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HAR NOF HERO

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JHB PROGRAMME 21 JUNE

SANDTON CONVENTION CENTRE

ROOM 1

10:00 DR EFRAIM ZUROFF

NAZI HUNTING



An account of the continuing efforts to bring Holocaust perpetrators to justice all over the world, including the rationale behind these efforts, and an inside look at how Nazis are caught. The talk also examines the obstacles that have to be overcome to put Nazis on trial more than 70 years after their crimes – as reflected in the cases of “Operation Last Chance”, a special project to locate, and facilitate the prosecution of, Nazi war criminals.

ROOM 2

REBBETZIN TZIPORAH HELLER

HAR NOF, HARDSHIP AND HEROISM



A talk that will take you to the moments in which ordinary people like you had their lives changed forever. Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller – whose own grandson and son-in-law were caught up in last year's Har Nof attack – believes their responses can change your life. A talk that will open up an entirely new perspective on life and death, fear and courage, and trust in G-d.

ROOM 3

RABBI SHAIS TAUB

MY NAME IS... AND I AM A HUMAN BEING: UNLOCKING YOUR EMOTIONAL SOBRIETY



The principles of recovery from addiction are available to everyone as tools for spiritual development. In particular, these faith-based techniques can teach us: how to free ourselves from negative thought and behavioural patterns; what to do about unhealthy attachments and relationships that we are “hooked on”, and how to bond with others in a healthy manner (without being controlling or manipulative); and how to focus our energy in productive ways, taking control of our lives and our decisions.

ROOM 4

RABBI DR TZVI HERSH WEINREB

DAF YOMI WITH THE EDITOR



An in-depth Gemara shiur, covering the day's daf in Tractate Nedarim, presented by the editor-in-chief of the Koren Talmud Bavli.



11:00 RABBI MORDECHAI BECHER

FROM CAIRO TO CAMBRIDGE: HIDDEN TREASURES FROM THE CAIRO GNIZA



A Cambridge University professor returned from a trip to Cairo with a trove of 200,000 manuscripts spanning over a thousand years of Jewish history. This historic find gives us an intimate look at the lives of Jews of the Mediterranean since the 10th Century. We will hear the music they played, see their business contracts, read their poems and correspondence and look into the classrooms of their children. What did Maimonides have for dessert? What did women insist on putting into their marriage contracts? What pictures did children draw in their books?

MIRIAM KOSMAN

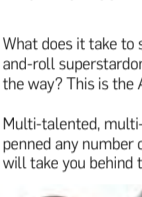
IT'S A MAN'S WORLD BUT MAYBE IT SHOULD BE A WOMAN'S?



Discussions about gender in Judaism tend to devolve into either elaborate apologetics or calls for reformation. Kosman presents a new paradigm: in which male and female are seen as archetypal, elemental, intrinsic forces in the world – both of which are present in men and women. Understanding these cosmic forces can have very real-life implications for own interpersonal relationships, marriages and relationship with G-d.

ALEX CLARE & YONATAN RAZEL

NEVER TOO LATE: THE ALEX CLARE STORY | CLARE MASTERCLASS: MY LIFE IN MUSIC | RAZEL



What does it take to stay true to Torah values in the world of rock-and-roll superstardom? And what sacrifices need to be made along the way? This is the Alex Clare story.

Multi-talented, multi-faceted, a deep, sensitive soul who has penned any number of instant classics – this year, Yonatan Razel will take you behind the music.

RABBI DONIEL KATZ

MIND-HACKING: A MASTER CLASS IN JEWISH MEDITATION, CONSCIOUSNESS AND CONNECTING MIND & HEART, BODY & SOUL



For the first time ever in South Africa, Rabbi Doniel Katz will present a taste of his famous Elevation Seminar

This astonishing two-hour intensive workshop will deconstruct human consciousness from a Kabbalistic perspective, teaching you ancient Torah techniques to radically increase your powers of concentration, creativity and emotional control. Not just a class, but a transformative experience for your heart, mind and soul.

12:00 RABBI YITZCHAK DAVID GROSMAN

STORY OF A DEDICATED LIFE



He has built a city from the ground up, transformed the lives of thousands of at-risk children, mediated a skirmish in a New York Knicks game at Madison Square Garden, hosted an entire brigade of IDF paratroopers in the midst of the 2006 Lebanon war, revolutionised Israel's prison rehabilitation system, and won just about every national prize there is. Hear the story of a true Israeli folk hero.

RABBI SHAIS TAUB

MAPPING THE TANYA



The Tanya, written in the late 1700s, is the foundational Hasidic spiritual text, and a classic of Kabbalistic thought and practice. In this talk, Rabbi Shais Taub – a modern-day expert on Tanya – takes us on a metaphysical journey into applied mysticism and what he terms the “psychology of the soul”. His primary aim is to demystify this most mystical of texts, sharing practical tools, and exploring notions such as personal development, human perfection, internal conflict, and the difference between who we are and what we do.

RABBI DR TZVI HERSH WEINREB

ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND MENACHEM MENDEL OF KOTZK: TRANSFORMING PSYCHOLOGICAL FAULTS INTO SPIRITUAL STRENGTHS



One was the greatest-ever U.S. President. The other was a Chassidic Rebbe in a tiny town in Poland. But they lived at the exact same time in history, and had much else in common. Both struggled with melancholy, both preached radical honesty, and both were religious men, though in very different ways. What can we learn from them today?



13:00 LUNCH

14:00 CHIEF RABBI DAVID LAU & CHIEF RABBI WARREN GOLDSTEIN

LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP



Join two Chief Rabbis in conversation as they draw on their extensive and varied experiences as leaders to share not only philosophical, but also practical insights into leadership. What is leadership? What makes a good leader? How does a leader address conflicting demands and expectations whilst staying true to ideals and values?

REBBETZIN TZIPORAH HELLER

THE BALANCING ACT: HOW TO BRING THE POWER AND PASSION OF TORAH INTO OUR HOMES, OUR CHILDREN - AND OURSELVES



The lives we lead are full of paradox – one role calls on us to do and be one thing, another asks us to do and be something entirely different. Often there is conflict and tension. We find ourselves thinking, “How much of me is really me”? This is especially true of our lives as parents – which require us to balance so many conflicting ideals and roles. Drawing on the depth, sophistication and compassion the classical Jewish sources offer, this talk will give you practical tools to create harmony in your life and help you balance your inner world with your daily roles and responsibilities.

RABBI MORDECHAI BECHER

THE SOUL'S SEARCH FOR G-D: KABBALAH, SCIENCE, SOCIOLOGY AND CRICKET



What do the desire for companionship, the scientific search for understanding the universe, and a seat at the MCG, the “Coliseum of Cricket”, have in common? Join Rabbi Becher on a journey through the cosmos as explores the mystical Jewish teachings that unite sociology, science, kabbalah and yes, cricket, and which provide tools for living a happier, more meaningful life. This class will answer some of life's most important questions (unfortunately, “why hasn't South Africa won a world cup?” isn't one of them).

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SINAI NEXT

15:00 HELLER, WEINREB & TAUB

RELATIONSHIP ESSENTIALS



Everyone wants it to work! Even so, our relationships need more than good intentions to realise the dream we started out with. Fortunately, Torah wisdom gives us practical, workable tools to establish flourishing relationships. This talk from three acknowledged experts in the field – each with a unique vantage point – will change the way you approach your relationships.

SAUL BLINKOFF

SINAI NEXT

MY DISNEY TALE. COLOURING OUTSIDE THE LINES



Inspiring Disney animator and director Saul Blinkoff began his career working on the hit films, Pocahontas, The Hunchback of Notre Dame, Mulan and Tarzan, and went on to direct contemporary Disney favourites such as Kronk's New Groove, Winnie the Pooh and Doc McStuffins. In between, he embarked on a journey in search of his Jewish identity, finding clarity amidst the animania and serenity amidst the looney tunes. In the process, he not only awakened his own inner self, but raised his Hollywood career to new heights. Hear all about Blinkoff's personal Disney tale.

DR EFRAIM ZUROFF

THE NEW ANTI-SEMITISM: HOLOCAUST DISTORTION AND THE REWRITING OF HISTORY



The fall of the Soviet Union meant freedom for the Baltics and the first opportunity to deal honestly with their extensive collaboration with the Nazis in the murder of their Jewish fellow citizens. Instead, these new democracies – led by Lithuania – are trying to rewrite the narrative of World War II and the Holocaust to hide their complicity and promote the canard of equivalency between Communist and Nazi crimes. Hear how this dangerous revisionism threatens the very historical foundations of the Shoah, and undermines decades of Holocaust research and education.

RABBI YITZCHAK DAVID GROSMAN



סיפור של חיים שיש בהם ייעוד

הוא בנה עיר מהיסוד, שינה את חייהם של אלפי ילדים בסיכון, גישר בתורה שפרצה במשחק של הניו יורק ניקס במדיסון סקוור גארדן, אירח חטיבה שלמה של צנחנים בעיצומה של מלחמת לבנון השנייה, חולל מהפכה במערכת השיקום בבגדאד של ישראל, וזכה בממכת כל הפרס לאומי שקיים. נשמע את סיפורו של גיבור עממי, ישראלי אמיתי.

16:00 CHIEF RABBI DAVID LAU

Q&A



In an exclusive Q&A session, feel free to ask Israel's Chief Rabbi any questions on your mind. Tweet or Facebook your questions. #AskTheChiefRabbi

RABBI DR TZVI HERSH WEINREB

SINAI NEXT

WHAT PARENTS AND CHILDREN CAN LEARN FROM EACH OTHER



Parents have a great deal to teach children. That's obvious. But children have a lot to teach parents! In this talk Rabbi Weinreb draws from his deep Torah scholarship and years of experience as a psychologist and parent.

RABBI DONIEL KATZ

SELF-LOVE AND JEWISH UNITY



Jewish unity is more than just a heart-warming ideal – it is a cosmic imperative on which the destiny of the world depends. Yet despite our desire for all Jews, regardless of our differences, to coexist in love, tolerance and respect for one another, let's be honest – it rarely happens. This session will cut to the core of this challenge, exploring it from a mystical and psychological perspective, and illuminating a new path towards unity.

MIRIAM KOSMAN

POETRY IN THE TRENCHES



This lecture explores four different approaches to the body/soul dichotomy, and describes how and why our day-to-day acts are the most potent expression of our spirituality.

17:30 CLOSING CONCERT

YONATAN RAZEL & ALEX CLARE LIVE



Meeting with
Mayor Parks
Tau could
smooth
communal
relations .
Page 10.

South African Jewish Report

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Photo: Sharlene Lipshitz



Laying tefillin for the cause of Comrades

Over the years, Jewish runners have taken the gruelling Comrades Marathon to heart and have regularly accepted the challenge of, probably, the most taxing ultra-marathon in the world. This year - the 90th Comrades - was the “up” run, from Durban to Pietermaritzburg, at a distance of 87,72 km. Those who watched some 16 584 athletes battle it out last Sunday, involuntarily became part of the challenge, with the message of “comradeship” for a unifying day in South Africa’s history. Chabad Uhmlanga, headed up by Rabbi Shlomo Wainer, has been very active in supporting Jewish Comrades runners over the years, both physically and spiritually. Chabad’s representatives again stationed themselves at Camperdown, 63 km into the race. Moshe Reuven Schneider is pictured here laying tefillin on runner Rob Firer. For the first time in 23 years, two South Africans won the race. Gift Kelehe, whose older brother Andrew won in 2001, crossed the finish line of the men’s race first with a time of 05:38:36. Caroline Wostmann won the women’s race in a time of 06:12:22. See pages 8 and 14.

Three murdered Israeli boys remembered on Unity Day

Thousands commemorated the first anniversary of the kidnapping and murder of three Israeli boys near Gush Etzion by Palestinian terrorists.

5

Citing Talmud, Dr Ruth questions sexual consent

Dr Ruth, the octogenarian sex therapist and TV host, has been called out for her recent comments about sexual consent - and using the Talmud to back her up.

6

Auschwitz message echoes: ‘Never again’

Back from a Mizrahi tour to Poland, Dina Diamond recalls the emotions kindled by a visit to Auschwitz. She calls it a ‘life-changing’ experience.

7

Not your common garden variety chazzanut

Cantor Elton Krawitz has put a new slant on Jewish liturgical music. It’s still chazzanut - but with a difference.



9

Rabbi Riskin’s ‘African conversions’ leave AJC in a pickle

Rabbi Reuven Riskin is at the centre of a big AJC problem, having controversially conducted mass conversions on black groups claiming they’re Jewish.

11



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Cloud, fire and trumpets



Parshat Beha'alotcha

Rabbi Malcolm Matitiani
Cape Town Progressive Jewish Congregation Green Point

This week’s parsha (the third of the Book of Numbers) relates that as soon as the Mishkan was completed, a cloud symbolising G-d’s presence covered the sanctuary during the day, taking the form of fire at night. When the cloud lifted, the Israelites broke camp and proceeded on their march through the wilderness. When the cloud rested, the Israelites took it as a sign to make camp. Thus the Israelites encamped and set out at G-d’s command, conveyed through the sign of the cloud. The cloud and fire were a source of comfort for the Israelites, conveying the idea that G-d was constantly in their midst. G-d then instructs Moses to manufacture two silver trumpets, fashioning them of

one piece, hammering them into shape (the menorah was made using the same method from one piece of gold). The trumpets were blown by the kohanim to summon the chieftains of the tribes to the tent of meeting, to summon the whole community, or to signal the camp to begin its march. The Torah describes in detail how the trumpets are to be blown for each purpose. The kohanim are also instructed to sound the trumpets at a time of war when Israel was attacked by her enemies, as a rallying cry so that G-d would deliver them. The trumpets were also to be blown on chagim and Rosh Chodesh during the offering of the sacrifices as a reminder to the People of Israel before G-d. Thus the cloud that hovered over the mishkan was a visual reminder and the silver trumpets were an auditory reminder of G-d’s eternal presence. It is noteworthy that the anan kavod, “the cloud of glory”, no longer features as a symbol in rabbinic

Judaism, whereas the sound of the trumpet, in the form of kol shofar, “the sound of the shofar”, is the quintessential symbol of the Yamim Nora’im, “the Days of Awe”. The sound of the shofar evokes images of a coronation: the crowning of G-d as the Sovereign of the universe. It also reminds us of our obligation to repent for our transgressions, and it is a reminder of the Divine promise made to Abraham on Mount Moriah. Thus the sound of the shofar is a symbol of G-d and our obligation to cultivate the Divine within ourselves. It is sound, rather than physical image which best conforms to the Jewish understanding that the Divine is incorporeal. But more than the sound of the shofar, the sound of the spoken word represents the creative process, which is the very essence of the Divine: “G-d said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light,” etc (Genesis 1). The gift of speech enables us to emulate G-d’s creativity but if abused, the words we

utter can have disastrous effects, creating negative realities which destroy the human spirit. The holiness of the spoken word is reflected in the berachah we recite every morning before the Pesukei d’Zimra: Baruch she’amar ve’haya ha-olam, baruch hu... “Blessed is the One who spoke and the world came into being...” Only when the words we speak emulate the positive connotations of the shofar, will the cloud of glory descend upon us.

Shabbat Times		
June 5 / 18 Sivan		
June 6 / 19 Sivan		
Parshat Beha’alotcha		
17:05	17:56	Johannesburg
17:27	18:21	Cape Town
16:46	17:38	Durban
17:06	17:59	Bloemfontein
16:58	17:52	Port Elizabeth
16:51	17:45	East London

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Around the Jewish World

KEEPING MILK FRESH WITHOUT ELECTRICITY
TEL AVIV - For more than 1,5 billion people without adequate access to electricity around the world, keeping milk fresh is a Sisyphean battle. But new research by Israeli researchers show that short-pulsed electric fields can be used to kill milk-contaminating bacteria and could make storing milk outside the refrigerator possible. Through a process called electroporation, bacterial cell membranes are selectively damaged. According to lead investigator Dr Alexander Golberg, of Tel Aviv University's Porter School of Environmental Studies, applying this electroporation process intermittently prevents bacteria proliferation in stored milk, potentially increasing its shelf life. The energy required can come from conventional sources or from the sun. The technology is three times more energy-efficient than boiling and almost twice as energy efficient as refrigeration. - Israel 21c

JEWS AND MUSLIMS IN PRAYER TOGETHER
LOS ANGELES - On a quiet California morning in May, a group of Jews and Muslims came together on a Los Angeles beach to pray. The worshippers laid out prayer mats and the sounds of their chanting, in both Hebrew and Arabic, mingled with the crashing of the waves. “We were just so surprised that we could do this together and it’s very similar,” said participant Maryam Saleemi. “It was kind of like an ‘aha moment’ that we’re praying to the same G-d, why aren’t we doing this all the time together?” The day of joint prayer was part of an initiative called Two Faiths One Prayer, which guided the group of 20 Muslims and Jews to five different public spaces across the city on May 3. At the Los Angeles City Hall, the group was joined by about 60 to 70 others for an extraordinary joint prayer session. It was followed by a dinner where Muslims recited their night-time prayer, or Isha, and Jews recited liturgical poetry, called Piyyutim.

The event was organised by New Ground, an inter-faith organisation that focuses on strengthening the bonds between Muslims and Jews. - Huffington Post
PROTESTERS PREVENT MASS IN KING DAVID’S TOMB
JERUSALEM - Hundreds of Jews, led by Breslov activist Rabbi Shalom Arush, barricaded themselves inside the lower hall of King David’s tomb on Mount Zion last Sunday morning to prevent a Christian Mass ceremony that was scheduled to take place there.

The lower hall is used as a Jewish prayer hall. The Greek Orthodox Christians were forced to move their prayers to the Cenacle, the upper room above the tomb, where they believe the “Last Supper” was held - Jewish Press

WOMAN WINS DAMAGES BECAUSE OF SHABBAT DISCRIMINATION
MANCHESTER - A Jewish woman has been awarded more than £16 000 (R298 300) in damages by an employment tribunal after being rejected for a job because she would not work on Shabbat. Aurelie Fhima said her application to work at a Manchester-based car rental firm was turned down after she revealed she was Shabbat observant and could not work on Saturdays. According to the Manchester Evening News, the company told her she had not got the job because: “We are still looking for people who are flexible enough to work Saturdays.”

Fhima asked the firm to review its decision and started legal action when it refused, claiming indirect discrimination on grounds of religion. Tribunal judges found in her favour, awarding almost £8 000 for loss of earnings, £7 500 for injury to feelings and £1 200 in costs. - Manchester Evening News

A LESSON IN RESPECT FOR BUS ABUSER
SYDNEY - The circle has been closed on a bus incident last year which saw young Jewish students travelling home from school subjected to anti-Semitic taunts by six drunken teenagers. One of the offenders was ordered to participate in a youth justice conference in December last year, where he came face-to-face with a 12-year-old female victim of the abuse and her parents.

The teenager was among six boys who had boarded the bus at Queens Park and started abusing learners from Mount Sinai College, Moriah College and Emanuel School. According to reports, they yelled “Heil Hitler” and threatened to slit the learners’ throats. A course of action for the offender included a guided two-hour tour of the Sydney Jewish Museum in January, where he met a Holocaust survivor, and enrolment in the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies’ “Respect, Understanding, Acceptance” harmony programme for schools, which he participated in last week. - Australian Jewish News

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Jewish Report

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Our giggling president shames South Africa



TAKING ISSUE

Geoff Sifrin

After last week’s contemptuous behaviour of President Jacob Zuma in Parliament, it is sobering to remember that this man was a key figure in the Moral Regeneration Movement when Nelson Mandela was alive. Hard to believe, but true.

Zuma scolded South Africans last week as if he were talking to children, about the proper pronunciation of Nkandla - “Nkhaaandla”. Then he giggled at being absolved by his police minister from repaying any state money spent upgrading his private homestead - with its swimming pool, visitors’ centre, cattle kraal and other features defined as “security” necessities - R246 million and growing. This scandal will symbolise his legacy.

In 1998 Mandela addressed a Moral Regeneration Summit convened with the National Religious Leaders Forum. He said: “The symptoms of our spiritual malaise... include the extent of corruption... where office and positions of responsibility are treated as opportunities for self-enrichment...”

The summit included a code of conduct for “persons in positions of responsibility”, concentrating on integrity. After the 1999 election, Thabo Mbeki became president and his new deputy president, Jacob Zuma, was allocated responsibility for pursuing a moral initiative between religious and political leaders. In 2002 the Moral Regen-

eration Movement was officially launched under Zuma’s patronage.

South Africans can count many huge successes since the end of apartheid, including the maintenance of a vigorous democracy. We have reason for pride. However, Mandela’s hope for moral regeneration has not been realised when it comes to corruption, which seems to have washed through every fibre of our society.

South Africa is a religious nation, which is why Mandela and other leading political figures at the time hoped that a partnership with the faith communities’ leaders could turn things around, based on tenets of honesty and integrity.

The vast majority of South Africans are Christian - 74,1 per cent of the population according to the 1996 National Census, followed by much smaller communities of Muslims, Hindus and Jews.

Other religions are also to be found, such as small groups of Buddhists and Baha’is. The influence of African Traditional Religion is strongly felt in many black church communities.

But today the voice of the religious sector is not heard with the insistence it was then. Politicians and faith leaders seem to have largely gone their separate ways. One does hear occasional expressions of protest about national crises from figures such as the Rhema Church’s Ray McCauley, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein and some others, but it’s more like random potshots than a focused strategy.

Maybe it’s time for another Moral Summit? Would religious leaders of sufficient

gravitas come together in numbers to call the politicians to account? Could they find a common voice in the absence of a leader like Mandela?

Within the ANC there are still many good people. Why are they silent as their president embarrasses the country they fought for? One of the encouraging things that is happening - perhaps Zuma’s performance will accelerate it - is that increasingly, members of the old guard of anti-apartheid activists and intellectuals are coming out of the woodwork and condemning the ANC for what it has become - a disgrace to its former self.

But a new generation of activists is needed who will call things as they see them and have the energy to change them for the better.

South Africans no longer bask in the glow of the Mandela days. Their image has been soiled by things like corruption, xenophobic attacks on foreigners, Eskom’s inability to keep the lights on, and other events that would have made Madiba roll his eyes in shame.

The evolving Fifa corruption scandal looks like it might be another stain.

Our giggling president of today is a caricature - a far cry from the Moral Regeneration Movement.

It is up to South Africans on their own now to steer this rudderless ship into better waters before it really hits the rocks. There will not be another Mandela. To our credit, we have strong tools to draw on, including a vigorously free press which reports widely on corruption, and the fact that large parts of our citizenry are outraged by it.

World News in Brief

IS-affiliated group threatens attack on Eilat

EILAT - A Sinai-based affiliate of the Islamic State terror group warned last Thursday that the Israeli resort town of Eilat could expect a barrage of missiles in the coming days.

The threat was issued on a Facebook account associated with Wilayat Sinai, an organisation previously known as Ansar Bait al-Maqdis, which swore allegiance to Islamic State last November. Most of its attacks have been directed at Egyptian military forces in Sinai, although it has repeatedly fired rockets on Eilat and on the nearby Jordanian town of Aqaba.

On Thursday, the terror group called on Egyptians to join its ranks and help it wrest Sinai from the Egyptian regime. It also criticised the Hamas terror group for “abandoning the fight against the Jews”. (JNS.org)

Hamas paves road for Israel attack

JERUSALEM - Former Hamas interior minister Fathi Hammad admitted last Saturday that the Palestinian terrorist group had been paving a new road near the Israeli border with northern Gaza.

According to Hammad, the road, located southeast of Kibbutz Nahal Oz, was intended for the use of Hamas’s Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades in future conflicts with Israel.

“The road has been secretly built under heavy security and will be used when the time is right for us to launch an attack against our enemy,” Hammad said during a speech in Khan Younis.

“The Zionist occupier will be surprised at Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades’ capabilities in the next military confrontation,” he added. (JNS.org)

News

Three murdered Israeli boys remembered on Unity Day

MICHAEL BELLING

Thousands of people commemorated the first anniversary this Wednesday, of the kidnapping and murder of Eyal Yifrach, Gilad Sher and Naftali Frenkel by Palestinian terrorists near Gush Etzion. Special Unity Day events were held in 19 countries and over 30 cities, including Johannesburg and Durban.

Yeshiva College co-ordinated the event for schoolchildren and parents in Johannesburg, in which the South African Zionist Federation and other Jewish day schools participated - King David, Hirsch Lyons, Maharsha, Shaarei Torah and Torah Academy.

Between the mincha and maariv services in the main Glenhazel Shul, tributes were paid to the three boys by Rabbi Avraham Tanzer, rosh yeshiva of Yeshiva College; Ben Swartz, chairman of the SAZF; and Rabbi Leron Bernstein, director of Yeshiva College. Children from the participating schools presented thoughts on unity, the theme of the event.

Two of the boys, Gilad Sher and Naftali Frenkel, attended the Mekor Chaim Yeshiva School near where they were kidnapped. Yeshiva College partners with Mekor Chaim in an exchange programme for grade 10 learners, with each school sending learners to study here and in Israel.

In Durban, the boys will be mentioned during shul services at the Umhlanga Jewish Day School.

At a reception at the residence of Israel’s President Reuven Rivlin, the Jerusalem Unity Prize in memory of the three boys was presented to four winners identified for

their leadership roles in promoting Jewish unity in Israel and the Diaspora. The 100 000 shekel prize is to be awarded annually on the anniversary of the boys’ murder to a person or organisation working to unify Israeli society.

The prize is a joint initiative of the families of the boys and with the Mayor of Jerusalem Nir Barkat and Geshar. The first prizewinners were: Israel-Diaspora, Chabad House of Bangkok, Thailand; social initiative, Nifgashim BeShvil Yisrael; and individual, Brigadier General (Ret) Ram Shmueli and Harav Chacham David Menachem.

Chabad House provides free services such as Shabbat meals, a place to relax, Internet access and assistance in cases of emergency to Jewish backpackers. Nifgashim BeShvil Yisrael is an annual hike along Shvil Israel (Israel Path) from Eilat to She’ar Yashuv, with the goal of reinforcing and deepening the sense of unity in Israeli society.

Brigadier General (Ret) Ram Shmueli has been developing various frameworks which promote a joint future for Israeli society since his retirement from the IDF. Harav Chacham David Menachem uses music to combine different worlds such as poetry, liturgy, Jewish law and Zionism. He believes that music has the power to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

A conference of Israeli and Diaspora leaders was also held in Jerusalem.

Other Israeli activities took place in schools, community centres and public venues across Israel, attracting hundreds of thousands of participants.

Similar events were held from Mumbai to Beijing, London to Montreal and Helsinki and Buenos Aires to Melbourne.

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south african
Jewish Report

Deconstructing the ritual

The planning of our children’s coming of age party - their bar- or bat-mitzvah - is an event of profound importance. We have all either been through - or will go through - what has become for many a costly, stress-inducing process.

If our children, or grandchildren, are at Jewish day school, and at bar- or batmitzvah age, they have already attended several “batis” or “barmis” (as they call it). Bar- or batmitzvah fatigue may have by now set in and, as parents, we are feeling compelled to search for new and innovative ideas for our own child’s celebration that might differentiate it from the rest of the parties.

A first child’s bar- or batmitzvah is as much a developmental milestone for the family as it is for the child, says author and psychologist Dr Judith Davis, who is an expert in the psychology of bar- and bat-mitzvahs.

“The bat-/barmitzvah is the first occasion in which the parents - as adults - present themselves publicly in relation to their religious tradition, their child’s development, their family’s evolution, and to every-one most important to them, all at the same time,” she says.

In the mother’s ability to arrange this communal celebration of her child’s coming of age, she herself, at some level, is tested and comes of age. A job well done - as facilitator of food, relationship builder, hostess and general balabosta - results not only in a successful celebration, but also in an elevated standing in the extended family and community. For the father, the celebration is also a statement about his economic suc-cess, says Davis.

The pressure to plan successful parties begins well before the pre-teen period, though. Already with toddlers who are brought up on Cinder-ella, Barbie, and Power Rangers, there are extremely high expectations for birthday parties. From cakes to themes, décor to entertainment, children want the dazzling kingdom of Disney recreated in their living rooms.

When I turned 12 at King David Victory Park Primary in the mid-‘80s, we all had our batmitzvah ceremonies together in shul, and that same day, celebrated with a modest tea or cocktail party with our own family and family friends. Our school mates were having celebrations of their own and the parties were fairly simple.

Today it seems quite different for both bar- and batmitzvahs, with more emphasis on making it a grand affair. In North America, the most vulgar, obnoxious bashes might cost as much as \$1 million.

One Toronto boy had pop band Maroon 5 flown in to perform at his barmitzvah. Another flew to Las Vegas with his friends and a film crew to make a seven-minute spoof of the popular film, The Hangover, and boxer Mike Tyson had a cameo role.

A magazine article described a New York City batmitzvah girl who descended from the ceiling of famous restaurant, Cipriani Wall Street, harnessed to a wire and dressed in a cat suit.

Such boggling possibilities can send currents of anxiety or revulsion through our intestinal systems - depending on our own ambitions and available budgets for our children.

But perhaps we all need to regain some much needed perspective. It is surely worth remembering in all the anxiety that bar-/batmitzvah plan-ning might induce, that the beautiful essence of this ritual is celebrat-ing an important milestone on our children’s journey to adulthood.

At the age of 13, a boy, and at the age of 12, a girl, become respon-sible for fulfilling the Torah’s commandments. The term “barmitzvah” literally means “son of the mitzvah” or batmitzvah, “daughter of the mitzvah” - one who is obligated in mitzvah observance. Both boys and girls now take responsibility for acquiring Torah knowledge and for do-ing mitzvot.

In fact, in very observant families, the emphasis at the celebratory meal is on the more meaningful events like the boy’s Dvar Torah - where he speaks before his community and family, showcasing his Torah learning.

I think when most of us - from less religious backgrounds - look back on our own celebrations, with braces on teeth and the beginnings of puberty, although the kernel of meaning is there, this special time is shrouded in unnecessary anxiety and materialism.

We may remember a funny comment from a speech, the anxious pangs of being up on the bimah, or who gave a large gift; but not too much else. It is probably the same with our children and their friends.

Let us, as parents, focus on the symbolism and spirituality of the bar- or batmitzvah process so that our children have a chance to focus on it also. It is not about the quality of the DJ, the variety at the sushi food station, or if the décor and venue were up to scratch; it is really about marking the amazing journey of our children into adulthood; their ac-ceptance of moral responsibility for their actions, and sharing this sa-cred ritual with family and special friends.

– Vanessa Valkin, Editor

More news on our website www.sajr.co.za



Feisty sex therapist Dr Ruth Westheimer has again caused an uproar – this time for quoting the Talmud in a sexual context.

Citing Talmud, Dr Ruth Westheimer questions sexual consent requirements

**JULIE WIENER
NEW YORK**

Dr Ruth Westheimer, the octogenarian therapist and TV host, is famous for her frank and open talk about sex. But she’s being called out for her recent comments about sexual consent - and using the Talmud to back up her controversial point of view.

With her new book, “The Doctor is In: Dr Ruth on Love, Life, and Joie de Vivre” out on Tuesday, the German-born Holocaust refugee, Israeli War of Independence veteran who turns 87 this week is on the media circuit. And one of her talking points - which she made on Monday on “The Diane Rehm Show”, a public radio programme - is that con-sent becomes moot after the clothes are off.

Here’s how she put it: “I am very worried about college campuses saying that a woman and a man - or two men or two women, but I talk right now about women and men - can be in bed together, Diane, and at one time, naked, and at one time he or she, most of the time they think she, can say ‘I changed my mind’.

“No such thing is possible,” Westheimer added. “In the Talmud, in the Jewish tradition, it says when that part of the male anatomy is aroused and there’s an erection, the brain flies out of that and we have to take that very seri-ously, so I don’t agree with that.”

JTA reached out to Westheimer to clarify her views on consent and find out exactly which passage in the Talmud she was referencing, but she was not available - perhaps not surprising given that Tuesday was the launch day of her book and Monday night she was at a fundraising dinner for the Museum of Jewish Heritage.

However, clearly aware that her comments are being construed as green-lighting rape, she tweeted on Tuesday, “I am 100 per cent against rape. I do say to women that if they don’t want to have sex with a man, they should not be naked in bed w/him.”

Moments later, she added: “That’s risky behaviour like crossing street against the light. If a driver hits you, he’s le-gally in the wrong but you’re in the hospital.”

Several rabbis are questioning her use of the Talmud.

Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg, author of several books on Ju-daism, including “The Passionate Torah: Sex and Judaism”, said the Talmud actually offered a strong argument that sex without explicit consent was a crime. The Talmud (in Ketu-bot 51B) went so far as to assert, Ruttenberg said, that even if the woman had an orgasm or decided in the middle of the act that she did consent, if she had not consented at the outset, it was still considered wrong.

“I’m grateful that Dr Ruth has in the past made a space to talk about human sexuality in a way that was really radi-cal for its time,” Ruttenberg said. “But a) she’s wrong about this, and b) she should not be using our tradition to bolster her argument.”

Although she was uncertain what part of the Talmud Westheimer was referencing, Ruttenberg noted that the statement was quite similar to a Yiddish saying: “Ven der Putz shtayt, der saychel gayt,” literally (according to JTA’s unofficial Yiddish translator, author Shulem Deen), “When the penis ‘stands’, the brains walk out.”

If the rabbis in fact said this - no doubt using less colourful phrasing - Ruttenberg theorises, they proba-bly intended it as descriptive rather than prescriptive.

“The rabbis had a lot to say about sexual arousal and the ways this can be a problem, and how to ar-range your life so you are not aroused when it’s not appropriate,” she said, adding: “I’m very comfortable saying, knowing the rabbinic corpus as I do, that they were not saying: ‘Boys will be boys.’ I think they were saying this is a thing that happens and how do we deal with it.”

Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, whose books about sex and Judaism include “Kosher Sex”, “Kosher Adultery” and “Kosher Lust”, said: “I know Dr Ruth and very much like her, but anyone in the Jewish community should strongly object to what she said. Consent is offered by a woman, and it can be withdrawn at any moment.

“The idea that men are ravaging beasts who are con-trolled by their hormones and can’t stop themselves, is a Neanderthal view that Judaism would never embrace. It’s a shockingly frightening excuse for rape.”

Like Ruttenberg, Boteach was unfamiliar with the pre-cise source of Westheimer’s Talmudic citation and ques-tioned whether the interpretation was accurate. And like Ruttenberg, he pointed out counterexamples from the Talmud.

“The Talmud says [in Sanhedrin 37A] that if a woman begins menstruating in the middle of the act, the man has to prop himself up on his elbows and subside because it’s not sanctioned by Jewish law,” Boteach said, refer-ring to the Jewish prohibition on sexual contact during menstruation known as niddah. “The Talmud is showing that a man can absolutely control himself.”

In addition, Boteach said, the Talmud strongly pro-hibited rape, even in marriage, ruling in Nedarim 20B that a man could not sleep with his wife when either was drunk, because full consent was not possible.

“A woman’s consent is dependent entirely on her,” he added. “If she says no, stop, that’s it. To say ‘I’m on auto-pilot’ is ridiculous.”

Rabbi Dov Linzer, head of Yeshivat Chovevei Torah, a liberal Orthodox rabbinical school, agreed with Rut-tenberg and Boteach, pointing to the passages they cited and also noting a passage in Berachot 62A saying that even when a man and his wife were naked together in bed, it was incumbent upon him to make sure she de-sired to have sex before beginning the act.

Although known for its conflicting opinions and argu-ments, the Talmud was notably consistent about sexual consent, Linzer said, adding that he could not think of any passage that forgave or condoned sex without full consent and that “the whole issue of responsibility and culpability is a major theme in the Talmud.

“This is about inflicting something unwanted on an-other person,” he said.

While it was “one thing” to use feeling out of control as an excuse for committing certain transgressions, Linzer said, “it’s a different thing to say you can go ahead and do something to someone else, that you don’t have respon-sibility toward another person.” (JTA)

Auschwitz message echoes: ‘Never again’

DINA DIAMOND

In early May, Mizrachi South Africa once again took more than 40 participants on its life-changing tour - entitled “Journey to Life” - to Poland.

Considering that this year marks the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, there were many tours to Poland, but this one in particular focused not just on the death and destruction that has become part of the history of the country from the Second World War, but also on the life, culture and traditions that emanated from a place where a thriving community of over three million Jews once lived.

Rabbi Ramon Widmonte conceptualised and co-ordinated the tour and managed to condense everything into four fully-packed and emotive days with his knowledgeable colleague Tzvi Sperber, a director of J-Roots, a group which organises tours to places of Jewish heritage.

We laughed, we cried, we drank, we sang and we danced - an emotional rollercoaster of experiences that has changed our views and ideas for life.

From the pristine but somehow soulless city of Warsaw, with only a tiny remnant of the ghetto walls remaining, through Lublin, once the jewel of Torah learning, to the bustling city of Krakow, where Oscar Schindler’s factory was situated, the entire country serves as a memorial to the Jewish pulse that once beat so strongly but is felt no more.



The number of six million Jews believed to have perished in the Holocaust, is often debated, especially by Holocaust deniers. However, after visiting death camps such as Auschwitz, Majdanek and Belzec, witnessing the remnants of the devastation and listening to the evidence, the number six million seems like an underestimation. Despite the meticulous record-keeping of the Nazis, with ghettos and death camps numbering over 14 000, it would have been impossible to count all those who perished from starvation, cold, illness, beatings, gas chambers and the mere whim of a Nazi with a gun. The mass graves in the forests, particularly those of children, attest to this.

The day we arrived at Auschwitz

II, this all-too-painful site of unspeakable horrors, the skies clouded over, the wind howled and the rain pelted down. A slight reprieve in the weather, just in time, allowed an entire group of officers from the Israeli Defence Forces, headed by two Holocaust survivors (one who was with our tour), and an IDF officer carrying a Torah, to march through the gates, almost in total defiance of what we all knew had taken place there.

It was a moving moment, reassurance that this would never happen again and a validation of why the State of Israel exists and needs to exist. To paraphrase famous human rights activist Irwin Cotler: “Israel did not happen because of the Holocaust, the Holocaust happened because

there was no Israel.”

We were privileged to have with us Dov Landau, a cheerful and energetic 87-year-old, a survivor of Auschwitz and the Holocaust. He took us to the town where he once lived and showed us where his house was, where the bakery was and even the mikveh.

Today he is greeted by the local residents and treated like a celebrity. Inside Auschwitz, he showed us the very bunk to which he had been confined; he relayed the hardships and losses of life inside the camp.

Dov now lives in Tel Aviv and harbours no anger or bitterness; he defies what he went through by living and raising a caring Jewish family.

When learning about all the propaganda and baseless lies created by

the Nazis pre- and during the Second World War, to vilify the Jew, to pave way for the Aryan race, one cannot help but compare it to modern-day anti-Semitism now camouflaged as anti-Zionism.

To compare the actions of the Jewish State to that of the Nazis’ treatment of Jews in the Holocaust, is an insult and shows utter disrespect for the memories of the six million Jews and others who had to endure cruelty, brutality and were ultimately sent to their death because of who they were.

People who do this and those who entertain it, need merely to go and view part of what is now a museum in Auschwitz with mounds and rooms full of shoes, locks of hair, spectacles, suitcases, shaving brushes, prosthetics and the list goes on...

“Never again”, a phrase repeated time and time again, must never stop being said so that Jews are never again slaughtered for being Jews.

The most important lesson from the past is that history does repeat itself - if you let it. It is up to every Jew and every decent human being to ensure that Jews are not labelled and turned into “the villain” through varying excuses and propaganda.

No matter how many cemeteries and shuls have been restored, how many plaques have been erected, the lives of six million precious souls can never be regained and the once bustling centres of Jewish life in Eastern Europe are no more and will most likely, never be again.

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Not your common garden variety chazzanut

SUZANNE BELLING

Lawyer by day, cantor on Shabbos and Jewish festivals, Elton Krawitz has put a new slant on Jewish liturgical music. It is still chazzanut - but with a difference.

Johannesburg music lovers will be treated to this new genre of traditional music (without losing the essence of tradition) in “Anything... But Cantorial” at the Auto and General Theatre on the Square, Sandton, on Sunday, June 28 at two shows 15:00 and 19:00. Hatzolah Medical Rescue is a beneficiary of this event.

Krawitz, who is the chazzan at Waverley Shul, has teamed up with renowned pianist Bryan Schimmel and the Waverley Choir under the baton of choirmaster Joel Sacher.

Krawitz’s repertoire will be a departure from his usual public singing and promises to be an exciting prospect “both for the audience and for me”, he says.

“The show will feature some of my favourite artists and composers, with five-part harmonies. This is not classical cantorial,” Krawitz told Jewish Report. “There will be music from Broadway, Les Miserables, Michael Buble, Elton John and my favourite - Andrea Bocelli.”

Schimmel, no stranger to the South African music scene, with a reputation as a brilliant showman, will accompany the singers.

Krawitz, who originally hails from the East Rand, attended the Hillel Jewish day school in Benoni till the end of grade 10 when the school closed down.

“I then went to King David High School Linksfield, commuting every day until my parents (Dr Walter

and Natalie Krawitz) moved to Johannesburg.” Krawitz has a BA LLB degree and practises as an in-house attorney for Discovery Health. His musical talent came to the fore in his youth when he studied piano (“I wrote all the exams”) and went on to have voice training with Eugenie Chopin. “I was also helped a lot by Evelyn Green, accompanist for the Johannesburg Jewish Male Choir.”

He was a member of the JJMC, travelling with the choir on tours to the United States (twice) and Perth and Melbourne. He joined the Victory Park Synagogue as a cantor from 1997 for two years and was then chazzan at Chabad of Sandton from 1999 to 2004, when he was appointed by Waverley Shul and has been there ever since.

He does not find it particularly tiring to work all week and sing on Friday nights and Saturday mornings. “I don’t even find Yom Kippur a strain, but strangely feel Rosh Hashanah is the most taxing.”

In 2008, with Michael Hankinson, he recorded an album “Inflections”.

“We took classical cantorial music and recorded with an 11-piece chamber orchestra.” After adapting their style of music for weddings, Krawitz recorded another album, “Wedding Inflections”, with an eight-piece chamber orchestra.

He is one of the regular performers for the Chaz-zonus Club and sings at West Park Cemetery for Yom Hashoah. His wife, Carmel, is a remedial teacher. They have four children aged between seven and 14.

“We are changing the sound of shul music. We work in five-part harmonies. It is not the stuff you usually hear, not classical cantorial,” Krawitz remarked.

Photo: Shibolet Felsht



Prospective grade 8s get a foretaste of what KDL has to offer

KERRY N FEIGENBAUM

On a sunny Highveld autumn day on Sunday May 17, King David Linksfield High School played host to the prospective grade 8s of 2016. They and their parents were taken on an informative tour around the school by this year’s grade 11s.

The Open Day activities then moved to the hall where each of the school’s eight committees presented colourful displays, educating the prospective KDL learners as to what each committee does and why the visiting grade 7s should join that particular committee when they become part of the school next year in grade 8.

An informal assembly was held to showcase a variety of the opportunities on offer, including dancing, sport, slam poetry and the inspirational



Photo: Shira Jacobs

Grade 11 pupils Eitan Malkin; Raphael Symons; and Daniel Gewer.

academics. School Principal Lorraine Srage addressed the audience, highlighting the “specialness” of this unique institution. At the tea that followed, current and prospective pupils, parents and staff commented on how proud they were to be part of such a school.

Minnie Bersohn dresses in blue and white

MICHELLE VINOKUR

Unity Day was celebrated at Minnie Bersohn Nursery School this Wednesday. The children came to school dressed in blue and white.

They donated beaded African crafts to Divote, an organisation that supports the injured soldiers and families in Israel.

Cheryl Unterslak, head of Divote, came to speak to the children about unity. She gratefully

received the donation. The children were also given the opportunity to watch how the crafts were made. It was a special day for all. Both the parents and children felt very united being part of this project.

Pictured are Jodi Maron (grade R teacher); Proud, Casandra, and Delorantis Mabu-ruse; (a family who sells and makes the crafts); Mandi Defries (principal); and the children in Grade R.



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Meeting with Mayor Tau could smooth communal relations

VANESSA VALKIN

The South African Jewish Board of Deputies met with Johannesburg Mayor Parks Tau (pictured) this week to express their distress at some of the recent decisions he had made to partner with BDS-SA, a group the Board believes have been responsible for creating a climate of hate against Johannesburg and South African Jewry.

The Board pointed to Tau’s decision to lead a march at BDS-SA’s Israel Apartheid Week held in early March as well as the City’s partnership with BDS for its newest creation, Palestinian Solidarity Week (PSW), a series of lectures held later in March, including hosting senior aide to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Fatah’s deputy commissioner for international relations, Dr Husam Zomlot.

Last year Tau was keynote speaker at the opening of Israel

Apartheid Week, whose organisers have been vitriolic and vocal in their criticism of Israel and, according to the Board, have led to South African Jewish students being referred to as “F***ing Jews” and “F***ing Kikes”.

“For us, BDS has degenerated into pure anti-Semitism,” Zev Krengel, president of the Jewish Board, told the Jewish Report.

The Board said it had no issue with Tau’s support of PSW but what had upset the community was that the BDS-SA logo was included in the PSW material.

At the meeting, which was attended by Tau and Krengel as well as the Board’s director, Wendy Kahn, and Gauteng vice-chairmen, Robbie Fihrer and Gigi Wolf, the leaders had an opportunity to express their unhappiness about various other issues as well.

They noted that the mayor, despite being invited to many Jewish events in the city, had not



attended any.

“You haven’t come to a single Jewish event and we invite you continuously,” Krengel told him at their meeting.

They also discussed the mayor of Jerusalem, Nir Barkat’s visit to South Africa in March, when the Johannesburg mayor’s office had said Tau was not available to meet

with Barkat

“When the mayor of Jerusalem goes to New York, he meets with Mayor Michael Bloomberg, why would Mayor Tau not meet with Nir Barkat?” Krengel asked.

The mayor defended himself, saying his office had tried to set up a meeting with Barkat at a time that worked for Tau but that Barkat had already left South Africa.

While Tau said at the meeting that he and the ANC were pro-Palestine and a two-state solution, the Board said that they, too, were supportive of a two-state solution, but felt that Tau’s support of BDS was not in line with this goal.

“We understand his support of a Palestinian state but it does not have to come at the expense of Israel and at the expense of local Jews,” said Krengel. “BDS might sell themselves as a pro-Palestinian lobby but they are anti-Semitic.”

Jewish Board director, Wendy

Kahn, told Jewish Report that not only is BDS anti-Semitic but the group does not support an Israeli state. “We want an Israeli state side by side with a Palestinian state but that’s not what BDS wants.”

The City of Johannesburg passed a resolution in January to twin itself with Ramallah and a large official delegation went to Ramallah. The board expressed their dissatisfaction that Tau passed through Israel but did not make time to meet with any Israeli officials on his way into the West Bank.

The Board said it was hoping there would be much more interaction between the Jewish community and the City of Johannesburg and the Mayor’s office going forward. The meeting ended on a positive note with plans for improved and open communication.

The Mayor’s office could not be reached for comment.

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French Jewish ‘safe haven’ doesn’t look so safe anymore

MICHAEL BELLING

The outlook for Jews in France is gloomy, according to Professor Henry Green, of the University of Miami, Florida, speaking at the Rabbi Cyril Harris Community Centre last Sunday. In his talk, titled “Charlie Hebdo and the new face of anti-Semitism”, Green, a professor of religious studies and international director of the project, Sephardi Voices, said that for French Jews, three-quarters of whom fled North Africa, France was always considered a safe haven.

Numbering 500 000, the French Jews are the second largest Diaspora community after the United States, and comprise almost one per cent of the French population today.

Rising anti-Semitism over the past decade - “feeding off the debris that sweeps out of the Middle East” and the recent Charlie Hebdo attack in Paris, “France’s 9/11, has shaken their roots,” he told the audience.

France has a Muslim population of nearly five million. “Staggering poverty, segregation and unemployment, are the trinity for the overwhelming majority.” Much of the anti-Semitism comes from this part of the population.

“Insecurity, fear and unpredictability have become the new normal for Jews of France. In 2014, 51 per cent of all racist attacks targeted Jews.”

“To understand what is happening in France is to understand the Sephardi Jewish experience,” Green said referring to the rise of Jew hatred there. Green has devoted himself to collecting the stories of the “forgotten exodus” of Jews from North Africa and the Middle East, in a similar way to Steven Spielberg’s chronicling of the tales of Holocaust survivors.

Within the space of a generation after 1948, over 850 000 Sephardi Jews were displaced from their countries in which Jewish communities had lived for centuries, even thousands of years, half of them from the North African Maghreb.

“There has been minimal activity in collecting their personal narratives, galvanising communities to voice their concerns about communal and cultural loss and disseminating their experiences,” he said.

“Their stories are heartbreaking and filled with trauma.”

Their displacement “cannot be reduced to anti-Israel venom,” he said. It began earlier than 1948 with the “acidic fertilisers” of the



Professor Henry Green, telling the stories of the displaced North African and Middle East Jews

rise of Nazism and Arab nationalist mobilisation. In the early 1940s, many were killed in Iraq in Nazi-inspired violence and Jews were sent to concentration camps from Tunisia.

After 1948 “state-legislated discrimination and repressive measures made life increasingly untenable for Jews in Islamic lands. Riots, arrests and detentions and discriminatory decrees became routine and are well documented”.

These measures included stripping Jews of citizenship, declaring Zionism a crime, freezing assets and confiscation of property.

As a result, the Jews left in droves and by 2005, the total Jewish population in Islamic countries in the Middle East had fallen to just over 5 000.

What happened to the Sephardim was a human rights story, said Green. This enabled Sephardi Voices to approach governments and other official bodies. It was also a story of Zionism.

Most of the displaced Jews went to Israel, but large numbers emigrated to France from the former French colonies in North Africa.

Green said he felt the outlook for French Jews was pessimistic. Some had forecast that up to half of French Jewry might emigrate over the next generation unless the situation returned to normal.

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-----A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

WJC’s Lauder to speak at SAJBD Conference

This year is a national conference year for the SAJBD. Our 48th biennial national congress will take place on November 22, and preparations are already well underway for this important event on the Jewish calendar.

I am pleased to report that Ronald Lauder, president of the World Jewish Congress (WJC), has agreed to be the keynote speaker. The WJC is at the forefront of international efforts to promote the welfare and ensure the safety and security of Jewish communities everywhere.

The Board has a close working relationship with the organisation and is an active member of its executive committee. We expect the theme of the conference to very much revolve around the rise of global anti-Semitism and how to counter it, and here it can be anticipated that Mr Lauder will provide us with many crucial insights into what is taking place.

University exams

When university exams have been set on Yomtov or Shabbat and these dates cannot be changed, an arrangement now exists between the Board and the relevant universities that religious students can write their papers immediately after the festival or Sabbath, where required, having been under the supervision of a rabbi during the preceding period.

After Shavuot, Unisa students wrote their exams at Beyachad (now an official Unisa exam venue), with Unisa invigilators and National Director Wendy Kahn in attendance. On the following Motzai Shabbat, University of Johannesburg students wrote their papers on the same basis.

We thank all those who participated in this process, from the various university administrators and invigilators to Rosh Beth Din Rabbi Moshe Kurtstag and the rabbonim who looked after the students with



Above Board
Mary Kluk
National Chairman

such dedication and sensitivity. Thanks, of course, are also due to our professional staff, and here, I am happy to quote from a very warm letter of appreciation received from one of the students involved: “I feel so appreciative for the hard work of so many people, the enormous effort and huge

amount of logistical planning as well as what must have been months and months of delicate and highly sensitive negotiations. “It is inspiring to know and to personally experience the role that the Jewish Board of Deputies plays in up-keeping the dignity and rights of the members of the SA Jewish community, whatever their cause.”

Jewish Affairs - an invaluable communal resource

Last week, the editorial board of the journal, Jewish Affairs, held their first meeting for 2015. The journal appears thrice annually (Pesach, Rosh Hashanah, Chanukah) and publishes articles dealing with Jewish history, literature, art and religion.

It has been brought out under the auspices of the SAJBD since 1941, and is now widely recognised as being South Africa’s leading Jewish historical, cultural and current affairs journal.

Jewish Affairs is now also available electronically on the SAJBD website www.jewishsa.co.za. It is an invaluable communal resource that records the myriad activities and achievements of our community, and I encourage everyone to take advantage of it.

• Listen to Charisse Zeifert on Jewish Board Talk, 101.9 ChaiFM every Friday 12:00 - 13:00.

This column paid for by the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Public protector sees UJW as a valuable partner

MOIRA SCHNEIDER
CAPE TOWN

Although not answerable to government - only to the National Assembly - the public protector was not an enemy of the state, Dr Maria du Toit, CEO of the public protector’s office, told the 82nd annual general meeting of the Union of Jewish Women.

Dr Du Toit, who was guest speaker at the AGM, pointed out that in terms of Section 182 of the Constitution, “the public protector should be accessible to all communities”. That factor also underpinned her engagement at the UJW meeting, she said. “For us access is about people being well versed in who we are and where to reach us.”

In her opening address she said: “Let us see that there is some hope, even in this country.”

Advocate Du Toit, a graduate of the University of the (Orange) Free State, has a Master’s degree in human rights.

Twenty-one years into democracy, women still faced an uphill battle with regard to violence and disease, among other things. “While a lot has been achieved, the Struggle continues for women,” she said.

A progressive Constitution outlawing discrimination on the basis of gender, along with several pieces of legislation supporting this principle, signified recognition of rights not previously acknowledged. “But we have to ask: How far are we in monitoring implementation of these rules in our society?”

She added: “There are not many with the means to access the courts, for example. People are afraid to get out of their comfort zone while recognising (instances of) discrimination. I see the UJW as a partner in helping the public protector to be more effective, to live up to being accessible to all communities, to protect the rights and freedom of women and therefore I couldn’t miss out on this opportunity today.”

Before one approaches the public protector to investigate action or inaction on the part of any of the three tiers of government, one should have exhausted all other remedies available. “For those who approach the public protector, it will be a last resort, so that’s why we like to say: There is hope.”

On the fact that the public protector was only answerable to the National Assembly, she said: “We can be perceived to be an enemy of the state, but this of course is not the case.”

Also speaking at the AGM, Hazel Levin discussed The Malacha Fund that she started with a friend, Janice Bunn, providing interim assistance to families in the community while they are processed for help



Myra Goldenbaum, past UJW CT chairman and national vice president, executive member of the International Council of Jewish Women (left); and Dr Maria du Toit, CEO of the public protector’s office.

from elsewhere. They have been providing meals, food vouchers, airtime, clothing and assisting with shopping for five years, despite the fact that both hold down fulltime jobs.

Last year they linked up with the UJW and are one of its beneficiaries. They don’t advertise themselves, preferring to operate below the radar, but the rabbis are aware of the service they provide.

Andy Bolnick spoke of Project Bayit, her way of engaging the Jewish community in the work she does with Ikhayalami, an organisation that develops and implements affordable solutions for informal settlement upgrading.

The UJW plans to support the project and Bolnick invited audience members to approach her and her building team to make an assessment of, for example, their employees’ shacks.

Upgrading to fire- and flood-resistant structures could take from one day upwards and would cost between R9 000 and R15 000 for a normal-sized shack.

Union stalwart Myra Goldenbaum called for a minute’s silence in memory of Pearl Mandelstam, honorary life national president of the UJW, who passed away in December at the age of 102.

The Pearl Mandelstam Shield of Excellence - the chairman’s award - was presented to 90-something-year-old Freda Davis in recognition of her “ongoing support”. Davis still serves on the executive of the UJW.

Hermoine Sternberg received the Freda Kapelus Award for her 15-plus years of active involvement in the UJW.

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Today, Friday (June 5)

• UZLC hosts arts writer Robyn Sassen on books: "These are a Few of my Favourite Reads". Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 - 14:00. Contact: is Gloria (011) 485-4851 or 072-127-9421.

Saturday (June 6)

• WIZO Tzabar, is hosting a "Fantastic" 50 golden theatrical anniversary with Ian and Viv von Memerty. Laughter, love and glamour. Fabulous costumes, dancing and music. Venue: Teatro Montecasino. Time: 20:00. Cost: R170. Booking: Raya, 083-377-2970, or raya.r@telkomsa.net or Graciela, 082-925-0924 or dskudi@icon.co.za

Sunday (June 7)

• Limmud presents a one-man play, "Bereh", written by South African Samuel Liebowitz in 1945 and acted by Robert Colman and directed by Vanessa Cooke. Venue: Old Eds Club, Family Room, 11 9th Avenue, Lower Houghton. Time: 13:00 for 13:30. Admission free. Light snacks will be provided. Information: e-mail limmudsa@gmail.com

• Chabad hosts "Power Sundays: Learn, Shmooze, Pray" at Shul in Sandton Central, 8 Stella Street. Time: 08:15. Information: Rabbi Ari Kievman 079-434-1293 or rak@chabad.org.za

• RCHCC presents its "Keeping Score Series" - the stories behind and intertwined with classical music, created by Michael Tilson Thomas with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, featuring "Beethoven's Eroica". Venue: Clive M Beck Auditorium. Time: 19:30. Donation: R70 (incl refreshments). Booking: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, a/h (011) 728-8378, or e-mail: rchcc@telkomsa.net or rene.s@telkomsa.net or www.greatpark.co.za

• Jaffa Morning Market and Fun Day. Morning Market from 10:00 - 12 noon, with bric-a-brac, books, jewellery, a deli and tea garden. Lunch from 12:30 - hamburgers and boerewors rolls on the braai with a cool drink for R50. Entertainment from 13:30, with Cindy Alter of the '70s SA group, Clout. For children: face painting, jumping castle and a treasure hunt. Information: Mark Isaacs, (012) 346-2006.

• Emunah Movement is holding a morning of "Laughter, Song and Snacks". Venue: Glenhazel Shul Hall. Time: 09:30 for 10:00. Donation: R150. All proceeds to Achusat Sara Children's Home, Bnei Brak, Israel. Contact: Ethne 083-400-5312.

Monday (June 8)

• UJW adult education division hosts Isobel Frye, director of the Studies in Poverty & Inequality Institute (SPII) on "Poverty and Inequality in South Africa: Are We Making Progress?" Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: UJW office (011) 648-1053.

• Chabad Seniors Club at Chabad House in Savoy. Free transport. Memory enhancement with Cynthia Liptz, lectures and discussions, refreshments, lunch, iPad lessons. Time: 09:00 - 13:00. Information: Rabbi Ari Kievman (011) 440-6600.

Tuesday (June 9)

• Chabad hosts a multiplex of shiurim at Chabad House at 09:45 for men and women, with Rabbi Ari Kievman. At 11:15

exclusive ladies shiur with Aviva Goldman. At 9:45, exploring the parsha for men and women, Venue: Chabad House 27 Aintree Ave. Savoy. Free transport, refreshments, lunch, no cost. Information: (011) 440-6600.

• Israel Centre hosts "Israeli Taxation Issues Q & A" with Israeli tax consultant Dr Avi Nov, who will concentrate on various Israeli and international tax issues related to people who currently reside in South Africa and are considering aliyah. Venue: Beyachad. Time: 19:00 – 21:00. RSVP: Sue (011) 645-2530 or Debbie (011) 645-2560.

Wednesday (June 10)

• Chabad presents "How do we know the Torah is true? Is there any empirical evidence to support his claim?" Venue: Kirsh Goodness and Kindness Centre, 8 Stella Street, Sandton. Time: 19:15. Information: (011) 440-6600 or at www.JLI.org.za

• WIZO Etgar presents "Live Magazine", what's trending? Featuring: fashion, foods, décor, and books, with well-known presenters. Venue: Illovo. Call office for details. Time: 10:00 – 12:00. Cost: R180. Contact: Zee 083-377-5644 or Nadine (011) 645-2515 or wizojhb@beyachad.co.za

• UJW adult education division hosts Dr Lorraine Chaskalson, former lecturer in the Dept of English at Wits on "Contemporary Poetry and its Relevance to Our Own Lives". Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: UJW office (011) 648-1053.

Thursday (June 11)

• Greenside Shul hosts photographer Ilan Ossendryver on "Ethiopian Jewry - a Slide Presentation". Time: 19:30. Contact: Lara (011) 447-3729.

Jewish Achiever Awards

Nominations are pouring in for the Absa Jewish Achiever Awards 2015. With less than three weeks to go before nominations close, don't miss out on your chance to nominate!

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Nominations for the 17th annual "Absa Jewish Achiever Awards" are open for another three weeks and the 2015 event is sure to again up the ante.

The closing date for nominations is June 26, so time is running out to nominate a deserving person for one of the host of awards.

The annual fundraiser culminates in a gala banquet which is, without question, the highlight of the Johannesburg Jewish social calendar. The glittering dinner honours members of South African Jewry who have excelled in business and the humanities.

Nominations are open to the public and all nominations should be sent to nominations@sajewishreport.co.za - see more on www.sajr.co.za - and anyone can nominate anyone.

The judging, especially in the audited business categories, has been described by many top financial people in the know, as the most rigorous and credible business awards process in the country.

Nominations should include:

- The nominee's name, telephone number and e-mail address
- The award for which the nominee is nominated
- A short motivation for the nomination

The Business and Entrepreneurial awards are judged by a panel of independent business people, financial journalists, stockbrokers and Absa representatives, who interview all of the candidates. The results are audited by Grant Thornton accountants.

The Absa Jewish Business Awards are:

- The Absa Listed Company Award, going to a Jewish person in a senior leadership position within a listed company who has achieved great success that is worthy of recognition.
- The Absa Unlisted Company Award, going to a Jewish person who is in a senior leadership position in an unlisted company and who has achieved significant success worthy of recognition.
- The Absa Entrepreneur Award, going to a Jewish person who has shown enormous entrepreneurial flair and business innovation.
- The Creative Counsel Young Jewish Entrepreneur Award, going to a Jewish youth. This award recognises entrepreneurship in young Jews aged 30 or younger.

Jewish Report Humanities Awards are:

- The Lifetime Achievement Award, in honour of Helen Suzman, awarded to a Jewish person who has contributed in an extraordinary manner, in their specific field, over a lengthy period of time.
- The Community Service Award, going to a Jewish person who has served the Jewish community with remarkable distinction.
- The Arts, Science, Sports & Culture Award, going to a Jewish person who has excelled in any of these spheres.
- The Chivas Humanitarian Award, in honour of Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris, awarded to either a Jewish or non-Jewish person who has contributed substantially to the betterment of the lives of the people of South Africa.

The black-tie awards evening is replete with music, comedy and a sparkling array of the who's-who of South African Jewry. There is no other event on the social calendar which attracts as many high profile individuals as the Absa Jewish Achiever Awards.

2014 winners

In 2014 the Jewish Report Humanities Lifetime Achievement Award, in honour of Helen Suzman, went to Meyer Kahn; the Chivas Humanitarian Award, in honour of Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris, went to Professor Jonathan Jansen; the Art, Sport, Science & Culture Award went to Professor Valerie Mizrachi and the KIA Community Service Award went to Rabbi Dovid Hazdan.

The 2014 Absa Listed Company Award went to Steven Braudo, deputy CEO of Liberty Life. In the Absa Unlisted Company Award category, Ivor Ichikowitz of the Paramount Group won. The Absa Entrepreneur Awards went to Popimedia's Daniel Levy, Ryan Silberman and Gil Sperling. The newest award, the Creative Counsel Young Entrepreneurs award, went to Nadav Ossendryver.

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No rocky road in Comrades for these ladies

JACK MILNER

Three women athletes from Rocky Road Runners Club in Johannesburg were among the 16 584 starters in Sunday’s Comrades Marathon. This year it was an “up” run, starting in Durban and finishing in Pietermaritzburg.

Taryn Greenblatt, Tali Zulberg and Gabi Dennill all completed the race and earned themselves bronze medals in the process. They are all feeling “a little tender” but proud of their achievement.

Taryn, 32, performed best of the trio, completing the gruelling 87,7km race in a time of nine hours, 13 minutes and 59 seconds. She finished in 2 337th place overall, but in position 186 in her gender and 112 of 1511 women in her category. It was her first Comrades.

“Why do I do it? It was just to achieve something. My husband has done it and I’m sure he’s going to want to go back each year. But for me, I’m done,” said Taryn, echoing a common refrain when bodies are still smarting from the hammering.

“It’s been on my bucket list but I’ve got my medal and that’s it. They say you want to go back and do the down run the next year, but not for me. It was hot and hard. I just walked Polly Shorts from bottom to top.”

Tali finished the race in 09:28:54 to finish in 2 750th position overall, 227th out of 3 453 starters in the women’s race and in position 136 in her category.

“Yes, I’m sore and tired but I suppose I love the camaraderie of it all. I love the group I train with and I suppose you go back to beat your pre-

vious times. I will definitely be back next year. In fact, I am looking to get a green number,” for the magical 10 runs, said Tali.

She has completed three events and will need another seven for her to get a green number. But she really takes this event seriously.

“We do about four regular 42km marathons and three ultra-marathons every year. This year we ran an international marathon in Rotterdam. Again it’s all about the camaraderie. We choose an international marathon and go together as a group.”

In last year’s down-run, Tali completed the race in a faster time - 08:49 - but this year she was also hit by another problem which affected her time. “I had hip issues a few weeks back and that may have made me a bit sluggish.”

Gabi, at 29, is the youngest of the three and she completed the race in 09:42:11 to end up in 3 183 position overall, 281st in her gender and 160th in her category.



Tali Zulberg with fellow Rocky Road Runners teammate Devan Rick at Sunday’s Comrades Marathon.

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Israel soccer’s Fifa reprieve

JACK MILNER

The question of whether Israel should be banished from the world soccer body Fifa or not, became a side show last week when the organisation was turned upside down with allegations of bribery and money laundering by its senior officials.

The news then came on Tuesday evening that newly-elected president Sepp Blatter - re-elected for a fifth time - had finally agreed to step down.

But last Friday, 163 Fifa members voted at the body’s AGM in Switzerland, in favour of the Palestinian amendment to the motion (with nine against and 37 abstaining). While the headlines focused on the shelving of a resolution that would have suspended Israel, more realistic commentators have suggested that anybody celebrating an Israeli victory shouldn’t overdo it.

The Palestinian soccer body at the meeting withdrew its demand that Israel be suspended, but warned that it wasn’t the end of the story.

Politics, something Blatter claimed he tried so hard to keep out of Fifa, was probably what gave Palestinian Soccer Federation boss Jabril Rajoub a change of heart. A Palestinian insistence that Fifa vote for Israel’s suspension, would have ended in failure. They needed a 75 per cent majority, which they would not have got. The new watered down proposal was a compromise to which most countries agreed.

Michel Platini of Uefa, the European soccer body, was believed to be working hard to get the old motion withdrawn. Some reports say that Tokyo Sexwale figured prominently in the

decision and that Rajoub explicitly mentioned Sexwale as having played a critical role in his decision to withdraw the motion to have Israel expelled.

In the end, the way the Palestinian soccer boss saw it, was that the predicted defeat of the motion would have given a stamp of approval to Israel’s so-called “violations”.

But eventually, 167 delegates voted for the amendment that passed: “Restrictions of Palestinian rights for the freedom of movement. Players and football officials both within and outside the borders of the occupied State of Palestine, have been systematically restricted from their right to free movement, and continue to be hindered, limited, and obstructed by a set of unilateral regulations arbitrarily and inconsistently implemented.

“This constitutes a direct violation by IFA of Article 13.3 of the Fifa Statute, specifically in relation to Article 13.1(i) and its correspond[ing] articles in Uefa rules.”

Fifa has now appointed the equivalent of a probation officer for Israel and has chosen Sexwale to head the monitoring committee that will deal with Palestinian grievances. The establishment of the committee will enable the Palestinians to continue to pester Fifa and it puts Rajoub under the loupe of social-media activists who will demand proof that a corrupt Fifa hasn’t bought him off. According to Ha’aretz, the monitoring committee leaves Israel in a state of constant tension. Any expression of racism on the Israeli soccer field and the delaying of a soccer player at the Allenby crossing, would be grounds for deliberations and possible punishment of Israel.

Alas, Israel is not off the hook.

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CT PROGRAMME 16 JUNE

CAPE TOWN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE



ROOM 1		ROOM 2		ROOM 3		ROOM 4	
10:00	DR EFRAIM ZUROFF NAZI HUNTING	RABBI DR TZVI HERSH WEINREB WHAT PARENTS AND CHILDREN CAN LEARN FROM EACH OTHER	RABBI SHAIS TAUB MY NAME IS... AND I AM A HUMAN BEING: UNLOCKING YOUR EMOTIONAL SOBRIETY	RABBI MORDECHAI BECHER FROM CAIRO TO CAMBRIDGE: HIDDEN TREASURES FROM THE CAIRO GNIZA			
11:00	CHIEF RABBI DAVID LAU Q & A	ALEX CLARE & YONATAN RAZEL NEVER TOO LATE: THE ALEX CLARE STORY CLARE MASTER-CLASS: MY LIFE IN MUSIC RAZEL	RABBI DONIEL KATZ MIND-HACKING: A MASTER CLASS IN JEWISH MEDITATION, CONSCIOUSNESS AND CONNECTING MIND & HEART, BODY & SOUL	MIRIAM KOSMAN IT'S A MAN'S WORLD BUT MAYBE IT SHOULD BE A WOM-AN'S?			
12:00	RABBI YITZCHAK DAVID GROSMAN STORY OF A DEDICATED LIFE	RABBI SHAIS TAUB SOUL MAP	2 HR MEDITATION WORKSHOP	RABBI DR TZVI HERSH WEINREB ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND MENACHEM MENDEL OF KOTZK: TRANSFORMING PSYCHOLOGICAL FAULTS INTO SPIRITUAL STRENGTHS			
13:00	LUNCH						
14:00	CHIEF RABBI DAVID LAU & CHIEF RABBI WARREN GOLDSTEIN LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP	REBBETZIN TZIPORAH HELLER THE BALANCING ACT: HOW TO BRING THE POWER AND PASSION OF TORAH INTO OUR HOMES, OUR CHILDREN - AND OURSELVES	RABBI MORDECHAI BECHER THE SOUL'S SEARCH FOR G-D: KABBALAH, SCIENCE, SOCIOLOGY AND CRICKET	MIRIAM KOSMAN POETRY IN THE TRENCHES			
15:00	HELLER, WEINREB & TAUB RELATIONSHIP ESSENTIALS	SAUL BLINKOFF MY DISNEY TALE. COLOURING OUTSIDE THE LINES	DR EFRAIM ZUROFF THE NEW ANTI-SEMITISM: HOLOCAUST DISTORTION AND THE REWRITING OF HISTORY	RABBI DONIEL KATZ SELF-LOVE AND JEWISH UNITY			
16:00	MINCHA				NEW SPEAKER		
16:30	RABBI MORDECHAI BECHER RABBI DONIEL KATZ CHIEF RABBI DAVID LAU TODAY WE CAN...						

DBN PROGRAMME 17 JUNE

DURBAN JEWISH CENTRE

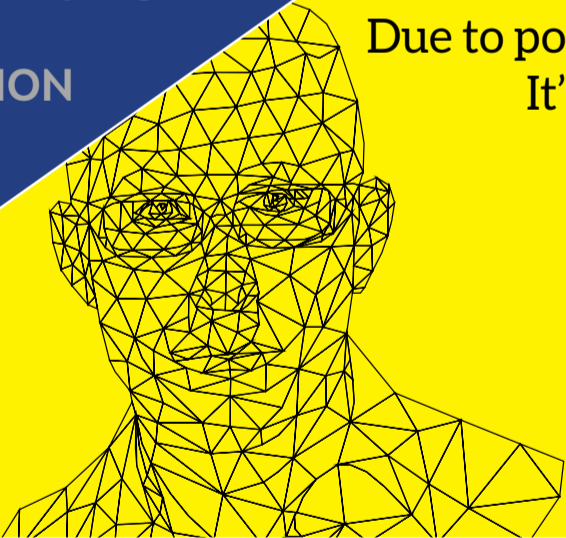
16:45	MINCHAH AND TEA NAZI HUNTING
17:00	CHIEF RABBI DAVID LAU CHIEF RABBI WARREN GOLDSTEIN RABBI MORDECHAI BECHER



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