacobson. "Yet, we have a massive skills shortage globally. The question is, are we going to try and upscale humans to fill these jobs, or will the robots do it first?"

A university degree is no longer key to set yourself apart, she said. There are thousands of free AI courses available online even through Columbia and Duke universities. "When I hire people, if they have a university degree, especially from a university in South Africa, that's a strike against them. It means they've been standing still for three years. If they're showing initiative and have certification across a range of appropriate courses, and can demonstrate this practically, that's what I'm interested in."

Fear not, not all of us have to be software developers. "There are

numerous courses and professions that are shaping the future. In its 2020 report, the World Economic Forum said that some of the top skills you need to succeed in the future world of work include complex problem solving, creativity, critical thinking, and lifelong learning."

Ultimately, it's not a question of man versus robot, said Jacobson. "I don't think we'll be talking about ourselves as being outside of AI for much longer. We'll be using biological enhancements, and we'll find ourselves a bit closer to the machine."



Alison Jacobson

Photo: Barbara Dale-Jones

Lithuanian Jews caught between the past and the future

MIRAH LANGER

For the 5 000 Jews living in modern Lithuania, the past remains ever-present, and the future never seems entirely clear.

"We spend a lot of effort in reminding the people living in Lithuania who the Jews are, because in half of our country, there are no Jews at all." So says Faina Kukliansky, the chairperson of the Lithuanian Jewish community, during a recent visit to Johannesburg.

Kukliansky, a lawyer who has served as both a criminal investigator and prosecutor, was visiting to mark the opening of a new exhibition on the history of Lithuanian Jewry at the Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre in Forest Town. She also held a separate question and answer session to interact with the South African *Litvak* (Lithuanian) community.

Kukliansky sketched a complex portrait of contemporary Jewish life in Lithuania. She described how the community tasked itself with preserving its heritage, seeking justice for war crimes, fighting anti-Semitism, as well as bringing up the next generation according to Jewish values.

"We take a lot of care of our heritage – our synagogues, civil society, cemeteries, and the places where mass murders took place."

She said the community was involved in preserving about 250 cemeteries, and a similar number of sites of mass murder.

About 60% of the community is elderly. Nevertheless, the community is proud of its Jewish school in Vilnius, where Hebrew is taught from Grade 1 to Grade 12.

Kukliansky said the community was very politically active, citing the recent case of the Noreika plaque. In this case, South African-born Grant Gochin took the Lithuanian government to court to get it to take down a plaque outside a library in the capital city, Vilnius,

which honours Lithuanian nationalist hero Jonas Noreika. This man was responsible for the murder of 14 500 Lithuanian Jews in 1941, including one hundred of Gochin's relatives.

Gochin's aim – along with the likes of Kukliansky – is to get the Lithuanian government to recognise that many of its political and military leaders played an active role in the extermination of the country's Jews during the Nazi era.

Before World War II, the Lithuanian Jewish population numbered about 160 000 people. About 90% of this population was subsequently exterminated.



Faina Kukliansky and Tali Nates

Photo: Ilean Ossendryve

Since Lithuania became independent in 1990, the community has also been involved in seeking restitution for private property lost during World War II and the subsequent Soviet regime. It is a process riddled with legal hurdles, yet, Kukliansky said the community remained determined to keep trying.

The community had been paid restitution for communal property that was seized. The money was put in a community fund, and is distributed to help 1 500 community members.

Kukliansky conceded that the community was "always afraid of anti-Semitism", but said it was also vigilant in fighting it. Most often, this was done by education.

She said the only formal event in Lithuania that appears to have direct links to anti-Semitism is a yearly skinhead march. "They say that Lithuania is only for Lithuanians. I'm not sure that they know what they are talking about."

Asked by an audience member whether she thought there was danger for the Jewish community in the future, Kukliansky said that it was impossible to dismiss this fear.

"This is not ended. It is not finished. If [certain] Lithuanians would start to make the same concerted [push against the Jews], I think a lot of Lithuanians would join them. People, sometimes they lose their minds. They believe [myths about the Jews]."

Nevertheless, Kukliansky said with a touch of dark humour, when people tell her that Jews rule the world, she always responds, "Yes!"

Kukliansky said that the Lithuanian Jewish community was looking forward to 2020. The Lithuanian parliament has deemed next year to be a commemoration of the Vilna Gaon, the famous Lithuanian Jewish religious leader, Rabbi Elijah ben Solomon Zalman, and the history of the Jews in Lithuania. That year will mark 300 years since the birth of the Vilna Gaon.

Lithuanian Ambassador Sigute Jakštonyte, who also attended the opening, made it clear that the country wanted to honour its relationship with Jewry through initiatives like the events planned for 2020.

"There have been joyful and painful moments," she said of the centuries of Jewish life in Lithuania. "We have to remember all of them and learn from them. The 20th century brought great pain and suffering to the Jewish community of Lithuania, and nothing can make us forget the innocent victims of the Holocaust."

The ambassador's acknowledgement of this painful past made 92-year-old Mord Perlov, a Lithuanian Jewish survivor of the Russian gulags, emotional. Standing up at the event, he declared that Jakštonyte had given him a sense of spiritual home coming.



WHY IS THIS ORGANISATION DIFFERENT FROM ALL OTHERS?

Is it that we reach 11 000 Jews?

Or is it that we provide shelter, food, medical care, education, burial and counselling?

Is it that we have to manage a budget of R320m per annum?

Or is it that we must fundraise over R200m per annum?

Is it that we embrace the highest levels of governance and transparency?

Or is it that we ensure that from cradle to grave...

NO JEW GETS LEFT BEHIND

You decide.

TO DONATE

www.jhbchev.co.za | 011 532 9758 / 9674 | SMS Pesach to 37613



ChevrahKadisha

Gina Myers: following a fairytale

TALI FEINBERG

“At the mansion, the girls would do Shabbos with me every Friday, which was a special moment. I am very proud to be Jewish,” says make-up artist Gina Myers. She is a contestant on *The Bachelor SA*, and an ordinary Joburg Jewish girl who just wants to find love.

“I’m not what you see on Instagram. I’m a homebody, who loves chocolate and a glass of red wine at the end of the day,” she laughs. She entered *The Bachelor SA* with one thing on her mind, namely “whatever is meant to be, will be”.

“My friend sent me the entry, and I asked my mom if I should enter. She said yes. Without thinking any further, I just went with it, because I hadn’t met anyone, and I believe in fairytales. I’m a hopeless romantic. I thought to myself, wherever this takes me, I’ll go,” she says.

The show has had an impact on her life. “I’m so much stronger than I ever thought I was. On this journey, you have to trust your gut and listen to your intuition.

“You have to separate yourself from all the girls, and realise that none of them are competition because you are not

there to compete. You are there to find love. I can do that – I can sit and talk to a girl about her date, listen to every detail, and still manage to separate my feelings from hers. That is powerful for me.”

Some of the highlights include international singer Calum Scott’s invitation to sing for the girls. “What a beautiful surprise! Sky diving was also a huge accomplishment for me in terms of facing my fears, and being able to do that with Lee [Thompson] was a special moment. But my one-on-one date with him has to have been my greatest highlight. I’m all about smells, and the perfume date was perfect because you learn to listen to each other’s senses.”

Some of the challenges include not being able to talk about the show when everyone wants to talk about it, as well as the stereotypes attached to it. “I am learning to use the platform that I have in a positive way – that is all I want.”

Everyone she has spoken to since the show started has been kind and supportive, she says. “I experienced so much anxiety before the show premiered as I wasn’t sure how it would be received. So, the support is greatly appreciated.”

It was announced that Myers would be on *The Bachelor SA* on 14 February, six years to the day since her best friend, Reeva Steenkamp, was killed. Myers says that Steenkamp’s death has influenced her outlook on life.

“Losing her was the worst experience of my life. But I’ve gained an angel. I know she would have been proud, and would have supported me in my journey to find love. Leading up to the show, I saw so many signs. I saw that *The Bachelor SA* was going to premier on 14 February, and that was when I decided that if I got through the final interview, I would definitely do it. I got the phone call two hours after I made that decision.”

Myers’ advice to young girls about navigating current challenges is, “We get lost in social media, society, and in what magazines say we should be. I hope that these girls know that you have a choice to be you. You have a choice to be strong. You don’t have to compete to stand out, or push someone down to stand up. Speak your truth!”

To the South African Jewish community, she says, “Thank you again for all your love and support. I can’t wait for you to watch the rest!”



Gina Myers receives one of The Bachelor Lee Thompson’s roses

Golden key unlocks family history for King David student

JORDAN MOSHE

Having embarked on the journey of exploring their family’s Jewish roots, Grade 7 students David Matisonn and Jesse Shur were this week recognised for their outstanding My Family Story project submissions.

Shur’s project was one of three worldwide to receive the title of “exceptional submission”, and Matisonn’s submission won him a ticket to Tel Aviv in June to take part in celebrations held by Beit Hatfutsot, the Museum of the Jewish People.

The My Family Story international competition is a global educational programme sponsored by the museum which gives Jewish youth the opportunity to explore their family roots, historical memory, and Jewish family values, and express their ideas using creativity and artistic skill.

More than 20 000 participants submitted projects from 25 countries this year, out of which 50 students won tickets to Israel to display their project at the museum in a two-day programme, including a ceremony and prize giving.

In South Africa, the four participating schools, Torah Academy Girls’ High, King David Linksfield, Victory Park, and Sandton Primary School, showcased the magnificent works of art produced by the students at exhibitions held at the schools. Judges Liat Amar-Arran, the director of the Israel Centre SA; Kim Nates and Courtneigh Bernstein from the Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre; and Partnership2Gether Chairman Anthony Rosmarin were hard-pressed to choose winning projects from among the many submissions. Matisonn and Shur were among the nine winners selected.

A student of King David Sandton, Matisonn’s project, “The Golden Key”, was selected to be one of the displays at Beit Hatfutsot. The product of countless hours

of brainstorming for an original idea, the project represents a unique chapter of the family’s history. Matisonn explains that his great-great-great grandfather, Isaac Woolf Baranov, came from Lithuania and first settled in Grimsby in the United Kingdom, moving to Vryheid in South Africa thereafter.



Photo: Israel Centre SA

David Matisonn with his My Family Story project

“He was presented with a gold key at the opening of a shul in Vryheid in 1904,” Matisonn says. “His wife, Hannah, had brought from Europe a Torah scroll and many Judaica items required for a shul. Shul services were held in their home for 17 years until they had the funds to build a permanent shul, which ran for 83 years.”

He continues, “We were convinced that a shul had already been submitted in this

project previously, but thought that it was unlikely that another family had a gold key to a shul that was built 115 years ago. The key represents hope that even when there are hardships, such as leaving home for a place of uncertainty, Judaism is given priority. My grandfather, Ken Baranov, now has the

key, as it has been handed down from generation to generation, and he hopes future generations will unlock the door to Jewish practices.”

Matisonn and his mother, Tanya, spent three weeks on the project, working closely with information gathered by Baranov. “My mom and I thought that if we submitted a key as our project it would not be creative enough,” said Matisonn. “We used the theme of keys, locks, gates, and the shul to make my project. At the back of the project is a painting of the original shul with large wooden cut outs of door locks in front of the shul painting, so you have to look through the key lock to see the shul.”

“My grandfather spent years researching his family history, travelling to Lithuania, Poland, Grimsby, and Vryheid. It’s fulfilling to be able to use all the information gathered regarding our heritage.”

A proud South African, Matisonn is excited to be representing his country in the competition, and said he could not believe it when his name was announced as a winner.

“I was in awe when my Jewish Studies teacher then called to say the museum in Israel had selected my project for a trip to

Israel,” he said. “It is so amazing that the competition programme is held in Tel Aviv, as Israel is home for all of us. I am so excited to meet people my age from all over the diaspora, and celebrate together in a special place that is meaningful to all of us.”

Shur, a student at King David Linksfield, was also thrilled at the recognition given to his submission, “Zaida’s Bucket”. A tribute to his great grandfather Issy Krost, the project is modelled on a steel bucket Krost crafted himself for use in his plumbing business in South Africa after leaving the shtetl of Keidan in Lithuania in 1929.

“This bucket was inspired by a bucket which was used in their home in Keidan to draw water,” said Shur. “Many Krost customers liked the bucket, and asked him to make one for them. It was the start of a new steel manufacturing company called the Krost Brothers.” The company produced items like pots, pans, and toolboxes, eventually even making kitchen units and shelves.

A cousin visiting Keidan in 2012 actually found the original bucket, providing further inspiration for the project. “The bucket was found by the well,” Shur said. “It was still being used. Even though very old, it stood the test of time. It connects me to my Jewish roots and culture, and it symbolises the physical strength and durability of the Jewish people in the face of hardship. We have the inner strength and determination, with the help of Hashem, to overcome any situation.”

One of only three submissions worldwide to receive the title of exceptional submission, he will be awarded the “Prize Hitztaynut”, and will also receive a special mention at the competition. A video of the presentation, which was sent to judging committee, will be on view as part of the exhibit. Although Jesse’s display itself wasn’t selected for the exhibit, the video (with added subtitles) will be seen by the thousands of people visiting the museum in June and July.

www.kia.co.za



24/54 OLD FRIENDS YOUNG TALENT



May blessings find you at every turn
on your road to spiritual enlightenment.



The Power to Surprise

UNLIMITED
KILOMETRE

5 YEAR
WARRANTY

Chag Sameach to you and yours! May your journey towards spiritual enlightenment this Pesach be filled with blessings and joy! For every other journey, there's the comfortable, spacious and stylish KIA Grand Sedona.

Did Homeland Security just hurt or help America's ability to track domestic terrorism?

RON KAMPEAS – JTA

At first, it reads like a grim joke. Less than six months after the worst attack on Jews in United States history, the Trump administration took the bold decision to ... shut down a unit tracking domestic terrorism.

Dig a little, however, and it's a more complicated picture. The good news is that there are existing government agencies tracking domestic terrorism, particularly white supremacists, like the man who allegedly shot dead 11 Jewish worshippers in Pittsburgh in October.

The bad news, say some experts, is that the way the government, and particularly the Trump administration, tracks anti-Semitism is a mess, with or without the dedicated unit inside the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that just got disbanded.

Here are some questions about the move and its implications.

What happened?

The Daily Beast reported this week that the Department of Homeland Security had shut down the domestic terrorism analysis unit within its Office of Intelligence and Analysis.

The analysts compiled and shared information on home-grown extremists with state and local law enforcement agencies and with possible targets. Those targets include Jewish groups that handle security, like the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and the Secure Community Network (SCN), a group affiliated with the Jewish Federations of North America and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organisations.

DHS in a lengthy statement to *The Daily Beast*

said that the changes would make the tracking of potential domestic terrorists, and the sharing of information, more efficient, and that tracking had, in fact, increased recently.

Less clear was exactly how the change would lead to enhanced information sharing. Steve Pomerantz, a former Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agent who is now the director of counterterrorism programmes at the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (Jinsa), said it would make more sense to devolve the intelligence analysis and sharing to the FBI, which institutionally had greater experience in tracking domestic threats. DHS, he said, was better suited to ensuring that ports of entry were secure.

What do DHS's Jewish clients think of this?

The two clients, SCN and ADL had radically different takes.

Jonathan Greenblatt, the ADL's chief executive, said the move "defies logic". He took direct aim at the Trump administration, citing what he depicted as its muted responses not only to the Pittsburgh massacre, but to the deadly neo-Nazi march in Charlottesville, Virginia, in August 2017, and to the mass killing of 50 Muslims in New Zealand this year, carried out by a white supremacist.

"The current administration has been chipping away at our nation's ability to address a deadly serious national-security threat: right-wing extremism," Greenblatt said. "To simply disregard this threat, especially after what we witnessed in Pittsburgh, Charlottesville, Charleston, and even overseas in Christchurch, New Zealand, could put lives at risk."

He called for greater congressional oversight of domestic terrorism tracking.

Michael Masters, who directs SCN (which works closely with ADL in tracking threats), said that DHS's argument that the move would increase efficiency was persuasive.

"I have been assured by DHS that the changes it has made will lead to better information-sharing and co-ordination between law enforcement partners, notably between DHS and the FBI," he said in an email. "In this, it is my understanding that the changes were designed not only to improve the sharing of information, but increase the likelihood that

extremists".

"Largely absent from this list of killers were extremists motivated by radical interpretations of Islam," Greenblatt wrote in an op-ed for the *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*. "Only one of the 50 murders had any connection to Islamist extremism – and even then, the perpetrator had ties to white supremacy. In 2018, the US was thankfully spared the mass murders by Islamist extremists we've seen in recent years."

Michael German, a fellow at the Brennan Center for Justice, agreed that white



Photo: Scott Olson

The Department of Homeland Security shuts down its domestic terrorism analysis unit

domestic terrorist events are stopped."

What is it the ADL worried about?

Ryan Greer, the ADL's director for program assessment and strategy, said the mission of tracking domestic terrorists would be diluted without a dedicated team.

"What they are saying is that other people who cover a range of issues, airline security, cybersecurity, maybe sometimes they will deal with domestic terrorism," said Greer, who worked in senior anti-terrorism positions in the Obama administration's State Department and Department of Homeland Security. "To say that the same person who will focus on baggage handling policy or traffic control will have the same focus" as the disbanded team "is simply laughable."

A properly functioning dedicated team would notice, for instance, that the alleged Pittsburgh attacker and the confessed New Zealand killer were in the same online forums, being radicalised by the same propaganda, Greer said.

John Cohen, a senior adviser at Rutgers University's Institute for Emergency Preparedness and Homeland Security, said in an interview that he was sure that DHS would pass on tips of pending attacks. But he was concerned that the DHS clients, including local law enforcement and faith-based groups, could miss the bigger picture now that a dedicated team was not compiling reports.

So, we're losing an important means of tracking the rise of white supremacists?

This is where it gets really complicated. Whether white supremacy is on the rise depends on how you assess it – and whether DHS tracking has been any help at all is also an open question.

Jinsa's Pomerantz says the threat from white supremacists was more lethal when he was at the FBI in the 1980s and 1990s, noting the 1984 assassination of Jewish talk-show host Alan Berg, attacks on synagogues, and the existence of The Order, an armed white supremacist militia. Pomerantz said he believed the more imminent threat was from radical Islamists, who he said are organised and control territory overseas in a way that white supremacists do not.

The ADL released a study, however, noting that "extremist-related murders in 2018 were overwhelmingly linked to right-wing

supremacists were better organised a generation ago when he was working for the FBI undercover and infiltrating white supremacist groups. He cited one of the worst terrorist attacks on US soil, the 1995 bombing of a federal building in Oklahoma City.

But German, an expert on extremism, said that law enforcement tracking of white supremacists was also hampered structurally. Law enforcement staffing tends to be overwhelmingly white, and officials historically have been likelier to play down the threat from the communities with which they are familiar.

"White people who go to work and then come home to a safe white neighbourhood don't worry about white supremacists attacking them or their families," he said. German routinely reviews the reports from DHS and other agencies, and said that reports on potential violence from non-white supremacist groups tended to be more alarmist, if only because the reporters were less familiar with the communities.

So is the fight against extremism of all types being politicised?

Another factor inhibiting reporting on white supremacists was the Obama administration's botched rollout of a report on "right-wing extremism". Republicans objected to the term "right wing" and veterans' groups objected to its reporting that extremists would likely target young veterans returning from overseas.

Compounding the institutional reluctance to track white-supremacist extremism, German said, is an administration that has downplayed and in some cases appeared to encourage white supremacists. When asked after the New Zealand attack whether white nationalists were a growing threat around the world, Trump replied, "I don't really. I think it's a small group of people that have very, very serious problems. It's certainly a terrible thing."

After the Charlottesville violence, Trump initially blamed both sides for the violence, a day later condemned the Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazis, and a day after that said there were "some very fine people" on both sides of a clash that pitted anti-fascist protesters against white-power marchers who had chanted, "Jews will not replace us."

The opportunity: Africa



Africa is known for its contrasts, unique challenges and amazing opportunities. Whether you're a multinational or a smaller owner-managed business, operating anywhere on the continent, we'll craft a tailored solution for you. We've been doing business in Africa for almost a century, and over 9 000 professionals in 34 countries are working with our clients to build trust in society and solve important problems.

Let us help you reimagine your business.

www.pwc.com/africa





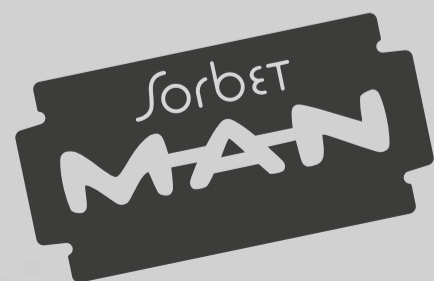
**FACIALS | NAILS
WAXING | MASSAGES
BROWS | LASHES
...AND MORE**



**WASH | BLOWOUTS
HAIR TREATMENTS
UP STYLES
MANIS | PEDIS
...AND MORE**



**HOT TOWEL SHAVES
HAIR CUTS | FACIALS
MASSAGES | WAXING
MANIS | PEDIS**



Turkmenistan capital as ghostly as the Jews who still live there

PAULA SLIER



The remaining Jews of Turkmenistan – less than 1 000 of them – have precarious status and usually don't want to disclose their religious origin.

Today, they have no rabbi, no synagogue, and by all assessments, no future.

This former Soviet Republic (bordered by Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and the Caspian Sea) is the seventh least visited country in the world. Its capital, Ashgabat, is described by the *Lonely Planet* travel guide as a cross between Las Vegas and Pyongyang.

It's easy to understand why. The main avenues are lined on both sides with breathtakingly beautiful buildings, all made of imported Italian white marble. No two are the same, as commanded by the president. Neon lights adorn the top of each façade and like Vegas, the flashy city rises as an oasis in the middle of the desert.

But Human Rights Watch says the country remains one of the world's most repressive regimes. Disparagingly referred to as North Korea with oil – the country boasts the second largest natural gas reserves in the former Soviet Union – the glitz and glamour is artificial. During daylight hours there is not a soul on the street except for cleaners who dust the shrubs lining the roadsides. The parks are empty, the roads are quiet, and no-one walks the perfectly manicured pavements.

An extravagant city in an isolated country, home to a Jewish community that time and history has forgotten.

According to Professor Zeev Levin of the Hebrew University, the first Jews to arrive in Turkmenistan were part of a wider group of Iranian Jews who spread from ancient Persia to central Asia. Archaeological evidence of their presence in the region dates back to the ninth century. At that time, Turkmenistan was an important junction in the Silk Road trade route that connected Europe with Asia.

"They were quite small in number so we cannot consider them a unique group," says Levin.

"They adopted quite a lot of practices and customs from the surrounding environment.

The women wore a veil, and some of their folklore and prayer practices were

Photos: Yekutieli family archive

The Turkmenistan community in Israel continue to maintain their traditions, such as this traditional pre-wedding Henna celebration



The Yekutieli family in Turkmenistan in the 1940s

common to the Persian environment, although some were unique."

Most of these Jews were involved in merchandise, and families would move with the father's work. Commerce was the cornerstone of the community.

"Don't romanticise those times. It was difficult," says Ze'ev Wolf who remembers his father singing songs from Turkmenistan that were passed down from his grandfather who travelled the area selling fur and china.

"The Jews didn't behave like they were different. They wore almost the same clothes as the Muslims. The food was similar, there was no alcohol, the music was the same. In some synagogues, people would take off their shoes before entering, like in a mosque. They also treated their women badly. It was only after coming to Israel that women became literate." Jerusalem-born Wolf taught his mother to read and write when he was seven years old.

"My mother's family didn't have much," he reflects, "but they were full of dignity. The house was always open to guests, even if there was only a little food. My grandmother taught me that a guest always brings luck."

Most of the community left for Israel and America in the 1940s. But in 1948 when a major earthquake wiped out 80% of the population of Ashgabat, among those who came to rebuild the city were Jews from Russia and Ukraine.

Ephraim

Yekutieli's family was among those trying to get out. They headed for the Iranian border.

"When they got there, my grandmother suddenly remembered she had forgotten a pot with all her gold and jewellery at home. My father, Yosef, went back to get it. But the KGB caught him and put him in jail," says Yekutieli.

"My grandmother waited for him, living on the Persian side for a few years. But when he didn't come, she left with her children for Israel in 1948."

Five years later, Yekutieli's father was released from prison and returned to Yoloten, a city in south-east Turkmenistan where he married and had children. Yekutieli and his nine siblings grew up behind the Iron Curtain.

Little is known about those Turkmen Jews who lived under Soviet rule as they were isolated and cut off from major cities and communication links. Many also changed their surnames.

"We lived like everybody else. My father was a businessman, an importer, but that was not accepted there – it was looked down upon because of the communists," says Yekutieli.

"There was no anti-Semitism, not from the people or the government. The communists were the problem. They took my grandfather because he was a wealthy and important rabbi and sent him to Siberia, where they killed him. As a child, I played basketball in the gymnasium without knowing it had been my grandfather's synagogue before the communists converted it."

In 1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed, Yekutieli's family was among about 2 000 Jews to leave Turkmenistan.

He settled in Israel.

The former First Secretary of the Turkmen Communist Party, Saparmyrat Nyýazow, declared himself president for life of the newly independent country, and soon became one of the world's most totalitarian and despotic dictators.

He named a meteorite after himself, banned gold teeth, made it illegal to drive dirty cars on the road, and because he disliked dogs, had them killed in barbaric ways.

In 2003, he passed a law that made Russian Orthodoxy and Sunni Islam the only religions permitted to

impound black cars in the capital and force their owners to repaint them silver or white because they were his lucky colours. To beautify the city, tens of thousands of homes were demolished and their inhabitants poorly compensated. A whole village, Choganly, was raised to the ground so that the new airport, which operates at 10% capacity, could have an international bus terminal. This is in spite of the fact that for the first five years of its existence, the airport did not serve a single international route.

"But," insists Yekutieli, relaxing in his home in Holon where most Turkmen Jews settled in Israel, "the people of Turkmenistan are very special. They are 'Muslim lite'. If we didn't have bread, they would give us. At our weddings, everybody came; also to our hennas. The heart of the Turkmen is very special. They will give you everything they have. When we left, the older people cried. They



Holon Mayor Motti Sasson (centre) checks the preparation of the traditional oshpelov rice, meat and vegetable dish as an honoured guest at a Turkmenistan community dinner

practice in the country. He tore down the city's only synagogue, and built a fountain featuring a traditional Turkmen hero over it. The Jewish community was forced to register itself as a cultural, not religious, organisation. Until today, non-Turkmens are treated as second-class citizens.

In spite of an unemployment rate of 60%, Nyýazow's successor, Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow, continued the excesses of his predecessor. He ordered police to

said that now because the Jews were leaving, they would not have any blessings."

In a certain sense that prophecy came true. Years of seclusion and secrecy have created a capital city steeped in the future while being stuck in the past. And which – just like the Jewish community it shelters – is eerily empty.

• A longer version of this article was commissioned and first printed in *The Jerusalem Report*.

Two-time loser Wayne Odesnik emerges a winner

SY LERMAN

Land ed with one of the longest bans recorded on the international tennis circuit, 33-year-old, Johannesburg-born Wayne Odesnik has demonstrated that a two-time loser can still emerge a winner.

Odesnik received a 15-year suspension from the International Tennis Federation in 2015. This followed a second guilty verdict related to doping, and effectively ended his tennis career.

At the time, he was ranked seventh in the United States, 77th in the world, and featured among a handful of the leading Jewish players on the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) circuit.

Today, Odesnik is a prominent consultant and adviser with a leading Florida-based financial institution in America.

“It was not easy recreating my life and lifestyle under traumatic circumstances at the age of 30,” says Odesnik. “I believe varied experiences over a period of 10 years on the international circuit, both good and bad, all helped shape me into a better person. It enabled me to advise others on all the personal and monetary problems life dishes out to you in circumstances that are often beyond your control.”

Odesnik’s father, Harold, a jeweller by profession, and his mother, Janice, a well-known gymnast in Johannesburg, immigrated to the US. Odesnik spent much of his formative years on the tennis courts of Boca Raton where the family had settled.

“Tennis effectively became my life,” says the left-handed sportsman. “It is with great pride that I was able to take the court against some of the best players the game has produced like Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal, and Novak Djokovic, even if I was not able to beat them.”

He played other formidable opponents like Juan Martin del Potro, a former US Open champion and world number three, and other players ranked in the world top ten like Sam Querrey and Ivan Ljubičić.

Odesnik has never won an ATP world tour singles title, but he was coming close when his career took a nose dive in 2010. At the time, he had been the champion of 14 Challenger and Futures tournaments, and had progressed to the third round in elite grand slam events.

He was apprehended on entering Australia with seven vials of the banned human growth hormone in his possession, and consequently suspended for two years by the International Tennis Federation (ITF) after pleading guilty. His sentence was reduced to one year after providing what was described as “valuable information” regarding doping practices in tennis.

Odesnik’s tennis career from 2011 continued to have a good deal of controversy before the bubble truly burst in 2014. It was then that the ITF revealed that he had failed a number of mandatory doping tests involving methenol, androst, peptide, and other banned substances. A disciplinary hearing in 2015 delivered the stunning 15-year sentence.

The suffocating tennis ban was notably supported by Federer, Nadal, Andy Murray, and his one-time hitting partner and US number one, Andy Roddick. They agreed that as a second offender, “he should have learnt his lesson”.



Wayne Odesnik

As to the positive tests that resulted in the 15-year suspension that ended his tennis career, Odesnik said that he was unaware that the medication he was using at the time for his injuries included any of the damning ingredients.

“Would I be so stupid as to use banned substances deliberately when I was probably about the most tested player on the ATP circuit,” he says, “and knowing full well I was sure to be detected after going through testing at almost every tournament in which I played.”

But on the question of appealing to the ITF to review his severe suspension and reduce it, if nothing else, Odesnik says he now has “a different life”. Besides, after almost four years out of tournament competition, it would be “super human” to get back to where he was in the past.

“But I have no regrets or grudges,” he says. “Tennis will always be a part of my life, and the memories and experiences I have of the game will remain indelibly in my mind. In fact, I feel lucky I was able to make my mark to the extent I did in such a competitive field.”

“Preparing for a new step in life has not been easy. But experience of one kind and another has helped me to meet my goals. The milestones I encountered and surmounted are something I cherish.”

“What is more, I believe the trauma I experienced at the end of it all has given me greater insight into life, and is helping me to help others in the vocation I am following.”

As to the backhanders he received from some players who were his pals, “well, that’s life”, he says.

COLLECTORS INVESTMENTS

Dealers in coins, banknotes and medals since 1959.



**WE GIVE FREE VALUATIONS.
WE PAY TOP PRICES
FOR ALL COLLECTABLES.**

Please be advised on sale of items an Identity Book or Drivers Licence is required.
Banking details are required for an EFT.

Suite 15, 1st Floor, Illovo Muse, 198 Oxford Road, Illovo, Johannesburg. PO Box 393, Parklands, Johannesburg, 2121
Email: collectables@telkomsa.net / Telephone - 011 880 9116 / Cell - 076 741 8801 / Fax - 086 248 4281

WE BUY SOUTH AFRICAN COINS, WORLD COINS, GOLD, SILVER AND COPPER COINS



'Veldpond'
R30 000 and UP



Kruger 5 Shilling
R1000 and UP



One Rand Coin
1966 to 1969.
R65



Gold 15 Rupein
R20000 and up



Silver Zwei Rupein
R1500



Gold Full Sovereign
R3400



20 Lire
R450



Russian Rouble
R500

WE BUY OLD WRIST AND POCKET WATCHES, JEWELLERY, GOLD AND SILVER ITEMS



WE BUY MILITARY MEDALS AND MILITARIA



R1000 and UP

All three (Trio) R1000, single R100

R1500

WE BUY BANKNOTES



FIVE SHILLING
1947 to 1950 = R120
1951 to 1964 = R70
1959 = R1600



TWO & HALF SHILLING
1923 to 1950 = R60
1951 to 1964 = R35
1931 = R7000 Up to R10 000



TWO SHILLING
1923 to 1950 = R40
1951 to 1964 = R30
1925 = R300 Up to R2 000
1931 = R8000 Up to R10 000



ONE SHILLING
1923 to 1964 = R15
1931 = R500 Up to R3000
1939 = R500 Up to R30 000
1949 = R400 Up to R4000



60
1923 to 1964 = R8
1931 = R500 Up to R3000
1939 = R10 000 Up to R30 000



30
1923 to 1964 = R4
1931 = R10 000 Up to R50 000

Weird and wacky world of the weekend heart attack

Ever had a heart attack? It's actually easier than you think. I had one on a beautiful summer morning one Sunday.

I was driving my daughter to her friend when I felt this nagging pain in my right elbow. I thought if I ignored it, it would go away. That is the generally accepted way men deal with problems. It is a rule that I always follow.

I dropped my daughter off, and the pain persisted. I began to feel rather discomfited or "poorly" as my English dowager aunt used to say about her health.

The pain became worse. I contemplated driving straight to the casualty department, staggering in, dropping onto the floor, feebly raising my arm whilst emitting a small but hoarse squeak, "Help me!"

Unfortunately I had my dog in the car, and I didn't know what the hospital would say if I asked them to admit the dog as well. It is only a small, 2kg pavement special with a pedigree as long as your fingernail.

So I drove home with the by now excruciating pain in my right elbow. I knew it could not be a heart attack, because I'd read somewhere that a heart attack was preceded by a pain on the left side or by a tightening in the chest. I had neither of these. I arrived home just as my wife was leaving to go out. "I'm having a heart attack," I managed to whisper.

My wife didn't panic. She's not built that way. However she had heard that if a person has a heart attack, then one must force aspirin into that person's mouth.

Of course there were no aspirins in the medicine cupboard. Now my wife panicked. Most unlike her. She went to the neighbours, and returned with a box of aspirins followed closely by the neighbour, looking suitably concerned.

The ambulance service was called. It said it would dispatch one, but it would take four hours. The neighbour knew of a private ambulance service, and she went home to call it.

Meanwhile, I was lying on my bed and everything was becoming more and more surreal. This couldn't be happening to me, surely. After all, I used to play rugby at school. Okay, it was only Under 13.

The Hatzolah ambulance arrived fairly quickly because suddenly, a young girl and an equally young man dressed in uniforms and wearing badges that said something about medical rescue were at my bedside. But my dog wasn't having any of it. It jumped onto the bed, then onto my chest, and starting barking hysterically at the orderlies, leaving them in no doubt that it would savage anyone who touched me. The male orderly put out his hand and said something that sounded like "nice doggie" and nearly lost a finger.

"Get rid of the dog!" my wife was shouting. The only one who could was me, so I grabbed it and staggered (again) from the bed, shuffled to the bathroom with the growling animal under my arm, threw the dog in, and closed the door. I was conscious of hearing rapid scratching noises against the door.

Back in bed, an oxygen mask was put over my nose, and an injection delivered somewhere in my nether regions.

The next thing I was in this ambulance careering through the streets, and I wondered why the siren wasn't blaring. Surely I was entitled to the Full Monty. It was uncomfortable because every time the ambulance took a turn, I was nearly thrown off the stretcher. The female orderly kept

comforting me by saying, "You'll be alright, Oom."

It was rather embarrassing at the hospital being rushed along on a stretcher with four people, one at each corner and a fifth racing along holding a drip over my head, going at break-neck speed along the corridor, bumping into a nurse coming out of a doorway and knocking her tray flying, and



all the time a suitably ethnic doctor shouting and threatening to kick some serious butt.

Sorry, I've got it wrong. I was confusing it with a TV mini-series I had seen once, or else every TV show about hospitals. Invariably, the senior surgeon belongs to some minority group such as a one-legged, height-challenged, single mother Eskimo with attitude.

Actually what happened was that I found myself in a bed in a silent casualty ward. The doctor administered what could have been – or should have been – morphine and I

OPINION

Lionel Slier



started floating. I also felt fantastic. I wanted to get up, thank the doctor for his kindness and medical skills and for spending six years at university so that he would know exactly what to give me and where.

I suddenly felt ready to go home. There had been some sort of error, and I was sorry for all the trouble and inconvenience that I had caused all these nice people, but I should now be getting on my way. And could I have, in a bottle, some of that stuff that they had given me?

The doctor ignored me, and plunged another needle into my arm. Things became rather vague, distant and impersonal from then on. I remember being in an operating theatre with a huge bright light over me and a masked nurse, dressed in green operating garb. I joked weakly, "This is just like the cinema." "Well I hope that you enjoy the show," she answered pleasantly

enough, probably hearing that comment daily.

A doctor arrived, greeted me, and said, "Hmm." "How bad is hmm?" I asked him, but either he didn't hear my question, or he chose to ignore it. I tried again, but I drifted off.

I awoke to find myself in a curtained-off bed. I stayed there five days and it was a pleasant rest. I was told later that I had a "myocardial infarction". I asked the doctor to write it down for me. How could I have had that, I wondered, when I don't even know how to spell it?

International ORT Day celebrates 139 years of education



King David Victory Park students celebrate International ORT Day with the iconic hand gesture

ORT South Africa joined students and teachers of the Jewish educational organisation around the world on 10 April to celebrate ORT's establishment in St Petersburg on that day in 1880. ORT is the largest Jewish educational organisation in the world.

"When celebrating a 139-year old organisation, you acknowledge its history, achievements, and future," said ORT SA Chief Executive Ariellah Rosenberg. "We stop everything once a year to have a party to honour our network, the opportunities it offers, and our togetherness."

ORT SA in Johannesburg and ORT SA Education in Cape Town celebrated with a variety of events throughout the day.

Staff took part in a competition on the

history of the organisation, as well as eating ORT-branded snacks. Said ORT SA staffer, Lauri Kruger, "I am proud to be part of an organisation that has been around for a whopping 139 years, having an impact on thousands of lives around the world during these decades. Today, we continue to educate, keep up with changing times, and believe in every person that steps through our doors."

Students posted hundreds of images on social media using the ORT together hand gesture.

The 2018 agreement of affiliation signed between World ORT and the South African Board of Jewish Education opens many doors to King David students. The recently inaugurated Youth Ambassadors of the ORT SA Youth Club at King David Victory Park and Linksfield high schools, allocated time on the day for connection, togetherness, and celebration of the organisation, which is passionate about making the world a better place through education.

Arts students visit Holocaust Museum

School children from the National School of the Arts in Johannesburg visited the newly opened Holocaust Museum at the Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre in Forest

Town in April. Two classes of 15-year-olds were taken around by volunteer guides. The museum opened in mid-March 2019.



Children from the National School of the Arts at the Holocaust Museum

Gruzd a master at Scrabble

Steven Gruzd won the South African Masters Scrabble Championships at Huddle Park Golf Club on 22 March. It's one of the toughest tournaments to win, as it pitches the top ten rated Scrabble players in the country against each other in a gruelling double round-robin over 18 games.

"I was thrilled with the win, 19 years after I last won the tournament," says Gruzd, who works as an analyst at the South African Institute of International Affairs.



KDL exceeds IEB standards



KDL students achieved excellent results in IEB maths and English tests

King David Linksfield's (KDL's) benchmark tests for Grades 3, 6, and 9 show that its students are far exceeding international IEB (Independent Examinations Board) standards in English and maths.

The international benchmark tests in maths and English are written at the end of each year. Detailed results for each section ensure that the school can assess whether its curriculum meets national and international standards for top IEB schools.

KDL's student scores reflect that it far exceeds international standards. In addition to overall excellent results, many of the school's students achieved high distinction (silver) awarded to the top 95%-99.9% of students in the country for each test, and distinction (bronze) awarded to the top 90%-94% of the students in the country/region.

KDVP mock election closely mirrors real version

King David High School Victory Park's mock election last week generated strikingly similar results to Israel's real election on 9 April. The election followed a week in which students promoted different parties, and debated different views at a special assembly.

Student polling generated a narrow margin between Likud at 36.1% and Kachol Lavan at 35.8%. Fifty four percent of pupils voted for the right wing, and 45.3% voted for the left wing. There was a large turnout, with 92% participation in the voting.



Head boy Gabriel Ferreira and head girl Danit Krawitz

The Torah Academy Nursery School children with their treats



Matzah Man brings forth treats

Pesach food gifts have been pouring in from excited young pupils following a recent visit by the Chevrah Kadisha's Matzah Man to Torah Academy Nursery School. The school's food trolley is overflowing with Pesach treats, grape juice, and boxes of matzah, and the children have been rewarded with soft toy Matzah Man replicas on key-chains.

Election fever hits King David Primary Linksfield

For one week, King David Senior Primary Linksfield was abuzz with the flavours, sights, and sounds of Israel as the Grade 4 to 7 students celebrated "Israel Week" and the Jewish State's 21st democratic election.

Students participated in numerous exciting activities, including livestreaming Israeli radio stations while children made pita to dip in humus and tehina. Words and phrases like *sababa* (cool), *mashehu-mashehu* (something good), and *achla* (superb) were echoed around the corridors by children and teachers alike.

By creating campaign posters for Israeli political parties,

Grade 4 students learned about advertising techniques; Grade 5s created dynamic timelines depicting the leaders, significant events, and inventions in Israel from 1948 to the present; and Grade 6s presented real-life Israeli TV stations, which included panel discussions on political parties, Israeli sport, weather, and adverts for Israeli products.

The week culminated in a mock election. After learning about the Knesset, the election process and the various parties, Grade 7 students were given the opportunity to vote. The school thanks Mr Zvi and Mrs Liat Arran (the director of the Israel Centre) for their valuable input into a memorable week.



Lia Greenhill, Shirell Katz, Ashleigh Girota, and Liat Nahman making pitot

NOOVO

REAL ESTATE SHOWROOM

RANCH VILLAGE RAANANA

AN OASIS OF CALM IN THE HEART OF THE CITY

RANCH VILLAGE IS AN EXCLUSIVE NEIGHBORHOOD IN WESTERN RAANANA. SET IN AN OASIS OF GREEN AND ADJACENT TO A PASTORAL RANCH, RANCH VILLAGE IS A 10 MINUTE WALK FROM THE HEART OF RAANANA

THE COMPLEX BOASTS SPACIOUS MULTI-STORY 4-7 BEDROOM VILLAS WITH WRAPAROUND GARDENS, AMPLE PARKING, AND LUSH COMMON AREAS.

INTERESTED IN MORE DETAILS?

CONTACT US TODAY! TEL: +972.3.504.3400
OFFICE@NOOVO.CO.IL · WWW.NOOVO.CO.IL
49 ROTHSCHILD BOULEVARD · TEL AVIV

BUY DIFFERENT



X T R E M E
COSMIC BOWLING
SINCE 1996
MARS BAR

TELEPHONE: 011 887 2095/6
www.xtremebowling.co.za
Midways Mall, 280 Corlett Drive, Bramley,

Don't break the chain that is Pesach

As a child, I loved Pesach. I loved changing over to the weird, outdated crockery and mismatched cutlery. I loved my new clothes that signalled the start of winter, that were too hot to wear in April, but worth enduring in any event. That is, just because it was Pesach. And I loved my new shoes that would blister my feet, but I knew would improve by the end of the festival.

I loved the family time, when all the cousins would get together for the seder. I adored the collective negotiations around the *afikomen* gifts. Even as little as we were, we knew that my grandfather was pretending to look the other way when we “stole” the piece of matzah he had precariously balanced on a glass next to him. We also knew that he had instructed my father to watch it carefully so that we didn't take it.

I loved that we never got caught stealing it. Even though it came close. Every year.

I loved how no one ever tired of talking about my grandmother's *knaidel* (matzah balls). And how each year, we would listen in rapture as she described how the first batch had failed and were too hard, while the

current offering was falling apart. But we all, apparently, preferred them that way.

I loved the conversation around the table which seemed so important, and drew me in. I loved noticing that there was some kind of mini power struggle among the adults. It didn't go unnoticed that my parents would whisper fiercely on the way home about a guest who was at the table and had behaved inappropriately.

I loved how they never suspected that we knew who they were talking about, and that all the children had spotted the behaviour even before the adults had.

We could have told them exactly how many extra glasses of wine that guest had snuck in when they thought no one was looking.

I loved the boredom that would follow an interesting conversation, and how although the seder was meant to be about us kids, it never felt like it.

But of course it was.

Because it was at the seder that we learned that the father of our forefather Abraham was an idolater, and that we didn't need to pretend that he wasn't.

And it was at the seder, surrounded by those that loved us, that we learned that anti-Semitism existed thousands of years ago. We learned that the stories of Passover and Purim and of Hitler's Europe, were the same story, but with different actors in the lead.

We learned that there were times in history when we had to endure the most terrible and painful cruelty because of our faith. And that by implication, we probably would have to do so again in the future.

And at the same seder, we learned that we don't celebrate when our enemies drown. And that they might have inflicted years of oppression on us, but we still remove wine from the glass because it doesn't make us happy to watch anyone's demise.

I loved the different foods as much as I hated the deprivation.

I don't recall the stress of the cleaning that seems to be all the rage now. My mother might have been difficult and unpleasant in the weeks before, but I recall none of it.

Rather, I recall waking up early on the first day of the festival, and making our breakfast – *gebroke matzah* – which was essentially

INNER VOICE

Howard Feldman



crushed matzah with coffee, sugar, hot water, and milk. It tasted terrible, but I remember the process of crushing the matzah so vividly, my fingers still hurt. As does the knowledge that I can't remind my late mother of those experiences. And that I can no longer thank her for creating those memories.

What I can do is make sure that I pass on the memories and rituals to the next generation.

More than any other festival, Pesach taught me what it means to be a Jew. It taught me about identity, family, love, compassion, and history.

It taught me that G-d has a plan, and that sometimes, in the moment, it is hard to understand or comprehend what it is.

It taught me the value of tradition and of ritual. It taught me that each of us has a responsibility not to break the chain. For our children's sake.

Chag Kasher v sameach!

Is your democracy more flawed than mine?



TAKING ISSUE

Geoff Sifrin

In spite of the doom and gloom which characterises South Africans' mood these days following the catastrophe of former President Jacob Zuma's tenure, South Africa's democracy is still relatively healthy, although with shortcomings.

According to the Democracy Index of *The Economist* magazine, which ranks the democracies of 167 territories based on a wide range of indicators, with Norway the most democratic at number 1, South Africa is placed 40th in the index. This is a remarkable achievement given its apartheid and colonialist history, and its difficulties.

Both South Africa and Israel are regarded by the index as “flawed democracies”. They hold free and fair elections, and though there may be problems, basic civil liberties are respected.

What about the world's other democracies? Does America still qualify as the leader of the free world? No, it doesn't. The ranting of loose-cannon President Donald Trump makes this idea unconvincing today.

The index regards America also as a flawed democracy, although ranking higher than South Africa, at number 25. For comparison, Japan ranks 22 and France 29. The problem in America is not so much Trump, but the erosion of trust in government and elected officials.

President Cyril Ramaphosa will try desperately to increase his hold on power in South Africa's crucial national elections on 8 May. Warring factions in the African National Congress threaten to undermine him, and unrest and political dissonance are flaring up countrywide. Rising social tensions and economic populism are challenging his “new dawn” vision for the country.

The diversity of South Africa's population is its richness, but there is a flip-side. This is that the country lacks a clear sense of what it means to be South

African, and the violence inherent in the society makes this dangerous.

Public protest often turns violent and racist. Last week's unrest, which began in Alexandra township in Johannesburg and has spread elsewhere, is the most recent example. The tone of political debate is often threatening. The positive side is that popular interest in politics is high. Everybody talks politics, from the taxi driver to the housewife.

What about Israeli politics, which last week handed Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu a fifth term? To the chagrin of many supporters of Israel, the index consistently ranks Israel as a flawed rather than full democracy. Knee-jerk defenders of Israel would claim it is because of anti-Semitism, but it is primarily about the Law of Return – the right of every Jew to emigrate to Israel. Arab citizens are guaranteed the same civil rights, but only Jews have the “right” to citizenship.

This analysis of Israel does not account for the simmering conundrum of the Palestinians under its control. They have no vote. Does this reduce Israel's democracy ranking? Without a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it would have to do that.

Notwithstanding these issues, the index ranks Israel's democracy 30th out of 167, between France and Belgium. In spite of the divisiveness of Israeli politics and the shift to the right, the country is moving in a liberal direction in areas such as improvements in LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) rights and women's rights. However, because of history, ideology, and security challenges, it cannot be more than a flawed democracy.

The internet is the new kid on the block when it comes to measuring democracies, where validation can be found for almost any belief, and “facts” are a matter of personal preference.

In America, South Africa, Israel, or elsewhere, it is getting harder for voters to make informed, rational choices about crucial matters. On this roller-coaster, voters will have to work harder to distinguish between fact and fiction. It's not an easy ride.

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Great Debates make us count



ABOVE BOARD

Shaun Zagnoev

Since 2009, the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) has been holding multi-party “Great Debates” as part of our #MakeUsCount pre-election awareness and education campaigns. These events help to recapture the spirit of the “town hall” public meetings of yesteryear, when democracy was much more of a consultative, grass roots affair than it tends to be today. They also provide a vehicle for our community to make a meaningful contribution to debate and political awareness in the wider society.

Over the past week, debates were held in Johannesburg and Cape Town. Both were highly successful, in terms of attendance and audience participation, and in terms of their impact beyond the confines of the Jewish community.

In Johannesburg, representatives of the African National Congress (ANC), Democratic Alliance (DA), African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP), Congress of the People (COPE) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) engaged in a lively but respectful exchange of views on their vision for the country. The audience responded enthusiastically throughout, including in the question-and-answer session.

Three days later, representatives of the DA, ANC, ACDP, and the new GOOD Party participated in the SAJBD (Cape) debate. Both debates were broadcast live, in Johannesburg by *ChaiFM* and by *eNCA* in Cape Town, and the many members of the media who attended ensured a gratifying amount of publicity

This column is paid for by the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

afterwards. We were further fortunate to have the debates hosted by distinguished journalists Mandy Wiener in Johannesburg and Jeremy Maggs in Cape Town, and we thank them for putting their time and skills at our disposal.

Our #MakeUsCount initiative is aimed at getting our community interested and involved in the election process, both in the lead-up and on the day itself, and we believe that we have been successful. Just as importantly, we were able to show that the South African Jewish community, in spite of its size, continues to be an active, engaged, and identifying part of the greater nation-building and democratic process.

Freedom seder – sharing the lessons of Pesach

On Monday evening, the Board's #MakeUsCount campaign culminated in a special pre-Yom Tov freedom seder held at the historic Villa Arcadia in Parktown, Johannesburg. As with previous initiatives of this kind, the event brought together a wide range of political and religious leaders, members of the media, and civil society to celebrate 25 years of democracy in South Africa in the context of the traditional Passover narrative. It offered a distinctively Jewish vehicle through which to celebrate this milestone.

We were honoured to have as speakers two distinguished veterans of the anti-apartheid struggle, Judge Albie Sachs and Mavuso Msimang, a former member of the Umkhonto we Sizwe high command in exile. They offered powerful and thought-provoking insights into the legacy of the democratic struggle, and the responsibilities that freedom brings.

- Listen to Charisse Zeifert on Jewish Board Talk, 101.9 ChaiFM every Friday from 12:00 to 13:00.

Thursday (25 April)

- Hebrew speakers meet at 10:30 on the second floor of the Beyachad building. Venue: 2 Elray Street, Raedene.
- Join the Women's International Zionist Organisation (WIZO) every Thursday for a *Lunch & Learn* shiur with Rabbi Michael Katz. Time: 13:00 at Beyachad. Contact: WIZO office: 011 645 2515.

Monday (29 April)

- WIZO Forum's annual Yom Hashoah. Guest speaker Willie Criveano will talk about his father, who has been honoured as a righteous among the nations. Candle lighting, Haskarah by Chilly Chrysler at 10:00. Venue: Beyachad, 2 Elray Street, Raedene. No Charge. Contact: Lauren 011 645 2515, or wizojhb@beyachad.co.za



- The Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning is offering a 10-week course, *The Star & The Crescent: The Long Relationship of Judaism & Islam*. The historical perspectives gleaned through this course are important to understanding what is common, and what sets us apart. Starts 29 April. Time: 19:00 to 20:30. Venue: Saxonwold. Contact: Ariella Milner 082 804 6113 or meltonjhb@gmail.com to enrol. Subsidies, students, and couples' discounts available.

Tuesday (30 April)

- WIZO Women Inspired hosts *What goes on inside marriage... the agony and the ecstasy* with clinical psychologist Dr Connie Valkin, a highly experienced couples therapist. Time 09:30 for 10:00 at the home of Joceline Basserabie (call for venue details). Cost: R290. Bookings: Joceline 082 441 4375; Lorraine 083 268 8016; and Leslie 083 456 3911.

More news on our website www.sajr.co.za

CHAG SAMEACH From

Sportsmans Warehouse

winning starts here

WINTER WARM UP | Great deals to layer up this winter

CAPESTORM

Men's Echo Jacket
1 699⁹⁰
each

- Water-resistant and quick-drying
- Filling: synthetic insulation
- Selected stores

first Ascent

Women's & Men's Transit Down Jacket
1 999⁹⁰
each

- 90/10 down
- Water-repellent
- Packs into its own stuff bag

CAPESTORM

Women's & Men's Echo Jacket
1 699⁹⁰
each

- Water-resistant and quick-drying
- Filling: synthetic insulation
- Selected stores

first Ascent

Women's & Men's Compass Jacket
1 499⁹⁰
each

- Wind-block zip baffle to block the chill
- Thermo-Shield insulation fill to keep you warm

first Ascent

Men's Seal Down Jacket
2 499⁹⁰
each

- 80/20 down
- Water-repellent
- Bonded seams prevent the down from migrating

first Ascent

Women's Seal Down Jacket
2 799⁹⁰
each

- 80/20 down
- Water-repellent
- Bonded seams prevent the down from migrating

first Ascent

Women's & Men's Finn ¼ Fleece Zip Top
549⁹⁰
each

RUNNING | Don't let winter break your stride

GTC

Women's Trailblazer Run ¼ Zip Top
599⁹⁰
each

- Reflective details

CAPESTORM

Women's & Men's Helium Jacket
749⁹⁰
each

Sportsmans Rewards
SAVE 100
649⁹⁰

- Windproof and water-resistant
- Packs into tiny ball with hand loop
- Reflective details

first Ascent

Men's Fusion Top
749⁹⁰

Sportsmans Rewards
SAVE 80
669⁹⁰

- Sweeps sweat away
- Zip-secure pockets
- Reflective details

Nike

Men's Pacer ¼ Zip Top
739⁹⁰

Women's Pacer ¼ Zip Top
649⁹⁰

CAPESTORM

Women's & Men's Tech Tights
649⁹⁰
each

- Reflective details

first Ascent

Women's & Men's P3 Tights
899⁹⁰
each

Sportsmans Rewards
SAVE 150
749⁹⁰

- Sweeps sweat away
- Zip-secure pockets
- Reflective details

Nike

Men's Power Mobility Tights
699⁹⁰

Women's All In Tights
599⁹⁰

GTC

Women's Stellar Run ¾ Tights
599⁹⁰



Sign up today. Instant Savings, Exclusive benefits

Shop online: www.sportsmanswarehouse.co.za

Offers valid 4 April - 5 May 2019

While stocks last. E&OE

a division of



'Beware India and Australia – they're the most rounded', says Yachad

LUKE ALFRED

A thoughtful man and a thoughtful former cricketer, Mandy Yachad begins our telephone interview with the verbal equivalent of a prod into the covers for a single. "I don't follow the game that fully anymore," he confesses, saying that, in spite of this, he's managed to keep tabs on the vicissitudes of the Proteas at home this summer.

Although his attention might not be as committed as he would like, as the interview continues, Yachad reveals that he's more in touch than he gives himself credit for. His views are invariably balanced and fair-minded, and his analysis of the likely Proteas World Cup squad that was chosen on Thursday is acute and knowledgeable.

With a powerful bowling line-up and a "proven all-rounder" like Quinton de Kock in their midst, he sees Faf du Plessis' side as outsiders for the World Cup.

"I'm not a betting man, but if I was, I like India and Australia because I think they've got the most rounded sides," he says. "After that, the West Indies and South Africa are outsiders – and probably England."

Clearly Yachad has been watching the evolution of the 50-over international game carefully, because he's noticed an almost imperceptible change. "One of my observations is that the game has evolved from

containment as a bowling side to something more aggressive," he says. "I think teams are trying to bowl sides out by packing the team with bowlers which is [national coach] Ottis Gibson's strategy with South Africa.

"It's happening quite frequently that batting sides don't finish their overs, which is obviously going to happen more when you are chasing big scores and fail to reach a total but, in general, I'm not opposed to Gibson's approach in trying to bowl sides out."

Warming to this theme, Yachad says that he senses this aggressive approach in teams like India, Australia, and the West Indies, the very sides he thinks will do well at the World Cup.

"I don't know if this is a conscious mental change or has just evolved over time," he says. "I certainly think with Dale Steyn, Kagiso Rabada, and Lungi Ngidi in our squad as fast-bowlers, and Imran Tahir there as well – he's been having a good Indian Premier League – we have a strong bowling line up that's capable of bowling sides out. Maybe Dwaine Pretorius will also do some bowling."

While Yachad likes South Africa's powerful bowling line-up and is a big fan of both De Kock and Du Plessis, he does have some minor

reservations about their middle-order batting. "If the two of them don't perform, there's an issue," he says, although he qualifies this slightly by saying

that in players like JP Duminy, the Proteas have the requisite experience to try and protect less confident members of the lower middle order.

South Africa's batting fragilities aside, how does he view the format of this year's World Cup, where a round-robin phase gives way to knockout cricket from the semi-finals?

"From a positive point of view, the format gives the selectors

the opportunity to play different players in different conditions as the World Cup progresses," he says.

"One of the disadvantages of this format is that rain in England could have a significant impact."

"I think that there's also a case to be made for a reserve day to be set aside for important matches, although that's sometimes a little logistically challenging."

What does he make, then, of the idea that South Africa will be arriving at the World Cup as one of the

darker horses?

"Look, it is dangerous being over-confident, without doubt," he says. "Then again, if you aren't confident to a certain level, that's almost worse. Maybe we're not the best team to go to the World Cup but, let's face it, the best team doesn't always win."

Yachad also accepts at face value recent media reports that transformation criteria will not apply when it comes to selection for the World Cup. He thinks the black cricketers who have been chosen have been chosen on merit, and the squad now needs to be left alone.

"Cricketers need to be allowed to do what they do without extraneous factors intruding," he says. "Otherwise they're not likely to be at their best."

Finally, for a player of his vintage (Yachad is now 58), does he not sometimes feel he's watching a different game from the comfort of his armchair, what with lighter, more powerful bats, smaller boundaries, and endless invention?

"Look, T20 is an entertainment spectacle," he says. "But I don't think 50-over cricket is that different to what it was. I remember once playing in a benefit match at Pirates [in Greenside] and ramping Clive Rice. I don't quite know what gave me the temerity to do that, but in some ways I think that the 50-over game remains pretty much the same."

Mandy Yachad

Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

KosherWorld



TRULY KOSHER

2 DAYS ONLY!!!

Thursday & Friday 18th & 19th April

Up to 40% OFF

SELECTED PRODUCTS

BABY CITY AND TOYZONE MANAGEMENT AND
STAFF WISH ALL THEIR FRIENDS,
FAMILY AND CUSTOMERS A



Chag Pesach Kashen ve Sameach

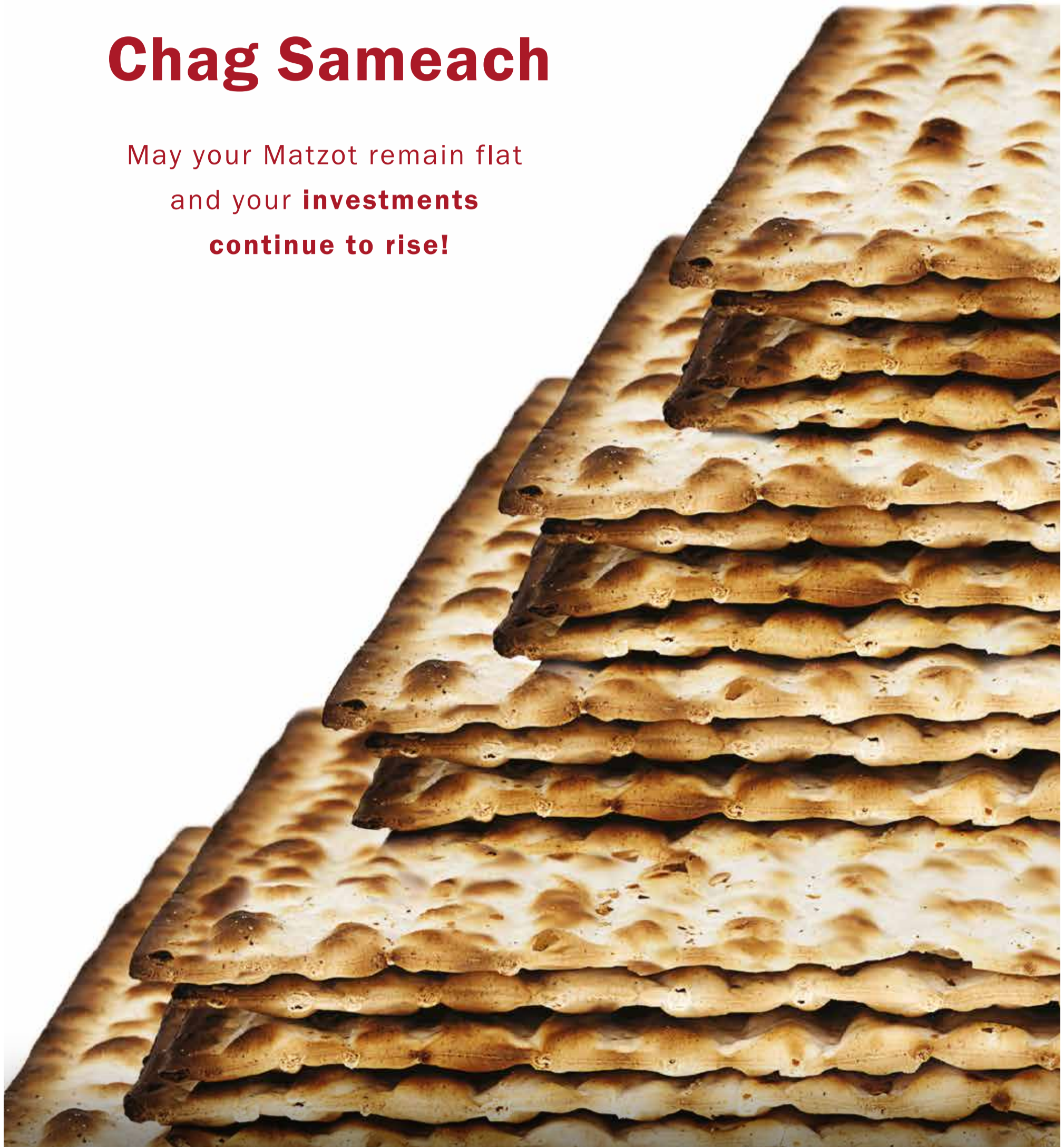


we know you care



Chag Sameach

May your Matzot remain flat
and your **investments**
continue to rise!



Delivering great rewards

www.36one.co.za | info@36one.co.za | +27 11 722 7390

36ONE Asset Management (Pty) Ltd, an Authorised Financial Services Provider. FSP #19107

36ONE

THREE SIX ONE ASSET MANAGEMENT