

Wood River Jewish Community

THE SHOFAR

Winter 2022/2023



This week, as Rabbi shared her thoughts on the Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev, her writing was prescient. Rabbi Levi Yitzchok was known (as our friends at Wikipedia share) as the "defense attorney" for the Jewish people ("Sneiguron Shel Yisroel") because he would intercede on their behalf before God. And these past weeks, as often over thousands of years, Jews and those who support the Jewish community have stood up for what is correct as the Jewish community's "Rabbi Levi Yitzchok."



We all know that there can be levels of anti-Semitism in every city or town. Some are very vocal and obvious – such as the marchers in Charlottesville chanting, "Jews will not replace us." In contrast, others are quieter such as someone in a business meeting referring to our identity as a "Jew" and adding "me down" immediately following to connote a business negotiation.

Anti-Semitism is nothing new and has been much talked about recently. We've seen the iconic (albeit mentally ill) musician Kanye West take the age-old "Jews control the world" and wrap it around tropes and hate – as he said he was going "Defcon 3 against the Jews." (a connotation of force against Jews). It took many companies associated with West days, if not weeks, to condemn him. Then, in an opportunity to take the national stage on "Saturday Night Live" and put a real hammer down on hate, the comedian Dave Chappelle started his monologue with a note that putting "The" in front of "Jews" was anti-Semitic. From that moment on, he shared some of the worst anti-Semitic stereotypes about Jews, including the one close to me, given a business that I know well, the entertainment industry.

It is no hidden secret that for over a century, at many film companies, television studios, and record companies, Jews sat at the top of the industry. And why? Because they created it. And why did they build it? Because for them, every other business sector was closed off to them. Before this, their parents were selling rags, glass, and metal on horse-driven carts or dry goods, such as the former Mayor of Hailey, Simon Friedman, who, as many of us know, is the namesake of the only airport in America named after a Jew. Hollywood was an industry that would accept Jews because, having created it, entrance into the business was through opening doors for one another.

And with the above, it brings us to the predominantly non-Jewish community where we live. Still, as my note in the last shofar mentioned, we will the Valley with active, caring Jews, Jewish philanthropy, and business. We are preparing the move into our new home and synagogue, with much support from the community. People of all faiths have shown excitement about our endeavor. Our Adult Education Committee is working on programming for the community and our schools. This spring, we will meet with the Community School's yearly class on Holocaust Studies, explaining to both non-Jewish and Jewish kids what it means to be a Jew in the face of the Holocaust and anti-Semitism. We have done extensive work with our security consultants and Sun Valley's police department for our new building to protect our membership. And with that in mind, we are very thoughtful about the world we live in and the anti-Semitism throughout the United States.

It is an exciting time for The WRJC to move into our new home and synagogue, with the opportunity to promote togetherness. We will open the doors of our new home for groups and organizations in the Wood River Valley that need a place to meet. There will be a community-wide dedication where we plan on a significant number of non-Jewish members attending. And we will continue to open and create outreach channels to the interfaith community. We stand proud as Jewish residents of the Wood River Valley.

But what it takes to fight anti-Semitism of any sort, and in whatever form this is presented, is for each of us to take a stand, shutting down negative stereotypes or slurs and being our "very own" Rabbi Levi Yitzchok. Imagine the beauty and power if Kanye West had said he was going "Defcon 3 against anti-Semitism." When things like that happen, the tides can continue to change.

Happy Chanukah and a healthy 2023.

November 24, 2022



Dear Members and Friends,

Greetings from The Wood River Jewish Community as we continue to grow and flourish, and this is due to your and our community's support. Here are a few highlights of our continued success:

As you know, The WRJC purchased and is renovating our first permanent home and synagogue. We expect the building to be completed before the end of this year and look forward to us being together there for services, religious school, and community events. When so many of us return to the Wood River Valley this summer, we will be holding the dedication of the building and look forward to you joining us there.

Our membership continues to grow, as 20 new families have joined the WRJC membership, and we now have the largest number of members the Wood River Jewish Community has ever had – 200 members!

We now have a community Shaliach, Stav Ohyaon, an emissary from Israeli joining us for the year. Stav is a beautiful new addition to our community. Stav works with our families, young people, and adult members to create deeper connections with Israel and Judaism.

Our Sunday School has grown to twenty-seven students. Young families are continuing to join our community. We continue our ongoing adult education and lectures, community Hebrew lessons, get-togethers for an introduction to all things Israeli led by Stav. Additionally, memorable times this year include the visit of injured Israeli IDF soldiers from Brothers for Life, the summer Jewish Bike Brigade, Ladies' Lunches, and Shabbat hikes. As well as our worship together – rabbinic teaching and counseling, lay leadership of Shabbat services, and High Holy Day services.

All the above activities are sustained only through your generosity, our members. Like many Jewish communities, annual membership dues are insufficient to pay our expenses. We hope you will make a year-end contribution to assist us in these efforts.

We thank you for all the funding you have provided and hope you will step up in response to this year-end appeal to support the exciting path we walk together.

Sincerely,

Claudie Goldstein, Development Committee Chair

Development Committee: Phil Goldstein. Susan Green. Joanne Mercer.
Bob Safron. Rhea Schwartz. Gail Stern



Make your gift today

Chanukah: The Power of Ritual

The second most celebrated holiday in Judaism (#1 is Passover), Chanukah requires us to perform a home ritual: the lighting of the Chanukah candles. According to the Talmud, the primary reason we light the candles on Chanukah is to “publicize the miracle of Chanukah”. The miracle is not necessarily the military victory of the Maccabees we were told about in our childhoods. During the Talmudic period, the Rabbis debated the worthiness and wisdom of celebrating a military victory and rededication of the Temple. In a time when Jews were living under the authority and at the pleasure of other nations and rulers, celebrating national identity and military victory was not a politically wise choice. Ultimately the rabbis decided to “re-invent” Chanukah as a miracle of faith and the celebration of a miracle of light. They developed a story of divine intervention to save the Israelite people which included one day’s worth of oil burning for eight days. This reinvention into a politically safe Chanukah has served us for two millennia, and we embrace this through music, poetry, plays and prayer.



To publicize the miracle, we place the lit Chanukiyah outside our doorways or in the windows of our homes, so that passers-by can see them. There is an interesting discussion among the rabbis of the Talmud about what constitutes the mitzvah, the commandment, of the menorah. One rabbi says that a person has completed the mitzvah by lighting the candles. Another rabbi states that one has not completed the mitzvah of lighting the candles until they are placed in the window so that others can see them. The disagreement is over whether the actual “lighting” of the candles is the main part of the mitzvah, or whether the “placing” of the candles in the window is the main part of the mitzvah.

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev, a Chassidic master who lived circa 1800, comments upon this Talmudic disagreement from a psychological perspective. He writes that a person should always try to perform a mitzvah with joy and great desire, with fervor and with meditating on God’s greatness. To perform a mitzvah is a wonderful privilege, and our enthusiasm for doing it should know no bounds. But, he acknowledges, our heart is not always in it. We are not always able to perform the mitzvah with the proper “kavanah” - the proper holy intention – or with the right attitude. A person might then think – “If I am not “feeling” it, I should not perform it.”

This, writes Rabbi Levi Yitzchak, is the hidden meaning of what at first glance appears to be a disagreement in the Talmud — whether “lighting” is the essence of the mitzvah, or whether “placing” is the essence of the mitzvah. This is not a disagreement at all, claims Rabbi Levi Yitzchak. Rather, in asserting that the “lighting” is the essence of the mitzvah, we mean that a person should optimally perform a mitzvah with great joy, as if his or her soul is on fire. When the other opinion maintains that “placing” is the essence of the mitzvah, we mean that even when a person falls from that place of fieriness and enthusiasm, he or she should still perform the mitzvah. In the first instance, the fervor of the person uplifts the lighting. In the second instance, the lighting uplifts the person. This is true of all mitzvot, whether of the “ethical” or the “ritual” kind.

Dr. Laura Schulman, a physician/musician living in Jerusalem, published in the Jewish Press the following regarding how she was moved by a mitzvah: She writes that over the years she had become very distant from her Jewish roots and apathetic about Jewish practice. She was attending a medical convention when she walked by the public lighting of a menorah on the steps of a building on the campus of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. “My eyes welled with tears,” she writes. “.... To be away from my family that first night of the holiday felt cold and lonely.” Now, seeing the lights of the first night’s flames of that big menorah, she contacted a rabbi for the first time in her life and told him of her experience in Baltimore. That flame in Baltimore ignited a spark that led her to reconnect with her Jewish community and to live an active Jewish life. Such is the power of ritual – sometimes it takes only one person, one moment of action, one memory to help us connect.

Whether the lighting or the placing of the Chanukiyah gets you excited about Judaism, may you find that spark that connects you to our beautiful heritage during this special season.

Chag Urim Sameach - Happy Chanukah!

Rabbi Robbi

WRJC Chanukah Potluck Party

Sunday, December 18th at 5:30pm

American Legion . 220 Cottonwood St., Ketchum

Please bring a dish to share
(main dish will be provided)

Last names starting with A-M: Please bring a dessert or salad
Last names starting with N-Z: Please bring a side dish or latkes

Adults: \$37.50 per person (Members)
\$47.50 per person (Non-Members)
Children under 12: \$10 per person, under 5: free
Sponsorship available. Call Claudie 208-450-9119

Rabbi Robbi will lead the service!

Fun, friendly, family competition led by Stav!
Special Prize for the winning family!

Chanukah Chair Committee: Samantha Cole, Melissa Rivello, Eryn Alvey

Please complete and return the RSVP below.

Name: _____

Adult members attending:: _____

Adult non members attending: _____

Number of children: _____

Under 5: _____

I will be a sponsor:

Total Amount enclosed \$ _____

Credit Card:# _____

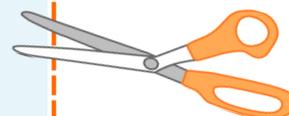
Name on card: _____

Exp.date: ___/___ CV Code: _____

Billing zip code _____

Have questions?
Volunteer to help?

Please contact: Claudie Goldstein
208.450.9119
claudie@wrjc.org



Please cut out and return to WRJC office:
P.O.Box 837, Ketchum. ID 83340

The "Maccabees," donuts and Israel

Hanukkah is the second most loved holiday in Israel, after Purim. (Personally, I prefer Passover). How illuminating this holiday is! Before I give you a peek at how it is celebrated in Israel and some spectacular facts at the end, let's briefly discuss the history.



The Greeks ruled the Land of Israel more than two thousand years ago, forcing the Jewish Israelites to convert. Against all odds, a small group of devoted Jews defeated one of the world's most

powerful armies, drove the Greeks out, reclaimed the Temple in Jerusalem, and rededicated it to the service of the God of Israel. That group is also known as "The Maccabees," which is an acronym for "Who is like You among the Mighty Adonai."

When the Israelites wanted to light the Menorah inside the temple, they discovered only one jar of olive oil had survived the Greek destruction. The quantity, which was supposed to be enough for one day only, miraculously burned for eight days, until they were able to produce new oil in purity. The scholars declared the holiday of Hanukkah in memory of these miracles and to publicize them. The Menorah is at the center of the holiday. On the first night, we light one candle, on the second night two candles, and so on until the eighth night of Hanukkah, when we light all eight candles.

The prayers "On the Miracles" and "Hallel" are said on the holiday to praise and thank God. (Some write it as G-d) We typically eat foods fried in oil, such as donuts (Sufganiyah) with jam or other fillings, fritters, and "sffing" - a Moroccan donut with a hole in the middle (similar to donuts in shape) deep fried with sugar on top. We play dreidel, and it is also customary to give out a small sum of money as a gift to grandchildren and the family's young kids.

In Israel, you can see a magical and shimmering spectacle coming from the light emanating from the menorah if you walk down the streets in the evening during the holidays and look through the windows of homes.

Walking around during the day might have you fight the desire for "just half a donut to taste", thanks to the addictive aromas emanating from bakeries and caressing the streets. You can find donuts in different sizes and flavors- cheap, expensive, and a very expensive crème brûlée flavor. Wow, what a delightful dish.

To be honest, my favorite part of the holiday is that every night candle lighting is an invitation to a party. We go to the neighbors one evening, visit family members, meet with all our friends the next, and so on. This is an ideal time to visit our loved ones, and the best part is that there is time for everyone.



I promised you interesting information at the end, and I always follow through on my promises. As previously noted, the holiday of Hanukkah commemorates the Maccabees, who saved the Jewish people. In their wake, a youth movement known as "Maccabi World Union" emerged in 1929, just a few years before the Holocaust began, and provided a platform for Jewish athletes who were unable to participate in sports teams and games – just because of them being Jewish (maybe say because of discrimination against Jews- antisemitism). The movement grew and spread around the world, eventually becoming the home of Jewish sports- they are in charge of getting our athletes to the Olympics! Today, Maccabi is one of the world's largest organizations, primarily through sports, which brings Diaspora Jews closer to Israel, educates and teaches an appreciation and love of Israel.

There are numerous sports teams (soccer, basketball, etc.) that bear the organization's name, as well as health funds and a youth movement with many branches in Israel and around the world, including the United States.

I came here, to you, on behalf of this organization and the Jewish Agency. In Sunday School, we started talking about influential and important people for Israel who grew from Maccabi.

Also, the children began to learn about the geographical overview of the State of Israel. We will all go through a series of activities and workshops related to Israel, Judaism,

It is important for me to keep getting to know you all, hear your stories, and, of course, have you at our next meetings. In addition, I'd like to thank the wonderful families who invited me over, traveled with me, and welcomed me into their homes!

You are more than welcome to follow everything that is going on, on my Instagram page (stav_shlichah) and to send me an email regarding anything that is on your mind.

I wish you all a joyous and warm holiday, filled with light, I wish you all a joyous and warm holiday, filled with light, and with hope that we will always be surrounded by the ones we love.

Stav

Shoshone Project & WRJC Tikkun Olam. This Holiday Season - Neighbors Helping Neighbors!

Can Do It, Together! Join Us ... Neighbors Helping Neighbors!

This holiday season, the WRJC's new **Tikkun Olam** committee is supporting the Shoshone Project. Based in the Wood River Valley and Shoshone, **the Shoshone Project** is a grassroots organization supporting families in neighboring counties that live in under-resourced communities. Many families work in the Wood River Valley, live in neighboring counties, and don't have access to the types of resources available in Blaine County. The Shoshone Project's mission is to create connections between these communities and support each other, creating stability and equity for all.

This will be the 3rd season that the Shoshone Project has been supporting our neighbors by providing warm clothing and food boxes.

Here's what you can do to help:

DONATE WARM CLOTHING!

Drop off lightly used (or new) warm clothing to our offices at the WRJC. (Look for the yellow box). This can include coats, hats and scarves, gloves and socks, and even blankets, for all ages and sizes.

All clothing donations will be accepted at the WRJC during normal business hours between now and December 11th. If you need items picked up at your home contact Tracy Kanowsky (tracy@kanowsky.com)

BAKE SOME COOKIES!

Shoshone Project will be providing 100 food boxes and their goal is to include homemade cookies in each box. Bake alone or host a baking party and invite your friends. They are asking for one dozen cookies in a ziplock bag. Decorate them if you'd like! If you have extra time and creativity please include a store bought or handmade holiday card

Drop them off at the WRJC offices December 10th through 13th.



VOLUNTEER!

Volunteer to pick up clothing from our congregants. We are also looking for a few people to drive our clothing donations to Shoshone on the morning of December 14th and help set up the "clothing store".

For more Info: Tamar Dolgen (tamar.dolgen@gmail.com)

Please note that the Shoshone Project is not a 501c3. They are a grassroots group of neighbors, supporting our neighbors to the south.

Knitzvah Mitzvah Project

We have been busy!!

More than 20 women in the Wood River Valley have been applying their time and talents to knitting a goal of 90 items (hats, scarves and lap robes) for the 22 residential families that are clients of the Advocates.

These gatherings mostly generously hosted by Carlyn Ring inspire everyone to continue working toward our goal. This is a community outreach project which includes WRJC members and friends, Wood River Community Orchestra members and Hailey friends and neighbors and mahjong players too.

Everyone is working together to help make a difference. See a photo of a few of our dedicated knitters at a September gathering.

Do you want to join the fun? ? Email Coni at conifoster@hotmail.com
PS: We are also in need of acrylic yarn the Knitzvah Mitzvah Project.

Coni Foster, Knitzvah Mitzvah Project Chair



Valentine's **LADIES LUNCH**

Tuesday, Feb. 14, 2023 at 12 noon

FIRST EVENT IN OUR NEW HOME!

Guest Speaker: Dr. Cynthia Green



PRICE: \$40 MEMBERS . \$45 NON MEMBERS

Committee chair: Sammie Mailman

PLEASE REPLY claudie@wrjc.org or send check to WRJC PO Box 837, Ketchum, ID 83340

STOP NAME DROPPING!

Join Dr. Cynthia Green
at our Valentine's Ladies Lunch to learn
5 Simple Strategies to Use to
Rev Up Your Recall for Names

Frustrated by forgetting the people you meet?
You aren't alone! Forgetting names is the #1 complaint
of adults worldwide.

Join Dr. Cynthia Green of Total Brain Health and learn
how you can boost your memory for names.

We'll have fun learning ...

- Why names are so very tricky to remember
- The unexpected ways your lifestyle is making names harder to learn
- Five easy yet highly effective strategies guaranteed to end your name-dropping ways

About Dr. Cynthia Green

Leading brain health expert
Dr. Cynthia Green is passionate
about making the brain health
science accessible, sustainable,
and fun for all. A clinical
psychologist and assistant clinical
professor of psychiatry at the
Mt. Sinai School of Medicine, Dr. Green is the president
of Total Brain Health, a leading provider of brain well-
ness training. She has authored 6 books on the topic,
including *Your Best Brain Ever*, named a "2013 Top
Guide to Life after 50" by the Wall Street Journal, Dr.
Green is a regular media guest whose work has been
featured on *Good Morning America*, *20/20*, *CNBC*,
Fox, *The Martha Stewart Show*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *The New
York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *Good Housekeep-
ing*. Originally from North Carolina, Dr. Green lives
with her family in Northern New Jersey and is proud to
be the daughter of Susan and Ronald Green.

Learn more at totalbrainhealth.com



COOKING CLASS

ISRAELI FOOD

Join our Shlichah Stav and learn to
prepare some Israeli dishes! We will
be hosting monthly cooking classes
with Stav in the homes of our
members.

First class is Wed. Dec. 7 from
2:30-4:30pm.

Moroccan salads

For location, details and registration
please [RSVP to Leslie Kaplan](mailto:lesliedk@comcast.net)

Zoom option for those who are out of
town.

Number of participants is limited!



RSVP to
lesliedk@comcast.net

ISRAELI FOOD SERIES

Adult Education

Israeli-Election

Stav along with the help of the Adult Education com-
mittee will lead a discussion on **Jan. 2**, location TBD,
on "**How Did Israel Arrive at its 5th Election in
3.5 years?**"

Women in the Israel Military

Stay tuned for date.
Presentation by Stav.



National Library of Israel

Stefan Litt, Head of Humanities Collections at Na-
tional Library of Israel and Adina Kanefield, US
President of NLI, hopefully will join us in SV in mid
March for a lecture on Kafka's papers—how they
arrived at the NLI, and about Kafka and his rela-
tionship to Israel and Judaism.

More info: Amy Kroll , Adult Committee Chair
Ankroll51@gmail.com

Is Hanukkah Just Jewish Christmas? The Great Latke Debate

c.2022 Marlene Samuels

"Isn't Hanukkah just the Jewish version of Christmas?" I heard some kid in my high-school class ask. I'd grown up in an inner-city, almost entirely, Jewish neighborhood in Montreal, then our family immigrated to an upper-income Chicago suburb where almost no Jews lived.

Many of us might be surprised by such a question but it's actually surprising just how many Americans really do believe this. Sure, both holidays are celebrated during the winter but their significance and similarities do stop there.

Christmas celebrates the birth of Christ. Hanukkah is the remembrance of an historical event of human action: when Jews reclaimed their temple after Syrians forced them to worship Syrian gods. Hanukkah is our celebration to commemorate this reclaiming of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. Moreover, Hanukkah originated no fewer than 200 years prior to the birth of Christ and the Christmas holiday.

Our holiday, also referred to as the "festival of lights," is a relatively minor Jewish holiday when compared with Jewish holidays that have a much greater religious significance. According to legend, Jews rose up against their Greek-Syrian oppressors in the Maccabean Revolt. Jews reconsecrated their temple after they'd reclaimed it and lit a menorah in the temple. After they did so, it became clear they had enough "sacred" oil to keep the "lamp of eternal life" burning for one day only. Yet, despite their limited oil, the lamp continued to burn for eight days. That was regarded as the miracle of the menorah.

In all fairness, and given my long-standing cynicism concerning miracles in general, I can't help but wonder whether perhaps some poor, over-worked lowly maintenance worker may have mis-measured the sacred lamp oil in that synagogue. Besides that possibility, the miracle leads me to question how those folks measured their oil in the first place for instance, were they on the metric system?

In our modern era of miracle-questioning, oftentimes traditions serve a valuable cultural role. Traditionally, we light the menorah for eight days. Most of us have replaced oil with small Hanukkah candles in fun colors and interesting shapes. We reserve our oil for frying the latkes (a.k.a., potato pancakes). These are prepared to help us remember and celebrate that eight-day oil miracle but we all know that latkes in themselves are a celebration, especially when done correctly. After all, what would Hanukkah be without latkes?

What follows is the true story of my family's latke debate plus my mother's recipe, one I demonstrated in a Zoom-cooking class during one of Covid's lockdown Hanukkahs.

Each year, exactly two weeks before Hanukkah and beginning the year our family immigrated to the U.S.A., Aunt Esther and Mom began their debates. We had moved to a suburb only a fifteen-minute drive from Esther, my mother's sister. The debate? Which one of them would host our annual latke holiday party. It wasn't about whose house was better — that is, more fun for the kids, more comfortable, a better television setup or easier to get to. Hardly! Instead, every Hanukkah debate which always devolved into an argument focused upon whose latkes were better; crispier, less greasy, thinner, even more symmetrical. The entire family knew whose latkes were tops, hands down. But at the risk of hurting our overly-sensitive aunt's feelings, we all held our tongues.



Given Esther's complete kitchen ineptitude, her cooking was so awful it defied description. No surprise, then, that her latkes were no exception. None of the family could fathom from where she'd gotten her god-awful recipes. In short order, we all understood our house was the preferred venue for the annual Hanukkah latke feast.

In reality, our house was nowhere as enticing or entertaining as was Aunt Esther's and Uncle Sigmund's. Neither Jake, my brother, nor I cared. We weren't accustomed to the same entertainment extravagancies as were my cousins. Unlike their parents, ours were anything but consumers of games, toys or electronics, things they considered to be total time-wasters. Instead, they endorsed whatever struck them as having the potential to enhance our minds, improve our academic performance and help us become successful adults. Food was the only exception that ranked just as highly.

Exactly one Sunday before Hanukkah, our entire family gathered at Aunt and Uncle's home for dinner. After the meal, Esther and Mom engaged, for the final time, in their "who's hosting Hanukkah" debate. Just as they began to make what sounded like head-way, busy-body Uncle Sigmund felt obliged to butt in.

"Why don't you two girls take turns? Isn't that what sisters do?" He asked, innocently. Instantly, the two women fell silent and their silence grew uncomfortably long.

Continued.....

"And why don't you just mind your own business, huh? Go watch that dumb ballgame of yours!" Aunt shouted at him.

"Besides that, we're not girls just in case you didn't notice!" Mom snapped.

"My brother, our cousins and I were in the living room, hands over our mouths stifling our hysteria over-hearing their exchanges. Next, we witnessed Sigmund slink out of the kitchen toward the den. He was muttering to himself in German, words we sensed were anything but polite. After several more moments of tension-filled quiet, the sisters resumed their latke-hosting argument. At last, we heard what resembled a hard resolution on my mother's part.

"Don't forget who's older and who was old enough to take care of you when we were in the camps! And you know something? I'm still older!" She shouted at Aunt Esther. "And once and for all, this *mishgas* with you is settled, yes?"

"Okay, okay, enough already and yes, I know you took care of me then! You never let me forget this, have you noticed? But I'm making the applesauce and we're using my Menorah!"

In unison, all of us in the living-room breathed an extraordinarily loud sigh of relief.

marlenesamuels@gmail.com

Sara Bernstein's Latke Recipe

Ingredients:

- 8 Russet potatoes.
- 2 white or yellow onions (not sweet)
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 Tbsp potato flour or 1 dry potato starch (if needed to thicken batter)
- Salt & white pepper to taste
- 1. For frying: grape seed, canola or avocado oil
- 2. Equipment: large shallow non-stick skillet, heavy griddle or electric skillet; paper towels oven-proof platter or cookie sheet

For batter:

- 1. Peel and cube potatoes; cut onion into quarters
- 2. Soak potatoes and onion for 1/2 hour in cold water with 1 tsp salt added
- 3. Scoop vegetables out of water onto a cloth towel leaving excess starch in bowl
- 4. Puree in a food processor (*for coarser latkes use shredding blade)
- 5. Transfer processed potatoes and onions to a large mixing bowl
- 6. Meantime, in a small bowl beat eggs; add to the batter
- 7. For batter that's too runny, strain through a fine sieve or add potato flour or starch
- 8. Mix until smooth

Latke cooking instructions:

Heat oven to 200, arrange a rack in the middle and place a paper-towel lined baking sheet or oven-proof platter on the rack

- 1. Preheat a large skillet or griddle on low for 10 minutes; add oil to approximately 1/2" depth;

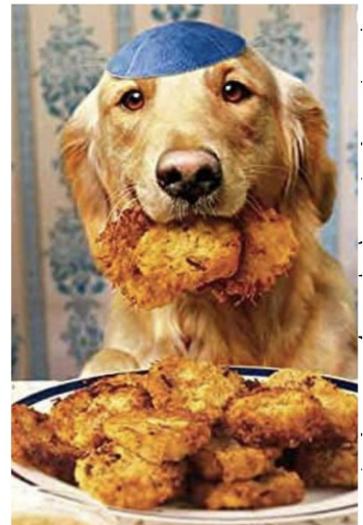
increase heat to medium (oil should be hot but not smoking)
*Test the oil for readiness by lowering a small amount of batter into the pan; it will sizzle when hot enough.

2. Lower spoonfuls of batter slowly (approx. 1/3 cup at a time) into the oil, smooth out gently with the back of a spoon or spatula.

3. When the edges begin to brown and look crisp, gently turn latkes over. Note: this is best accomplished using 2 spatulas.

4. Drain latkes on paper towels; transfer batches onto a heated platter in the oven after they're drained to keep them warm.

Serve with plenty of applesauce or sour cream or preferably, both.



Author's notes:

- Any of the oils listed have a high smoking point, best for frying.
- If you use a stove-top griddle, one that fits across 2 burners is great.
- Ratio: 1 onion and 1 egg for every 4 potatoes.
- Potato flour or potato starch are best if your batter needs thickening.
- Pre-soaking cubed potatoes draws out excess starch, keeping your culinary creations from becoming gummy

King Charles III and the Jews

6 Facts about Britain's new king.



With the passing of Britain's beloved Queen Elizabeth II at age 96, the longest serving monarch in the United Kingdom's history, her eldest son Prince Charles has become Britain's newest monarch. Here are six facts about King Charles III, Jews, and Israel.

Circumcised by a Rabbi

King Charles III has something in common with thousands of British Jews he was circumcised by Rabbi Jacob Snowman (1871-1959), a brilliant physician and one of London's leading *mohelim* (Jewish ritual circumcisers).

It's widely believed that the tradition dates back to the early 1700s, when Britain's King George I – who was born in Germany – imported the custom of German noblemen to have *mohelim* circumcise their sons, though some have disputed this account, claiming that this royal practice is far newer. It's unclear why this became a tradition, but some speculate that their extensive experience reassured anxious parents that their sons would be safe during the procedure. Charles' mother Queen Elizabeth wanted only the best for Charles, so she turned to Rabbi Snowman, who was well known in London's Jewish community.

Unlike Queen Elizabeth II, who never visited Israel in all her long years on the throne, her son Charles has made trips to the Jewish state. One emotional visit occurred in 2016, when he travelled to Jerusalem for the funeral of former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres. While there, Charles visited the grave of his grandmother, Princess Alice of Greece, who saved Jews during the Holocaust and was named Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem. She is buried in Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.

Born in 1885, Princess Alice was the great granddaughter of Britain's Queen Victoria. She married Prince Andrew of Greece and moved to Athens with her new husband. She was intensely unhappy. A religious Christian, Alice watched as her husband drifted into a life of dissolution. With the rise of Nazism in the 1930s, her three daughters all became ardent Fascists and married Nazi officials. Only her son Philip, King Charles father, defied Nazism, moving to England and fighting with distinction in the British air force during World War II.

Princess Alice remained at home in Athens alone; her husband had long since left her and was completely devoted to a life of drinking and gambling. During the Holocaust, Princess Alice invited a Jewish family she was friends with, the Cohens, to move into her apartment with her. Her building was next to the Gestapo's Athens headquarters, and Princess Alice was even brought in for questioning at one point, but she refused to divulge the fact that she was sheltering Jews.

After the Holocaust, she was named Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem. Alice founded a religious order and died in 1969. Her wish was to be buried in Israel. At first her family ignored her request, but in 1988 the Royal Family arranged for her remains to be reinterred in Jerusalem. On his 2016 visit to her grave, Charles brought purple flowers that had been grown in Scotland – her favorite – and placed them on her grave.

King Charles visited Israel again in 2020, when he attended the World Holocaust Forum in Jerusalem, commemorating the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. There, Charles lingered, speaking with Jewish Holocaust survivors at length, and hearing their stories. "He was very interested in how it was in Auschwitz and how we managed to survive," explained survivor Marta Weiss, who met the newest monarch during his visit. "He was very sympathetic. He came across as genuinely interested, not just doing it for the sake of it."

He Owns His Own Personalized Kippah

King Charles III owns his own personalized kippah: a blue velvet yarmalke adorned with the official royal crest of the Prince of Wales, his previous title, embroidered in gold and white thread.

One of the first sightings of the royal kippah was at the installation of Britain's Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mervis in 2013. Charles was the first member of the royal family to attend an installation of a chief rabbi.



Friends with Leading Orthodox Rabbi

King Charles and Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, the former Chief Rabbi of Britain, of blessed memory, forged a close bond, brought together by their public roles as community leaders in Britain and by their shared commitment to making the world a better place. When Rabbi Sacks died in 2020, Charles delivered an emotional eulogy for his friend and teacher.



Rabbi Jonathan Sacks “and I were exact contemporaries, born in the year of the foundation of the State of Israel, and, over many years, I had come to value his counsel immensely. He was a trusted guide, and inspired teacher and a true and steadfast friend. I shall miss him more than words can say.... He taught us how to listen to others, and how to learn from them without compromising the convictions of either party; he taught us to value participation in the common life of the nation; and through it all, he taught us the need to respect the integrity and harmony of God’s Creation.”

Adding Portraits of Holocaust Survivors to the Royal Collection

Last year, King Charles commissioned seven major new paintings to add to the official Royal Collection of art, displayed in Buckingham Palace: seven paintings of Holocaust survivors. The project was part of the prince’s long-standing aim of educating future generations and ensuring that the horrors of the Holocaust are never forgotten.

King Charles himself wrote an introduction to the exhibit’s catalog: “Behind every portrait is a unique story, of a life lived, of love, of loss. However, these portraits represent something far greater than seven remarkable individuals. They stand as a living memorial to the six million innocent men, women, and children whose stories will nev-

er be told, whose portraits will never be painted. They stand as a powerful testament to the quite extraordinary resilience and courage of those who survived and who, despite their advancing years, have continued to tell the world of the unimaginable atrocities they witnessed. They stand as a permanent reminder for our generation – and indeed, to future generations – of the depths of depravity and evil humankind can fall to when reason, compassion and truth are abandoned.”

Seven Portraits: Surviving the Holocaust went on display in Buckingham Place in January 2022.

Touched by Jewish Prayers for the Royal Family

Each week, Jews across Britain and the Commonwealth pray for the welfare of the monarch and their near relations in synagogue on Shabbat. For decades, that meant praying for the welfare of Queen Elizabeth II – and her son, “Charles, Prince of Wales, and all the royal family....”

In 2019, at a royal Hanukkah party at Buckingham Palace, King Charles praised Britain’s Jewish community and formally thanked them for their prayers. “I say this from a particular and personal perspective, because I Have grown up being deeply touched by the fact that British synagogues have, for centuries, remembered my family in your weekly prayers. And as you remember my family, so we too remember and celebrate you.”

King Charles III is consoling his nation from the depths of his very own grief. It is a testament to his commitment to a life of service and giving to others.

After Queen Elizabeth II’s death, Britain’s Chief Rabbi, Ephraim Mirvis, noted that “Throughout her extraordinary reign, she conducted herself with grace, dignity and humility and was a global role model for distinguished leadership and selfless devotion to society... Every week in synagogue we have prayed for her welfare, well-being and wisdom, and she never let us down.”

We wish those very same qualities for her son, Britain’s new king, and extend our deepest sympathies and our wishes for a long a successful reign.

by Dr. Yvette Alt Miller

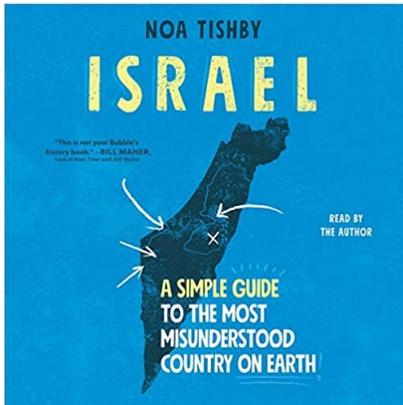


will take place on Thursday, December 22 at 3:00PM
at Susan Green's home.

Contact Amy Kroll for more information: amykroll51@gmail.com

Book review by Harriet Parker Bass

Israel: A Simple Guide to The Most Misunderstood Country on Earth by Noa Tishby



On the cover of Noa Tishby's book is a quote by Bill Maher: "This is not your Bubbie's history book". He is certainly correct on so many levels! Noa is an actress and producer in Los Angeles who was born and raised in Tel Aviv. She served in the IDF and later landed the

starring role in Israel's highest rated television drama. As she explains in the first chapter of her book, when she moved to LA she found that she was continually correcting peoples' misconceptions about Israel. She realized how little people actually knew about Israel when an Oscar award winning actress (not named) asked Noa if her parents were upset that she was modern and went "without all the headgear". Her hand motions led Noa to believe that this actress was talking about a hijab. After repeated incidents in this same vein, she realized that so many people didn't even know basic facts about Israel and she was going to set them straight. However she herself had a lot to learn. Even though her grandparents were intimately involved in the founding of Israel, she had a lot of homework to do. Noa quickly became an unofficial ambassador for her homeland. She began working with NGOs and pro-Israel organizations and in fact even influenced how the IDF handles its social media.

Noa writes in a very informal and conversational style. Her sentences are interspersed with a surfeit of coarse language and four letter words. She is snarky but she is hilariously funny. Although she has a breezy approach to her subject, she is deadly serious about her content. It is for sure history "lite" but a great primer and an amusing romp around history through the eyes of a liberal, secular 40-something Sabra. There is not a lot of nuance but this book is extremely accessible. It can clearly be appreciated by non-Jews, yet holds a lot of information and humor for Jews.

The author moves from Herod the Great to Lawrence of Arabia in about 15 pages! She reminds us of Lawrence's

exploits in the Middle East and of his international fame as a superstar...based simply on being himself. As she states, he was "The first Kardashian". This is illustrative of how she easily connects with today's youth, After lightly touching on Herzl's Zionism, the birth of the State of Israel, the wars with Israel's neighbors and the settlements, the author really zeros in on the BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) movement. In a reasoned argument, she states what BDS purports to be and then she shows (and documents) what BDS really is and its effects on the ground for both Palestinians and Israelis. She addresses the chilling effects the BDS movement has on college campuses across the country. So of course the ubiquitous question arises: Is this anti-Israel or anti-Semitism?

Noa as well does not shy away from the everyone's hot button issue, the settlements. This is a debate in Israel that is both passionate and ongoing. After explaining the liberal bent of her family she proceeds to write about the reasons for the settlements; the why, how and who behind them "even as it makes my family uncomfortable". There is an honest attempt to be unbiased which is unfortunately next to impossible when it comes to this subject. Throughout the book, as with the settlement issue, the author tackles numerous misconceptions with an abundance of facts. There is at least a little something for everyone to learn.

The concluding chapter of the book is entitled "What's with the Obsession World?" Isn't this the question we have all been asking for years? Is Israel really the 'biggest, baddest wolf on the block' or is the obsession simply because Israel is a Jewish state?

There is something in this book to anger everyone...right and left. Noa is an equal opportunity political offender. Yet there is also something for everyone to find funny, amusing and educational.

Please support your local independent bookstores.



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Contact Claudie at 208-726-1183
Or claudie@wrjc.org

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