

שבאת חנם

A Resource Guide for Rabbis & Others on Antisemitism

on the first anniversary of the attack
at Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh

OCTOBER 27, 2019

AJC Global Jewish
Advocacy

#ShowUpForShabbat

שנאת חנם

A Resource Guide for Rabbis & Others on Antisemitism

on the first anniversary of the attack
at Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh

OCTOBER 27, 2019

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Worship Resources	6
Traditional Jewish Sources	13
Quotable Quotes	20
Sample Sermons & Divrei Torah	25
Perspectives	37
What You Can Do	40
APPENDICES	
Defining Antisemitism	44
Facts & Figures on Antisemitism in the U.S.	46
Additional Resources	48

Introduction

By David Harris, AJC CEO

“A year has passed since the terrible event at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh.”

We had seen deadly attacks happen in Europe, Latin America, the Middle East. But was it conceivable to us that a horror of that magnitude could happen here in the United States? No.

Our American “innocence” was irrevocably shattered that Shabbat morning.

We face a major threat of antisemitism in America today. We have seen the loss of lives in Pittsburgh and Poway. Violence against Jews continues on the streets of Brooklyn and elsewhere. Vile antisemitic conspiracy theories proliferate across social media and seep into our political discourse. Some campuses have become inhospitable for Jews.

The leadership of the Jewish community is committed to ensuring the safety and security of our congregations and the children of our congregations, come what may. To help do so, we have an obligation to call out antisemitism as it is and wherever we find it. From our perspective at AJC, we have long recognized that antisemitism comes from the far-right, the far-left, and extremists who mask their violence with the language of Islam. We stand ready to condemn instances of antisemitic activity and violence from whatever source it springs.

But just as we see that antisemitism can come from many places, we also see all around us allies ready to join us in fighting it. Many of us are already working to build coalitions and communities of conscience, to join forces with other houses of worship, and clergy across all faiths. We must continue to do so, of course, not only to oppose antisemitism and all

forms of bigotry, but in order to affirm positively what we all stand for as Americans—democracy and pluralism: We are all Americans; we all want to practice mutual respect and advance mutual understanding; and we all want to be supported and protected in this process.

The spirit of solidarity that AJC was trying to engender immediately after the Tree of Life shooting with [#ShowUpforShabbat](#) needs to become a daily spirit. We must not limit our actions to the anniversary of tragic events, but ought to continually seek out opportunities and occasions to stand together and boldly proclaim the shared values we cherish, including decency, civility, respect, and unity.

At this hour of rising antisemitism and hatred in America and elsewhere, we believe that every one of us has a special responsibility to do this work. We deeply appreciate all that has been done in this regard—in synagogues, in communities, and in interfaith engagements. AJC looks forward to partnering with you as we all intensify these efforts in the New Year.

It is our sincere hope that the sources collected in this resource guide may assist you in this task.

L'Shalom.

David Harris is the CEO of American Jewish Committee (AJC).

Worship Resources

Tree of Life Memorial

Tree of Life,
Revive our souls,
Enrich our days,
Entreating Your blessings.
Oh, God of Peace,
Fill our hearts with comfort,
Letting Your Torah shine,
In the fullness of our love.
Faith in You, our God,
Eternal Source of blessings.

Praying for healing
In the depths of despair,
Thanking God for the survivors,
Thanking God for the first responders,
Sorrow crushing our hearts,
Bereaved beyond belief,
United in our love,
Returning to You in faith,
God of Israel,
Healer of generations.

Tree of Life,
Redeemer of Israel,
Enliven this moment with healing,
Enliven this moment with hope.
Oh, Rock of Israel,
Forget not the Jews of Pittsburgh.
Let Your love flow
In the days ahead
For justice and peace
Everlasting.

עץ חיים, פִּיטְסְבֹּוּרְג

עץ חיים
צוֹיְתֵנוּ לְבַחַר בְּחַיִּים
חֲדָשׁ אֶת יָמֵינוּ
יַחַד לְבַבְנוּ וְהָאֵר עֵינֵינוּ בְּתוֹ רְתֶךָ
יֵשׁא פָּנָיו אֵלֵינוּ בְּחֵן וּבְשָׁלוֹם
מְקוֹר הַחַיִּים וְהַבְּרָכוֹת.

פְּתַחְנוּ שְׁפֹתֵינוּ בְּתַפִּלָּה
י-ה, מִמַּעַמְקִים קָרָאנוּ אֵלֶיךָ
טוֹב לְהוֹדוֹת עִם הַנִּצּוּלִים וְעִבּוֹר הַמִּצִּילִים
סוֹמֵךְ ה' לְכָל הַנִּפְלִים וְזוֹקֵף לְכָל הַכּוֹפִּים
בִּיגוֹן וּבִכְאָב הִתְאַחַדְנוּ
וְשָׁבְנוּ עִדֶיךָ בְּאַמוּנָה מִתּוֹךְ אֲהֲבָתְנוּ אֶחָד לַשֵּׁנִי
רָפְאוּנוּ וְנִרְפָּא
גָּמַל עָלֵינוּ כָּל טוֹב סֵלָה.

עץ חיים
צוֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגוֹאֲלוֹ
חוֹסֵה נָא וְחַנּוּנוֹ
יִשְׁכְּנוּ בְּתוֹכְנוּ צִדְקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט
י-ה, שְׁמֹר צִאתְנוּ וּבּוֹאֵנוּ בְּפִיטְסְבֹּוּרְג וּבִרְחֻבֵי תֵּבֵל
מִעֲתָה וְעַד עוֹלָם.

"Prayer for the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh", Alden Solovy. Hebrew Interpretation of Alden Solovy's
"Tree of Life, Pittsburgh" acrostic © 2019 Alden Solovy, Rav Aytan Kaden and Elyssa Moss-Rabinowitz

The 11 Victims of the Tree of Life Massacre

Joyce Fienberg, 75

Joyce Fienberg, 75, grew up in Toronto and received her bachelor's degree in social psychology at the University of Toronto. She was married to the late Dr. Stephen Fienberg and the two moved to Pittsburgh in 1980. She lived just around the corner from the Tree of Life Synagogue and is remembered for her kindness and readiness to open her home to visitors after services. For over 25 years, she researched methods of teaching and learning in classrooms at the University of Pittsburgh's Learning Research and Development Center. In her work, she was known for her thoroughness and attention to detail. She was a highly trusted member of the community and took great pride in being Jewish and in developing her Jewish identity. Fienberg made the lives of those around her exponentially better through her overwhelming warmth and kindness. She leaves behind two sons, Howard and Anthony, and many loving grandchildren.

📄 <https://pittnews.com/article/138028/news/tree-of-life-victim-joyce-fienberg-remembered-as-deeply-caring/>

Richard Gottfried, 65

Richard Gottfried, 65, loved to golf, run, and read. Together with his wife Margaret, known to all as Peg, he ran two dental offices, where he was known affectionately by his patients as Dr. Rich. He graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in 1980, where he also received his dental certification. He had a passion for helping others and donated his time and dentistry skills to those in need, volunteering at free clinics and frequently helping immigrants and refugees with little or no means. He understood that need necessitates action and was always willing to put in extra hours to solve a problem or help a patient. Following his father's death, Gottfried started regularly attending services at New Light Congregation, later becoming its president. He was an avid wine enthusiast and runner who loved to participate in Pittsburgh's 10K events, completing 28 races before his untimely death.

📄 <https://pittsburgh.cbslocal.com/2018/10/29/pittsburgh-synagogue-shooting-victim-richard-gottfried/>

Rose Mallinger, 97

Rose Mallinger, 97, attended Tree of Life for more than 60 years, most often accompanied by her sons and grandsons. She was the oldest congregant killed on October 27, 2018. She was a true matriarch of the Synagogue and was always involved with planning services and events. The synagogue was more than just a house of worship, but also a place for her to be social and active with friends and family. Her heart and dedication stretched beyond the Synagogue walls; her sharp wit and wonderful sense of humor endeared her to everyone in the community. She was a role model for us all and we hope to maintain her example of strength, intelligence, and incredible resolve against adversity.

📄 <https://www.wesa.fm/post/tree-life-was-center-97-year-old-rose-mallinger-s-very-active-life#stream/0>

Jerry Rabinowitz, 66

Jerry Rabinowitz, 66, was a beloved family doctor in Pittsburgh, heralded for his caring demeanor, infectious joy, and bright, bouncing bow ties. He previously served as the president of Dor Hadash, the Jewish Reconstructionist congregation housed in the basement of the Tree of Life Synagogue. When the shooting started, his first priority was to reach those who had been injured and provide immediate care. Rabinowitz earned his bachelor's and medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania in the 1970s and moved to Pittsburgh around 1980. He was especially known for his compassionate care of those diagnosed with HIV, even before there was an effective treatment, and during a time where many in the country feared and misunderstood the virus. He had a tremendous belly laugh, firm moral compass, and was a champion to friends, family, and patients.

📄 <https://www.cnn.com/2018/10/30/us/pittsburgh-dr-jerry-rabinowitz-funeral/index.html>

Cecil Rosenthal, 59

Cecil Rosenthal, 59, was a regular attendee at the Tree of Life Synagogue. Outgoing and caring, he never shied away from asking after sick relatives. He made daily visits to the Squirrel Hill Flower Shop, showering employees with compliments and grins. Even though he suffered from Fragile X syndrome, a genetic disorder, he always stayed happy and involved in the community. He had been dubbed the “unofficial mayor of Squirrel Hill.” Cecil and his brother David, another victim of the shooting, lived together and were practically inseparable. They always greeted members of the congregation at the door, ready with warming smiles and firm embraces to put others at ease.

David Rosenthal, 54

David Rosenthal, 54, was a regular attendee at the Tree of Life Synagogue. He was a quiet man and very emphatic about keeping things clean. David loved anything related to the police, and especially enjoyed toying with his scanner radio. He also worked at a number of cleaning jobs and was incredibly fastidious in his personal life. Cecil and David were known for their zest and embrace for life, their huge hearts, and beautiful message of acceptance. The brothers were role models for everyone entering through the Synagogue doors.

📄 <https://www.jta.org/2018/10/30/united-states/pittsburgh-remembers-shooting-victims-david-cecil-rosentha-thoughtful-kind>

Bernice Simon, 84

Bernice Simon, 84, was a regular member at the Tree of Life Synagogue, along with her husband, Sylvan, also a victim of the shooting. The two were married 62 years earlier, in the same chapel at Tree of Life where they later lost their lives. Bernice worked as a nurse after attending Montefiore Hospital School of Nursing. Known to her grandchildren as Bobie, she is remembered for singing songs like “A Bushel and a Peck” and “You Are My Sunshine,” as well as for her delicious cranberry orange bread. She would make regular trips to Costco with her daughter, Michelle, and would always be sure to try each and every food sample they had on offer. She and her husband were known to do everything together and are examples of how to live vibrantly through devotion and immense kindness.

Sylvan Simon, 86

Sylvan Simon, 86, was married to Bernice in the Tree of Life Synagogue in 1956. Sylvan was a member of the L'Chaim club, enjoying a shot of Jim Beam after Shabbat services, as he only "drank American." Sylvan was a retired accountant and served in the United States Military. He maintained a deep love for the muscle cars of old, though his wife might reprimand him for driving too fast. He and Bernice loved going to the Pittsburgh Symphony together and enjoyed many inside jokes.

📄 <https://www.post-gazette.com/local/city/2018/10/28/Bernice-and-Sylvan-Simon-a-married-couple-from-Wilksburg-synagogue-shooting-victims-squirrel-hill/stories/201810280231>

Daniel Stein, 71

Daniel Stein, 71, grew up in Homestead, Pennsylvania, where he learned to help run the family business: the Stein Hotel. Always a friendly and warm presence, he previously worked as a plumbing salesman, substitute teacher and as a funeral home driver. More recently, Stein became a grandfather to seven-month-old, Henri. He could light up a room with his infectious personality and dry sense of humor. As an active and loved member of the community, he attended services each Saturday - always ready with a smile and one of his famous wisecracks. Stein served as the president of the New Light Congregation, which shared space with the Tree of Life Synagogue. He also served as a member of its board of directors, and the president of the men's club. As a fundraiser for the community, he was known for his raffles and annual sale of entertainment books. Stein loved to volunteer his time anyway he could and was always ready to lend a helping hand to those in need, willing to do anything for anyone.

📄 <https://www.post-gazette.com/local/city/2018/10/28/Daniel-Stein-Tree-of-Life-Squirrel-Hill/stories/201810280222>

Melvin Wax, 88

Melvin Wax, 88, was a passionate member of the Tree of Life Synagogue who attended services 3-4 times a week and never let anything get in his way. He was a devoted grandfather to his grandson, Matthew, and a baseball fanatic, rooting loud and proud for his Pittsburgh Pirates. He loved to make people laugh and would always draw a large audience to deliver a punchline. Every week he looked forward to spending time with his daughter, Jodi. Wax served in the US Army after World War II, stationed in Germany, and through the Korean War. After his military service, he worked as an accountant, putting his incredibly sharp memory and way with numbers to good use. Wax was a generous man, built from grit and adversity, and was always the first to step up and serve.

📄 <https://www.jta.org/2018/10/31/united-states/pittsburgh-shooting-victim-melvin-wax-remembered-devoted-grandfather-selfless-community-member>

Irving Younger, 69

Irving Younger, 69, was most often the first face greeting congregants outside of Tree of Life. He was an incredible spiritual and physical presence, known for his selfless generosity and strong desire to lift others up. The son of two Holocaust survivors, Younger ran a real estate business for many years, sharing his incredible success with Sherry, his late wife of 30 years. He was always quick to greet and befriend any stranger, but was especially devoted to his children, Jordanna and Jared, and doted lovingly on his grandson, Jaden Buss.

📄 <https://archive.triblive.com/local/pittsburgh-allegheeny/irving-younger-killed-at-tree-of-life-up-in-heaven-greeting-people-at-the-gates/>

אל מלא רחמים

God full of mercy, who dwells on high, establish proper rest upon the wings of the Divine Presence, on the levels of the holy and pure ones who shine like the splendor of the firmament, for the souls of the Kedoshim of Pittsburgh,

Joyce Fienberg
Richard Gottfried
Rose Mallinger
Jerry Rabinowitz
Cecil Rosenthal
David Rosenthal
Bernice Simon
Sylvan Simon
Dan Stein
Mel Wax
Irv Younger

murdered al Kiddush Hashem, because we pray for the elevation of their souls. And remember for us their sacrifice and let their merit stand for us and for all of Israel. Let the earth not cover their blood and let there not be a place sufficient for their cries. Master of mercy, cover them in the cover of Your wings forever and bind their souls with the binding of life. God is their inheritance. May their rest be in Gan Eden and let them rest in peace upon their places of repose, and let them stand for their fate in the end of days. And let us say: Amen.

"El Malei," Rabbi Daniel Yolkut

Renew Our Days as of Old – A #ShowUpForShabbat Prayer

Shabbat Bereishit - Genesis
27 Tishrei - October 25-26, 2019
By Rabbi Noam E. Marans

From the depths we cry out to You¹, dear God,
for You are with us in our straits.²

*Hear the blood of our brothers and sisters as
they shout out to us, to You, from the ground.³*

A year has passed, but the pain subsists. We
are not the same.

*Dear Pittsburgh, we are with you in your
sorrow. We are responsible one for the other.⁴*

Comfort the mourners who grieve the loss of
their loved ones, their friends, those who unite
to establish synagogues for prayer and those
who enter them to pray.⁵

*Joyce Fienberg, Richard Gottfried, Rose
Mallinger, Jerry Rabinowitz, Cecil Rosenthal,
David Rosenthal. May our memory of them be
for a blessing.*

Bernice Simon, Sylvan Simon, Daniel Stein,
Melvin Wax, Irving Younger. May our memory
of them be for a blessing.

*God, Creator, brighten us with the light of the
First Day and dispel this darkness.⁶*

Renew within us our Divine image of the
Sixth Day, which fashioned and governs our
humanity.⁷

*Teach us to banish evil and know good, our
distinction from the beasts, acquired in the
Garden of Eden.⁸*

Care for the wounded of body and spirit.
Enable them, us, to heal and regenerate as
Adam and Eve did in the face of unbearable
loss.⁹

*Restore the American Jewish innocence lost,
that America could be different, that America
will be different. Mend our fractured nation.*

Bless those who did not stand idly by while
their neighbor's blood was shed, who ran
toward and not away.¹⁰

*Bless those who showed up for Shabbat, now
and then. Their presence allows the good of the
many to prevail over the evil of the few.*

Yea, though we walked through the valley of
the shadow of death, we will fear no evil, for
Thou art with us.¹¹

Renew our days as of old.¹²

*Rabbi Noam E. Marans is the American Jewish Committee's director of
interreligious and intergroup relations.*

1. Psalms 130:1

2. Psalms 91:15

3. Genesis 4:10

4. Shevuot 39b

5. Shabbat prayer book

6. Genesis 1:2-4

7. Genesis 1:27

8. Genesis 2-3

9. Genesis 4:24

10. Leviticus 19:16

11. Psalms 23:4

12. Lamentations 5:21

#ShowUpForShabbat Prayer

By Rabbi Noam Marans
2018

Compassionate God, God who comforts the mourning and visits the sick, God of justice and of mercy, Protector of Abraham and Sarah, and Proclaimer of Liberty, grant us strength at this awful hour.

As we face the venomous hate that extinguishes lives, we are filled with anger, with shock, and with despair.

We mourn the murder of precious human beings, our brothers and sisters who were gathered for prayer, for tradition, and for community.

We mourn with those who loved the victims, and we offer our love, as You love Your people Israel and all the world. We pray for the wounded of body and soul. O God, please grant them healing, physical and spiritual.

We grieve for the loss of American Jewish innocence, as the most basic of American values, our freedom of religion, has been threatened. Once more, a sanctuary has been violated, and people in prayer have been attacked.

Jews were murdered, but all America has been assaulted.

We will never forget the solidarity of our fellow human beings, from our American brothers and sisters, and from faith communities in all four corners of the world, who have come together to offer their support. Their words and their presence have shown us that good will prevail over evil.

Dear God, we are in pain. Heal us. Give us the power to heal ourselves. We are determined to persevere, and yea, though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we fear no evil, for You are with us.

God, give Your people strength. God, bless Your people with peace. And let us say: Amen.

Antisemitism, Intolerance, Baseless Hatred, and Reconciliation

Traditional Sources

ויברא אלהים | את-האדם בצלמו בצלם אלהים ברא אתו זכר ונקבה
ברא אתם

God created humanity in God's image, in the image of God were they created,
male and female were they created.

Genesis 1:26-27

קול דמי אחיך צעקים אלי מן-האדמה

The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground.

Genesis 4:10

ואברכה מברכיך ומקללך אאר ונברכו בך כל משפחת האדמה

I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you.
And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Genesis 12:3

ויאמר אל עמו הנה בני ישראל רב ועצום ממנו: הבה נתחכמה לו פן ירבה
והיה כי תקראנה מלחמה ונוסף גם הוא על שנאינו ונלחם בנו ועלה מן
הארץ

See, the Children of Israel are too many for us.
Let us deal wisely with them, lest they increase.

Exodus 1:9-10

ולפני עור לא תתן מכשל

You shall not put a stumbling block before the blind.

Leviticus 19:14

לא תעמוד על דם רעך


You shall not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor.

 *Leviticus 19:16*

לא תשנא את אחיך בלבבך הוכח תוכיח את עמיתך ולא תשא עליו חטא
לא תקם ולא תטר את בני עמך
ואהבת לרעך כמוך אני ה'


You shall not hate your brother in your heart; you shall rebuke your neighbor and not bear sin because of him.

You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

 *Leviticus 19:17-18*

וכי יגור אתך גר בארצכם לא תונו אתו: כאזרח מכם יהיה לכם הגר הגר
אתכם ואהבת לו כמוך כי גרים הייתם בארץ מצרים

When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not wrong him. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as one of your citizens; you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

 *Leviticus 19:33-34*

וחי אחיך עמך

Let your sibling live beside you.

 *Leviticus 25:36*


כי מראש צרים אראנו ומגבעות אשורנו הן עם לבדד ישכן ובגוים לא יתחשב

As I see them from the mountain tops, Gaze on them from the heights, There is a people that dwells apart, Not reckoned among the nations.

 *Numbers 23:9*

לא תתעב אדמי כי אחיך הוא לא תתעב מצרי כי גר היית בארצו

You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother: you shall not abhor an Egyptian, because you were a stranger in his land.

 Deuteronomy 23:7


העדותי בכם היום את השמים ואת הארץ החיים והמות נתתי לפניך
הברכה והקללה ובחרת בחיים למען תחיה אתה וזרעך

I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your children may live.

 Deuteronomy 30:19

הנה מה טוב ומה נעים שבת אחים גם יחד

How good and pleasant it is for siblings to dwell together.

 Psalms 133:1

וכסילים ישנאו דעת

Fools hate knowledge.

 Proverbs 1:22


ויאמר המן למלך אחשורוש ישנו עם אחד מפזר ומפרד בין העמים בכל
מדינות מלכותך ודתייהם שנות מכל עם ואת דתי המלך אינם עשים ולמלך
אין שוה לחניחם

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

 Esther 3:8

הוא היה אומר אם אין אני לי מי לי וכשאני לעצמי מה אני ואם לא עכשיו
אימתי

Hillel used to say: "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? And if I am for myself alone, what am I? And if not now, when?"

 Pirke Avot 1:14

שמואל הקטן אומר (משלי כד) בנפול אויביך אל תשמח ובכשלו אל יגל לבך
פן יראה ה' ורע בעיניו והשיב מעליו אפו

Shmuel Hakatan says: "Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and let not your heart be glad when your enemy stumbles; lest God see it, and be displeased, and God turn away God's wrath from your enemy."

 Mishna, Pirke Avot 4:19

המאבד נפש אחת...כאלו אבד עולם מלא והמקים נפש אחת...כאלו קים
עולם מלא

Whosoever destroys one soul, it is as though he had destroyed the entire world.
And whosoever saves a life, it is as though he had saved the entire world.

 Sanhedrin 37a

שד זה מתהפך לכמה גונים

This demon can change himself into many guises.

📖 *Yoma 75a*

דרכו של שד נכנס לאדם וכופה אותו

The way of the demon is to enter a person and possess him.

📖 *Sifre Haazinu*

מום שבך אל תאמר לחברך

Do not reproach a person with a fault which is also yours.

📖 *Bava Metziah 59b*

בכל העולם כולו נתפס על כל העולם כולו

If a person can prevent the whole world from committing sins, but does not, he is punished for the sins of the whole world.

📖 *Shabbat 54b*

איזהו גבור העושה שונאו אוהבו

Who is mighty? The one who makes an enemy into a friend.

📖 *Avot de Rabbi Natan*

צדיקים בגוים יש להם חלק בעולם הבא

The righteous among the gentiles have a share in the world to come.

📖 *Tosefta, Sanhedrin*

האומות באות להתגרות עם הקדוש ברוך הוא ואין עושין מה עושין
מתגרין בישראל

The nations wish to vex God, but cannot, so they vex Israel.

Exodus Rabbah 51

ישראל אמרה ריבונו של העולם עד מתי יקומו נגדנו והוא אמר שהם קמים
לא נגדכם בלבד אלא נגדי

Israel said: "Master of the Universe! For how long will they rise up to destroy us?
He replied: they rise not only against you, but also against me!"

Midrash Tanhuma, Shoftim

מי ששונא בני אדם כאילו הוא שונא את מי שדבר והעולם קיים

Whosoever hates people, it is as if he hates The One who spoke
and brought the world into being!

Pesikta Zutrei

אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא מה אני דורש ממך אלא לאהוב ולכבד אחרים

This is what the Holy One said: "My children, what do I ask of you?
I ask no more than that you love one another and honor one another."

Seder Rabbah Eliyahu 26


שונא את חברו כאילו שפך דמים

One who hates his neighbor, it is as if he has shed blood!

 *Derekh Eretz*


זה דומה לחכמים לפני המלך האחד מכסה את ראשו ואחד עומד בגלוי
ראש הם נבדלים זה מזה באשר להפגין כבוד למלך הם מסכימים שכיבוד
המלך הוא הדבר הנכון

This is to be compared to two wise men who appear before a king, one covers his head and the other removes his hat. Despite the fact that they differ as to how to show honor to the king, they agree that honoring the king is the correct thing.

 *Rabbi Yitzhak Arama, Akedat Yitzhak, 12:90*

הענין הנהדר בכל העולם שאדם למחול את חברו

The most beautiful thing that we can do is to forgive a wrong.

 *Eleazer ben Judah of Worms*

Quotable Quotes

“

May the children of the stock of Abraham who dwell in this land continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other inhabitants—while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree and there shall be none to make him afraid.

👤 President George Washington

📄 Letter to the Jews of Newport, RI

📅 1760

🔗 <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-06-02-0135>

”

To build bulwarks against this kind of evil, we know there is but one path to take. It is the direction opposite that which produced the Holocaust; it is that which recognizes that among all our differences, we still cannot ever separate ourselves one from another. We must find in our diversity our common humanity. We must reaffirm that common humanity, even in the darkest and deepest of our own disagreements.

👤 President William J. Clinton

📄 Remarks at the Dedication Ceremonies for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

📅 April 22, 1993

🔗 <https://www.ushmm.org/information/about-the-museum/mission-and-history/clinton>

“

[I]n recent years, we’ve seen a deeply disturbing rise in antisemitism in parts of the world where it would have seemed unthinkable just a few years or decades ago. This is not some passing fad; these aren’t just isolated phenomenon. And we know from our history they cannot be ignored. Antisemitism is, and always will be, a threat to broader human values to which we all must aspire. And when we allow antisemitism to take root, then our souls are destroyed, and it will spread.

👤 President Barack Obama

📄 Remarks at Adas Israel Congregation

📅 May 22, 2015

🔗 <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/DCPD-201500388/pdf/DCPD-201500388.pdf>

“

America must always reject racial bigotry, antisemitism, and hatred in all its forms. As we pray for Charlottesville, we are reminded of the fundamental truths recorded by that city's most prominent citizen in the Declaration of Independence: we are all created equal and endowed by our Creator with unalienable right. We know these truths to be everlasting because we have seen the decency and greatness of our country.

👤 Presidents George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush

📄 Joint Statement on the events in Charlottesville, Virginia

📅 August 16, 2017

🔗 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/politics/wp/2017/08/16/both-bush-presidents-just-spoke-out-on-charlottesville-and-sound-nothing-like-trump/>

”

Yet, dare we be at ease? We are part of a world whose unity has been almost completely shattered. No one can feel free from danger and destruction until the many torn threads of civilization are bound together again. We cannot feel safer until every nation, regardless of weapons or power, will meet together in good faith, the people worthy of mutual association.... There can be a happy world and there will be once again, when men create a strong bond towards one another, a bond unbreakable by a studied prejudice or a passing circumstance.

👤 Ruth Bader (Ginsberg)

📄 “My Own Words”

📅 1946 (age 13)

🔗 <https://www.jta.org/2016/10/01/united-states/read-13-year-old-ruth-bader-ginsburgs-essay-in-her-synagogue-bulletin>

“

We need to send the message far and wide that antisemitism is totally unacceptable and can never be justified.... We must work together to root out antisemitism wherever we find it...

👤 London Mayor Sadiq Khan

📄 I Have Zero-Tolerance for Antisemitism in My City

📅 June 27, 2016

🔗 <https://www.jpost.com/Opinion/A-strict-zero-tolerance-approach-to-anti-Semitism-457805>

Expressions of outrage and promises to fight against antisemitism with all means at our disposal, while necessary, bring little comfort. We all know that we cannot be silent, but we cannot allow words to replace action either. Moral outrage means nothing without the force of action to back it up. This means that all governments, including our own, must be bold in our outrage when we see antisemitism and categorically condemn its expression, even when doing so is inconvenient or unpleasant.

👤 Senator John McCain

📅 April 16, 2015

🔗 <https://www.scottsdaleindependent.com/opinions/sen-john-mccain-speaks-out-against-anti-semitism-and-holocaust-denial/>

We have to tell our young people what history has brought over us, and others, these horrors.... It's why we're for democracy, why we try to bring about solutions, why we always have to put ourselves in the other person's shoes. Why we stand up against intolerance, why we show no tolerance towards violations of human rights ... The task has become harder but it needs to be done.

👤 Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany

📅 May 28, 2019

🔗 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/28/spectres-of-the-past-angela-merkel-warns-against-rise-of-far-right>

As I have often repeated, a Christian cannot be an antisemite; we share the same roots. It would be a contradiction of faith and life. Rather, we are called to commit ourselves to ensure antisemitism is banned from the human community.

👤 Pope Francis

🗣️ Remarks to World Congress of Mountain Jews

📅 November 5, 2018

🔗 <https://www.nconline.org/news/vatican/francis-chronicles/anti-semitism-must-be-banned-society-pope-says>

A society, or for that matter a political party, that tolerates antisemitism, that tolerates any hate, has forfeited all moral credibility. You cannot build a future on malign myths of the past, you cannot sustain freedom on the basis of hostility and hate.

👤 Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

🗣️ Address to House of Lords

📅 June 20, 2019

🔗 <http://rabbisacks.org/a-society-or-for-that-matter-a-political-party-that-tolerates-antisemitism-that-tolerates-any-hate-has-forfeited-all-moral-credibility-house-of-lords/>

What is done cannot be undone, but one can prevent it from happening again.

👤 Anne Frank

📖 "Diary of Anne Frank"

📅 May 7, 1944

🔗 <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/anne-frank-70-years-after-her-death-her-diary-remains-one-of-the-most-enduring-symbols-of-human-10104067.html>

No human race is superior; no religious faith is inferior. All collective judgments are wrong. Only racists make them.

👤 Elie Wiesel

📅 May 24, 1992

🔗 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/inspired-life/wp/2016/07/02/i-still-believe-in-man-in-spite-of-man-remembering-elie-wiesel-in-his-own-inspiring-words/>

This is what we must do—not to sleep well when people suffer anywhere in the world. Not to sleep well when someone's persecuted. Not to sleep well when people are hungry all over here or there. Not to sleep well when there are people sick and nobody is there to help them. Not to sleep well when anyone somewhere needs you.

👤 Elie Wiesel

📖 'Don't Sleep Well When People Suffer'

📅 May 14, 2012

🔗 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_IJ-8wx-MBo

Nothing worth doing is completed in our lifetime; therefore, we must be saved by hope.

👤 Reinhold Niebuhr

📖 The Irony of American History

🔗 https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Irony_of_American_History.html?id=SAQ5GfzZPswC&printsec=frontcover&source=kp_read_button#v=onepage&q&f=false

“

In our time, the road to holiness necessarily passes through the world of action.

👤 Dag Hammarskjöld

📅 Markings, 1964

🔗 <https://www.nytimes.com/1964/10/18/archives/meditations-of-a-man-of-a-action-markings-by-dag-hammarskjold.html>

”

The Bible commanded the love of neighbor rather than of mankind because it is easier to love humanity as a whole than to love one's neighbor.

👤 Eric Hoffer

📅 The Ordeal of Change

“

Racism: the maximum of hatred for the minimum of reason.

👤 Abraham Joshua Heschel

📅 Religion and Race

🔗 <https://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/heschel-religion-and-race-speech-text/>

”

You don't make peace with friends. You make it with enemies.

👤 Yitzhak Rabin

📅 The Irony of American History

🔗 https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Irony_of_American_History.html?id=SAQ5GfzZPswC&printsec=frontcover&source=kp_read_button#v=onepage&q&f=false

“

The most enduring response to racism, and my response to antisemitism, is precisely this: to affirm life and to say “LeChaim!”

👤 Julius Lester

📅 Moment magazine, April 1980

& Sample Sermons Divrei Torah

How to fight antisemitism's resurgence in Europe

By Rabbi Andrew Baker

Antisemitism is sometimes compared to a virus. While we can't eliminate it, we at least know how to keep it under control. But what if we're wrong? What if, like a virus, antisemitism has developed a new strain, unresponsive to all the traditional treatments?

The European Union's Agency for Fundamental Rights' (FRA) new report on discrimination and hate crimes against Jews in the E.U. is deeply disturbing. Antisemitism is "pervasive" and "has become disturbingly normalized," it says. "The persistence and prevalence of antisemitism hinder people's ability to live openly Jewish lives."

FRA polled more than 16,000 Jews in 12 E.U. countries this year. More than a third of those polled say they have considered emigrating. The first FRA survey, six years ago, surprised many, who imagined Jews were comfortable and secure in a prosperous and modern Europe. Instead, it revealed high levels of anxiety, Jews fearful of encountering antisemitic harassment or attacks, and 1 in 3 deciding not to wear any identifiable Jewish symbol in public.

Since then, international organizations and national leaders have issued declarations and virtually every European capital has hosted a conference on antisemitism. Yet, 85 percent of Europe's Jews say antisemitism is a serious problem, and nearly 90 percent say it has worsened.

The three countries where Jewish pessimism has increased the most sharply are Germany (up 23 percent), Britain (up 27 percent) and Sweden (up 22 percent). If we are looking for newly effective treatments for the virus, these are good places to start.

A unified Germany opened its doors to thousands of Jews from the former Soviet Union. They and their children are part of a vibrant and visible Jewish community. But Germany also has a growing Muslim population, with 1 million new migrants from Middle Eastern countries. They account for the largest group responsible for antisemitic incidents, according to Jewish participants in the FRA report. Will migrants adopt Germany's values of tolerance and responsibility for its past? Rightwing parties are also ascending. The new Alternative for Germany (AfD) party has shattered taboos and offered a space for antisemitism to return.

Six years ago, British Jews were among the most secure and confident in Europe. But it's not physical threats that trouble them. The British Labour Party is now led by Jeremy Corbyn, whom most Jews consider antisemitic. His antagonistic view of Israel is a case study in how anti-Zionism can mask antisemitism. Once home to a majority of the country's Jewish voters, the Labour Party is a hostile environment, and British Jews are facing the unthinkable — a possible prime minister ready to cross the line from anti-Israel animus to antisemitism.

Sweden's reputation for tolerance was already eroding. The largest per capita share of the 2015 wave of Middle East migrants settled in Sweden. Most antisemitic incidents were also attributed to the Muslim population in the report. But rightwing parties that hold strongly antisemitic views are on the rise there, too.

Moreover, the Swedish government is among the most strident and outspoken critics of Israel within the E.U. As Jews are frequently conflated with Israel and held responsible for its perceived misdeeds, many think twice

before voicing support for the state of Israel, knowing such support has consequences. When FRA asked Jews to identify the perpetrators of antisemitic incidents, they said about 30 percent come from extremist Muslims, 21 percent from the political far left and 13 percent from the far right.

Will Germany, Britain and Sweden find a way to reduce the numbers and reverse the trends? Can they provide answers for the rest of Europe?

Germany appointed a national commissioner to coordinate the fight against antisemitism. And it's devoting millions of euros for programs to assimilate Muslim immigrants. Police are being trained to recognize anti-Semitic hate crimes. British Jews are finding allies to push back against the problematic shift in the Labour Party. The country has endorsed a definition of anti-Semitism with all of its examples, including those relating to Israel.

Sweden's National Council for Crime Prevention is undertaking its first comprehensive analysis of anti-Semitism. If successful, it could finally force the government and Swedish society to face to the extent of the problem.

These countries illustrate European-wide challenges laid bare in the FRA survey, and the measures that must be taken to bring the anti-Semitic virus under control: acknowledge the sources of anti-Semitism even if it is politically incorrect; target educational programs to those most responsible; protect Jews and Jewish institutions; define anti-Semitism particularly as it relates to Israel; and continue to battle right-wing extremism.

It is a formidable challenge, and the very future of European Jewry will depend on its success.

Rabbi Andrew Baker is AJC's director of international Jewish affairs and a special envoy on combating antisemitism for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2018/12/18/how-fight-anti-semitisms-resurgence-europe/>

Antisemitism in America: The Loss of American Jewish Innocence?

By Rabbi Noam E. Marans
Rosh Hashanah 5780/2019
Morristown (NJ) Jewish Center-Beit Yisrael

Dinah Haramati was my freshman Hebrew language teacher at the legendary Yeshiva of Flatbush High School. Mrs. Haramati gave me many gifts, but the one that has lasted the longest is the treasure trove that she transmitted of brief Hebrew sayings, aphorisms, ethical teachings, kernels of wisdom and advice from the Jewish tradition over two millennia. Mrs. Haramati would dramatically write the Hebrew date and name of the weekly Torah portion on the blackboard with chalk – blackboards and chalk, the good old days – and beneath the date she would write the Hebrew saying of the day. By the end of the academic year there were more than 150 of these Hebrew sayings. And we had to commit all 150 to memory for the final at the end of the year. Thank you, Dinah Haramati, I remember every single one! One of my favorites was on

the longer side – most were no more than five words in length – and this one was ten words: Ayno domeh shoneh pirko me'ah p'amim l'shoneh pirko me'ah v'achat (Babylonian Talmud, Chagigah 9B). Like all foreign language idioms, it gets a little lost in translation, but here it is in English: It is not the same studying a text 100 times as it is studying it 101 times. Or, more literarily, more idiomatically: Keep looking – you'll find something new you never saw before.

Every year on Rosh Hashanah we read Genesis, Chapter 22 from the Torah - the story of the Akedah, Abraham's attempted sacrifice of his son Isaac at God's behest. Every year we reread this frightful drama – a father attempting to sacrifice his own son in fulfillment of a divine command, a test by God. We reread the story

every year, but we do not experience the story the same way each year. When we are younger, we might read it as someone's child, and when we are older, we might read it as someone's parent. Sometimes we notice something in the story that we never noticed before. That happens to me a lot, even though I have read the story hundreds of times. Sometimes something is going on in the world and we are given a new perspective on this story, a story we know probably as well as any story in our Torah.

This year, I read the story in the context of a year in which American Jews had to comprehend the horrifying, cold-blooded murder of 11 Jews in a Pittsburgh synagogue on a Shabbat morning; the murder of one Jew in a Poway, San Diego synagogue six months later, a tragedy that would have been even more deadly had the perpetrator's gun not jammed; a year that included antisemitic incidents at a level that surpasses our experience in this country during at least the last 60 years, my entire life.

Abraham is willing to sacrifice his son, Isaac, as God has commanded. Abraham and Isaac have a brief conversation as they get closer to their mission. It seems like Isaac is aware of what is going on, but his understanding of the situation is never made fully explicit. He does not resist. He appears willing to martyr himself. The angel intervenes at the last minute and rescinds God's command. Abraham has passed the test of faith.

Not a further word is spoken about this life-threatening and life-changing incident. There is no debrief. There is no conversation between father and son. There is no emotion. The trauma is repressed.

Almost immediately after the story ends, a new story begins. We are told that Sarah, wife of Abraham, mother of Isaac, has died. The rabbis of the midrash can't resist and amplify the Torah's story. It must be cause and effect. Sarah heard that her husband was willing to sacrifice her son, the rabbis say, and she dies of fright. Sarah cannot process the trauma and she passes from the scene.

The Torah tells us that Abraham prepares to bury his wife, Sarah, in the city of Hebron, where she died. Abraham needs to purchase

a burial plot for his family from the local population, the Hittites. For the first time since Abraham attempted the sacrifice of his son, Isaac, just a few verses before, we finally hear Abraham say something. The Torah records Abraham's first post-trauma spoken words. He turns to the local Hittite leadership and begins his request for the acquisition of a family burial site with the following introduction: "*Ger v'toshav anokhi imakhem*," "I am a resident and an alien (stranger?) among you." (Genesis 23:4)

A resident alien? What does Abraham mean? On the one hand he is saying that he lives in this new place, the land of Canaan, the future Land of Israel, the land God promised to him and his descendants. He is a resident. On the other hand, he is not certain about his status with the local people. He is an alien. Abraham doesn't know whether he should feel at home or feel unwelcome. Is he a resident or an alien?

It is quite surprising that Abraham has this loss of confidence. He is God's guy, the one God has entrusted with the sacred task of propagating what we have come to know as Judaism. We are already told that he is a very successful man, that he is rich in cattle, silver and gold. But somehow, he is not sure whether he fits in. Something has shattered his confidence. Abraham has experienced trauma, the attempted sacrifice of his son as God requested, and the death of his wife, Sarah. And Abraham is rattled. He can't fully process the events. He is no longer sure if he is a resident or an alien. We might wonder whether Abraham is suffering from what we moderns call PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder.

This is exactly the kind of trauma we are experiencing as a collective American Jewish community. Our confidence as resident, as permanent, has been threatened by an American minority – threatening and violent – who want to make us as alien, as temporary. We are wondering whether America will live up to the narrative we have bestowed upon it – as the best home for the Jewish people among our thousands of years of diaspora experiences. Here we could make it. Here we did make it.

I know many rabbis in Pittsburgh. I have spoken with several of them during this past year as they and their community have navigated this horror. I cannot imagine what these High Holy Days will be like in Pittsburgh this year, as

Jews gather in synagogues there in very large numbers for the first time since the memorial services for their fallen nearly one year ago. Yet I do know that, certainly for Pittsburgh Jews, who have suffered unbearable familial and communal loss, but also for all American Jews in a different, yet parallel way, we enter the new Jewish year with a palpable realization that a great deal has changed since we gathered for the High Holy Days a year ago. It is not just Pittsburgh and Poway. Beyond those tragedies inside synagogues on Shabbat mornings, it has been a year of a wider epidemic of violence against Jews in this country, most notably the ongoing attacks on visibly Jewish Orthodox Jews in Brooklyn, NY, home to more than a half million Jews, and dramatic increases in antisemitic incidents nationally. New York City, the city with the largest Jewish population in the world has experienced a 63% increase in antisemitic hate crimes during the past year. We have had to adjust to entering fortified synagogues and other Jewish communal institutions which are beginning to look like European synagogues that have been secured for decades.

We are dealing with antisemitism from multiple sources: there is the extreme right of Charlottesville and its chants of “Jews will not replace us,” of Poway and Pittsburgh which, at the moment, is the most dangerous antisemitism in the U.S. As you undoubtedly know, the Pittsburgh massacre was the deadliest day of antisemitism in American history. There is the extreme left, which has perfected anti-Zionism and anti-Israelism as a new form of antisemitism, and pushes BDS – boycotts of, divestment from and sanctions against Israel – and has brought its campaign of Israel demonization to the college campuses where our young Jews are put on the defensive. There is also antisemitism in America from extremists in the name of Islam. Each of these and other manifestations need targeted responses.

But we dare not let that be the only narrative of American Jewish life. Yes, the spike in violence is a permanent stain on the American Jewish experience, long heralded – correctly - as the best of the Jewish diaspora experiences. Jews are regarded more warmly in the United States than any other faith adherents, according to yet another recent survey by the Pew Research Center, consistent with previous findings.

Americans respect Jews. Depending on your age and where you grew up, some version of the following is true: Our American Jewish experience has been much better than the American Jewish experience of our parents and grandparents. The experience of our parents and grandparents – and for some here, our own experiences – of restrictive covenants denying Jews access to certain neighborhoods, glass ceilings that prevented promotions of Jews in corporate America, and university quotas that were once barriers to Jewish advancement - have receded or disappeared. But this positive narrative coexists with a new reality: The marginalization of antisemitism to the political and social fringe has ebbed in force, and a dormant and violent beast, hugely boosted by the power of social media, has awakened.

It is up to American Jews and their fellow citizens to keep antisemitism from being renormalized during this tipping point moment.

There is a lot at stake for all of us. Antisemitism endangers not only Jews but the societies in which we live. Thankfully, this American society is not prepared to be passive in the face of antisemitism and other forms of hate.

What can we do now? Here are five possibilities to consider.

First, we must defeat nativist and anti-immigrant sentiment in the U.S. and the political opportunism that manipulates this issue for electoral gain. America as a nation of immigrants is not just a slogan. It is a historical reality and central to America's success as a nation inspired by “E Pluribus Unum” (Out of Many, One). Nativism cyclically rears its head in American history with deadly consequences, as in the El Paso, Texas, massacre. For Jews, American immigrant history has had its highs, notably millions of Jews fleeing Eastern Europe from 1881 to 1914, including my grandparents, and its lows, as when the government sent the passengers of the ship *St. Louis* back to Europe, where 254 of them were murdered in the Holocaust. America can reform its defunct immigration system while securing its borders and sustaining its strong tradition of welcoming refugees.

Second: Last year, within hours of the Tree of Life synagogue massacre, the American Jewish Committee, AJC, where I work when

I am not here with you on the High Holy Days, established on social media a rallying cry, #ShowUpForShabbat, that moved untold numbers of Jews and others of all and no faiths to attend synagogue services across the planet on the following weekend, including here at MJCBY (Morristown Jewish Center, Beit Yisrael). This “We are all Jews” response reaffirmed that this moment is not remotely akin to the nadir of civilization reached in Germany in the 1930s, when antisemitism, built upon centuries of religiously motivated anti-Judaism, was mandated by the government and encouraged by civil society.

Let’s make #ShowUpForShabbat a tradition. Jews who may not be weekly attendees should fill the pews on Oct. 25-26, to commemorate the Pittsburgh tragedy and the global response of solidarity. Synagogues should open their doors to their neighbors that Friday evening and Saturday morning and allow the goodness of the overwhelming majority to prevail over the evil of the few. MJCBY will be participating in the 2019 iteration of #ShowUpForShabbat. Individual Jews should invite their non-Jewish friends to join them. Faith groups should encourage their adherents to participate. This will be a collective opportunity to say: We will not be cowered. We will not be made afraid. In addition to showing solidarity, #ShowUpForShabbat can be educational, demystifying Judaism and the synagogue and contributing to a more literate society in which the faith of the other is better understood.

Third, although antisemitism is a primary existential threat to the Jewish people, hate of the other in all its manifestations must be eradicated. Hatred of Jews may not always be first on the list of haters’ priorities, but it is always in their inventory. The white supremacist terrorists of Pittsburgh and Poway justified their murder of Jews by linking antisemitism with other forms of hate, implicating Jews as those who allegedly facilitate the nonwhite immigrant “invasion” of America. The American Jewish response to that should be the redoubling of our efforts in coalition building, including but not limited to Muslim-Jewish, Latino-Jewish and black-Jewish initiatives.

Fourth, our government must have the tools

needed to defeat hate, including antisemitism, when it erupts into violence. Preemptive strategies have been enhanced with the establishment of New York City’s Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes, which was sorely needed after a 41% increase in hate crimes in the city during the past year. Other cities of concern should follow suit. Additionally, concerned citizens are calling upon all Americans to advocate for the NO HATE Act, which will improve the FBI’s ability to track and respond to hate crimes. When federal authorities were given the tools to defeat the threat to our country after 9/11, they were successful in keeping us safe. They need parallel and powerful tools now.

Fifth, and arguably most important: If we are to survive and flourish as Jews, combatting antisemitism, as serious as that task is, cannot be our only focus as responsible Jewish Americans. We have to teach our children and grandchildren that there is much more to being Jewish than anti-antisemitism. As the renowned expert on the Holocaust, Emory University professor Deborah Lipstadt, cautioned in her recent book on antisemitism, we have to balance the OY with the JOY. No one aspires to be a part of a persecuted people. Our children and grandchildren will only want to be Jewish if it brings joy to their lives, gives meaning to their existence, ennobles them, and creates concentric circles of family which they can’t resist in joining. We must ask ourselves, individually and collectively, whether we can do a better job in that mission.

In short, on many levels, especially this last piece – conveying a positive message of Jewish belonging – we are not passive actors. There is something, there are many things, we can do at this tipping point moment in American Jewish history. A lot of this is in our hands.

The Ashkenazi High Holy Day liturgy asks, “Who shall live and who shall die?” Sadly, we cannot avoid reflecting on this question as we sit in a synagogue and contemplate the events of the last year. But the Sephardic liturgy asserts more hopefully, “End a year and its curses. ... Begin a year and its blessings.” May it be so. We can make the hope for those blessings a reality.

Rabbi Noam E. Marans is AJC’s Director of Interreligious and Intergroup Relations.

The Massacre of Jews in Pittsburgh: A #ShowUpForShabbat Reflection

By Rabbi Noam Marans

Now, as American Jews, we are confronting the reality that we dreaded and feared—it could happen here. We are mourning the loss of American Jewish innocence.

This Shabbat cannot be like any other Shabbat. It is the Shabbat of the week of shivah for our eleven brothers and sisters who were brutally murdered as they joined together in a synagogue to pray, to celebrate our Jewish tradition, to be together with our people. They were murdered because they were Jews, at the hand of a man infected with antisemitic, racist, and xenophobic hatred. They were murdered because they were part of a Jewish civilization that welcomes the stranger and cares for those in need.

Above all, they were human beings, with families. They were, to the bereaved, fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, grandparents and great-grandparents, brothers and sisters. These families mourn their losses in a very personal way—a mourning that goes far beyond and much deeper than our communal pain. The Jews of Pittsburgh and their neighbors feel this massacre as an assault on their home, on their people. By all accounts, the victims were the good, the upstanding people, the backbone of their synagogue. They were the people who welcomed you at the front door, the joyful participants and the able leaders.

And we, the wider Jewish community, wherever we are on this Shabbat, from Jerusalem to New York, from Paris to Miami, from Mumbai to LA, wherever Jews are gathering in large numbers, in diverse synagogues and traditions, we feel the pain, anger, and loss of a people that is inextricably linked one to another. For we know that *kol Yisrael areivim*, that all Jews are responsible for one another, for each other's welfare, for our wellbeing.

It is a Shabbat of sadness and mourning. But it must also be a Shabbat of defiance and continuity, a Shabbat of gratitude and thanksgiving. Synagogues all over the world will be more filled, rather than less filled. We will not run away. We will not cower. We will not allow the hate of a few to drive out the love of the many. We have been blessed by the many beyond the Jewish community who have joined us in our sorrow and defiance, not only by their presence in our synagogues this Shabbat, but by their statements and vigils of solidarity, declaring unequivocally: We are all Jews. Faith leaders, civic officials, and tens of millions of Americans have made it clear: An attack on one faith is an attack on all faiths. An attack on one American is an attack on all Americans.

It is a Shabbat in which we feel diminished, but it is also a Shabbat of appreciation. We salute and praise the first responders who engaged the evil without hesitation despite the real threat to their own lives. The first police officers on the scene and the many others who followed fearlessly demonstrated the values of elevated citizenship, of *E Pluribus Unum*, out of many—one. We thank them for the lives they saved and for the justice they pursue. We ask God to heal them of their wounds, to body and soul.

Our Torah portion this week, *Hayyei Sarah*, speaks of death, of continuity, of consolation, and it is instructive for us as a people and as individuals at this moment of crisis in American Jewish life. There is no massacre in the Torah reading, but there is insecurity. Abraham, the first of our Patriarchs, the father of the Jewish people, is old. We learn of the death of his beloved Sarah, the first of our Matriarchs, the mother of the Jewish people. Abraham is bereaved; he is vulnerable.

Abraham is already a wealthy and influential man, whom the Torah describes as a person who has made his mark on the wider society, in commerce and defense, and, no doubt, with his ethical monotheism. And yet, the trauma of the death of a loved one makes him

unsure, uncertain of his place in the wider society. He says to the Hittites, the local majority, “*Ger v’toshav anokhi eemakhem.*” “I am both a resident and a stranger in your midst.” (Genesis 23:4) At a moment of terrible personal crisis, Abraham seems to lose his footing, not sure of his place in the wider world.

Many American Jews experienced the trauma of last Shabbat on multiple levels. Of course, we experienced the tragedy on the most human level, lives cut down, families permanently altered. But we also experienced it through our history of Jewish vulnerability. Could it happen here? What does the spike in antisemitism mean? We witnessed the intermittent violent antisemitic incidents and loss of Jewish life over recent years. We witnessed the massacres in churches, the torching of mosques, the damaging of synagogues, the rise in hate crimes, particularly against Muslims and Jews. We dreaded and feared the inevitable and it has now happened—the most deadly antisemitic carnage in our magnificent American Jewish history—and it scares us. Of course, we realize that this is the act of a madman, of a crazed bigot, but we also sense that something is happening, that the darker side of America, a side that had been subdued, is surfacing, sometimes with very violent consequences.

There was a lot at stake when Abraham seemed insecure. The future of the nascent Jewish people hung in the balance. And he regained his poise, buried Sarah and turned his focus to assuring the future of the Jewish people, to find a bride for Isaac so that the lineage he began with his beloved wife might continue.

We are far from being ready to regain our confidence. The wound is too fresh. The families are still in the midst of palpable trauma with multiple *shivah* homes and

unbearable grief. But today we take a first step as a wider Jewish community, as a Jewish people, as Americans. We are aided immeasurably by the support of our fellow Americans of all faiths, races and ethnicities who have reached out to us as individuals and as a people with solidarity and comfort. We are grateful and buoyed by their support. Americans of goodwill have come together at a time of great need. If we stay together, love will prevail over hate, good will prevail over evil.

The journey for Abraham was a long one. He sends his servant, whom the midrash identifies as Eliezer, back to the old country to find a wife for Isaac. Her name is Rebecca. The narrative concludes with a beautiful verse, a rare moment of recorded patriarchal emotion. “And Isaac was consoled for [the loss of] his mother.” (24:67)

The bereaved families and community of Pittsburgh have only just begun to process the horrific that is so personal for them. We have only just begun to process the impact of this trauma for American Jewry. We are a long way from comfort and consolation.

Today we focus on praying for the health of the injured. May they be granted a *refuah sheleimah*, *refuat hanefesh urfuat haguf*, a speedy and complete recovery of body and soul.

We remember the 11 martyred Jews of Pittsburgh and mention each of them by name: Richard Gottfried, 65; Joyce Fienberg, 75; Rose Mallinger, 97; Jerry Rabinowitz, 66; Cecil Rosenthal, 59; David Rosenthal, 54; Bernice Simon, 84; Sylvan Simon, 86; Daniel Stein, 71; Melvin Wax, 88; and Irving Younger, 69.

Yehi zikhram barukh. May their memory be for a blessing.

Rabbi Noam E. Marans is AJC’s Director of Interreligious and Intergroup Relations. Originally published on November 2, 2018 at www.ajc.org

<https://thriveglobal.com/stories/the-massacre-of-jews-in-pittsburgh-a-showupforshabbat-reflection/>

“Life and death are in the power of the tongue” (Proverbs 18:21)

By Rabbi David Rosen

In May 2019, AJC co-sponsored a conference on Jesus and the Pharisees at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome. We did so because of our concern regarding the persistent use of the name “Pharisee” in a pejorative manner, primarily by religious Christians and even by some leaders of major Christian denominations.

The Pharisees were one of the major Jewish groups during the late Second Temple period. Jesus of Nazareth’s interaction with them was complex; some scholars have even suggested that he himself was part of their community. Saul of Tarsus—who came to be known to Christendom as Saint Paul — was a Jew who openly declared himself to have been a Pharisee; and the leader of the pharisaic community at the time, Rabbi Gamliel, is portrayed in the New Testament as if not sympathetic, certainly not hostile to Jesus and his followers.

However, the New Testament also describes fraught interactions between Jesus and Pharisees. In these scenes, the Pharisees are presented as rigid and finicky about Jewish religious Law, not always spiritually sincere and even hypocritical. In fact, some of these accusations were made by some of the Pharisees themselves against others within their own community.

The Pharisaic community came to be identified both in Jewish tradition and by many Christians as synonymous with the rabbis of the Talmud, and thus the term Pharisee came to be used by Christians as a synonym for Jew.

Thus, just as the name “Jew” was often used in a negative way in the past by gentiles particularly in the Christian world (but also in the Muslim world in different times and places), the name and image of the Pharisee became a tool of antisemitic discourse.

With the revolution in Catholic teaching towards Jews and Judaism brought about by

the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council in the mid-nineteen sixties, a greater sensitivity in this regard developed. (A parallel development took place among many Protestant denominations.) Vatican documents such as the Guidelines on *Nostra Aetate* (1974) and the Notes on how to present Jews and Judaism (1985) precisely cautioned against such pejorative usage and negative generalizations.

However, the effect of this “new theology” and its attendant cautions was limited. While in parts of the Christian world, the impact of the Shoah led to a greater awareness of the evil of antisemitism, elsewhere attitudes towards Jews and Judaism were not relevant to the daily life of Christians, let alone high on their list of priorities. Moreover, insidious attitudes that prevailed over almost two thousand years are not eliminated overnight.

In recent times, the impact of the Shoah and of these warnings seems to have waned and we have witnessed something of a resurgence of the pejorative use of the term Pharisee in sermons and homilies, even by most senior figures in the Church. This was the reason that we felt it was of the utmost importance to make scholarship regarding the identity, beliefs, and practices of the Pharisees more widely known, to show how the term came to be used in a negative manner, and to warn of the danger of the use of the name in that way.

There was no intention on our part to suggest that such pejorative use was or is motivated by antisemitic intent. On the contrary, recent generalizations using the term Pharisee have often been made by those whose love of the Jewish people is well-known.

Cardinal Blaise Cupich of Chicago recently referred to the danger of prejudicial language while reflecting on the tragedy of the Shoah. He recalled the observations of William Dodd, a historian from the University of Chicago who was chosen by President Roosevelt to be America’s first ambassador to Nazi Germany.

Initially hopeful and encouraged by the spirit of the “New Germany” that emerged from the ashes of the First World War, Dodd’s excitement quickly turned to fear as Hitler’s rise to power led to the increasing persecution of Jews and others. Dodd telegraphed the State Department firsthand accounts of attacks on Jews, the censorship of the press, and the enactment of new laws that restricted the rights of the Jewish people and other minorities. His superiors, however, treated his communiques with indifference and his reports were considered too sensational to be reliable.

Dodd later noted that Hitler’s rise to power and the policies that led to the Holocaust developed through stages. First came the bigoted language targeting a minority. Initially widely dismissed both within German society and abroad as “only words” and marginal, the use of such language became increasingly widespread, credible and even “respectable.” The next stage involved targeting the “other” as a scapegoat for the grievances people were told they should have, especially as they reflected on their experience of defeat in the First World War. Hatred leading to the dehumanization of “the other” became

a political tool for national cohesion and empowerment. Dehumanization, in turn, led to the intent and action of extermination.

The philosopher George Santayana once remarked that ignorance of the past condemns us to repeat it. While the world today is significantly different for that of Germany in the 1930s, there are dangerous echoes of such bigoted language and prejudicial stereotyping in our contemporary society that must alarm every person of conscience.

Almost always we discover that the perpetrators of ethnic or religious violence have been exposed to and have promoted bigoted speech and attitudes. It is accordingly of the utmost importance to educate religious leaders about that dangers of such language. It is no less important to ensure that we do not let the use of prejudicial language go by uncontested.

Any language that demeans human dignity, poses a threat to all of us. For words might not kill in themselves, but they can certainly inspire violence. As it is written in the book of Proverbs 18:21, “**life and death** are in the power of the tongue.”

Rabbi David Rosen is AJC’s International Director of Interreligious Affairs.

A Global Perspective on Antisemitism

By Rabbi Serena Eisenberg

Charlottesville. Pittsburgh. Poway. These names resonate as some of the bloodiest demonstrations of racist and antisemitic violence in the recent past. But even before neo-Nazis marched in Virginia, or one of their cohorts opened fire at Pittsburgh’s Tree of Life congregation, a toxic culture of coarsened civil discourse was escalating in our country. As a former Hillel director who worked on some of the United States’ most prestigious college campuses, in the past decades I have witnessed firsthand the emergence of a form of anti-Zionism that often shaded into antisemitism, and sometimes led to acts of hate speech, vandalism, and provocations to violence. The tragedy and terror of Pittsburgh did not happen in a vacuum.

Here in the United States, we took our safety for granted and took comfort in the idea that antisemitism was a relic of another century and other continents. But denial now is dangerous. As we sift through the shock and grief of a resurgence in antisemitism, this first anniversary of the Pittsburgh shooting is a milestone, a reminder to move forward with action. One meaningful response, and surely the theme of many high holiday sermons, exhorts us to find joy and meaning in Judaism: to celebrate Jewish holidays and culture, to educate our children, and to share the treasures of our tradition with our neighbors. The AJC initiative to #ShowUpForShabbat is a powerful challenge to reclaim our synagogues as sanctuaries. These are personal and local steps each one of us can and must do.

But we must also broaden our networks of responsibility and influence to address bigotry and hatred nationally and globally. Our European cousins have borne the brunt of the resurgence in this oldest of hatreds. Germany and France have seen a disturbing spike in street harassment of Jews, and in some cases murder, from the 2015 rampage at Paris' kosher supermarket to this month's attack on the Halle shul. Meanwhile, the British Labour Party, in the thrall to its antisemitic chief Jeremy Corbyn, could soon take power in London. Neo-Nazis, among them the murderer in Halle, cast Jews as foreign agents of cosmopolitanism and decadence. Jews, in a revised "Elders of Zion" conspiracy theory, are said to deprive so-called real Europeans of their right to decide their political fate. Meanwhile, some on the far left liken Jews to Nazis because of our community's support for the state of Israel. Spurious BDS campaigns have caricatured Israel as an aggressor in its conflict with the Palestinians, and have fomented hatred against Jews as representatives of the state of Israel. The confluence of these two streams of antisemitism has created a tide of fear and terror for European Jews. Antisemitism exists on various points of the political spectrum, and an integrated strategy for fighting it must take account of this reality.

Our organization has pioneered exactly such an approach. AJC brings something

unique to the conversation; ours is one of the few communal organizations with a worldwide imprint, with offices in the United States as well as in Europe and Israel. AJC's edge in addressing this large and complex issue of contemporary antisemitism rests on our unique bridge-building efforts with diplomats, elected officials, and religious and civic leaders. These alliances lead to concrete action to combat antisemitism and other forms of bigotry. A few examples: more than 160 members of Congress have signed up for the Joint Bipartisan Taskforce for Combating antisemitism that was launched at AJC's behest. AJC has also led the campaign to stop the BDS movement in its tracks, on the congressional level, in statehouses, and on our nation's college campuses. On the worldwide level, we have encouraged foreign governments to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Association's definition of antisemitism. And we are changing the conversation about Israel through Project Interchange trips for elected officials, diplomats, and civil society leaders from various countries.

There is far too much at stake for us to be complacent. It is time for a local AND global outlook, to utilize our influence and resources to advance strategic battles against antisemitism by building friendships and alliances for mutual understanding.

Rabbi Serena Eisenberg is the northern California regional director for AJC and a seasoned Jewish community professional.

A Sermon for #ShowUpforShabbat 2019

By Rabbi David Levy

A six-year-old boy in Nazi Germany is forced to use the local Jewish cemetery as a playground. At school, in the park, in the city neighborhood he calls home, he is harassed simply for being a Jew. The cemetery is his only safe space, the one place the bullies are too afraid to follow him. In the embrace of ancestors long past, he plays alone. Soon he is sent to a Jewish boy's school in Caputh, a place he remembers as paradise, a place where he became a proud Jew and a proud Zionist. It was also a place where he found non-Jewish allies, teachers and townspeople who showed him care and

protection. Long after he left that place, long after he made his way ultimately to a successful and long life in America, he would pass these lessons on to his children and grandchildren: the importance of allies and pride.

Fast forward to 1973, his son was raised as a proud and active Jew, unafraid to express his identity, never feeling targeted for it until he entered a new Middle School that included students from neighborhoods different from his own. Walking home from school one afternoon, he was ambushed by three older boys who

taunted him with antisemitic slurs and pushed him into the dirt. He fought back and made his way home, but hid from his parents what had happened, fearing the repercussions of a report to the principal. Instead, the next day he told his best friend Alex, an Egyptian Christian who also happened to be one of the biggest children in his grade. For the next few days, he and Alex walked home together, and Alex made it clear that he had his friend's back.

Finally, in recent years, the son had become a Rabbi. Now one of the children of his congregation, a 13-year-old studying for his Bar Mitzvah, came to him with another story of antisemitism. At the bus stop one morning, a couple of kids had thrown some pennies at him and then said, "Come on Jew, aren't you going to pick them up? Don't you love the money?" Asked how he responded, he said that before he could say anything, his friends called them out and got them to back off. Then, he said, when he got to school, he went right to the Principal's office to report the incident. When the Rabbi said that was very courageous of you, the boy demurred. He said it wasn't about courage, but pride. He wasn't going to let anyone get away with putting down his Judaism.

Three vignettes, from the life of my father, myself and one of my congregants that all share something in common with this anniversary #ShowUpforShabbat gathering, the power of pride and community in facing the challenge of antisemitism. From the 1930's where these were lessons learned, to the 1970's where they were embraced, but not fully integrated, to only a few years ago where they were fully incorporated into a young boy's sense of place; pride and community remain two of our most powerful weapons against the corrosive effects of this oldest of hatreds.

That is not to say that we must ignore the imperative to react as a Jewish community powerfully and directly to incidents of antisemitism. We must speak out and we must demand that our government and political leaders confront it head-on, whether it comes from the left, from the right or from jihadist elements. We must remind them, and other public figures, that words have power and rhetoric has consequences. The use of "Jew down" by a public figure is not a trivial matter to be simply dismissed.

But we cannot take it so far as to make rising antisemitism so central to our psyche that we either shrink back in fear, live in denial, or make this battle our core reason for being Jewish. As Dr. Deborah Lipstadt, one of the world's leading scholars on the subject of antisemitism notes, *"What is necessary for Jews to survive and flourish as a people is neither dark pessimism nor cockeyed optimism, but realism."*²¹ This is where pride and community come in and why this Shabbat is so important.

Tonight is a Shabbat devoted to gathering in remembrance of those who lives were lost in the shootings that took place at Tree of Life in Pittsburgh a year ago this weekend. But it is equally devoted to remembering and recommitting to what brought them to that sanctuary in the first place. They came to that sanctuary to express their Jewish connections to each other, to their congregation, and to their G-d. They came to be part of a worship tradition that connects us back through the generations of our ancestors and serves as a foundation for the generations to come. They came because being Jewish was something they proudly expressed.

Dr. Lipstadt, in her book, Antisemitism: Here and Now, shares a story that feels keenly tied to this moment in time and the importance of our Jewish pride. She writes:

*"...during a recent Jewish holiday, as I entered my synagogue along with two friends—a five-year-old girl and her mother. The mom smiled at the security guard stationed at the door, turned to her daughter, and said, 'Let's say hi and thank you to the guard for keeping us safe.' A look of puzzlement swept across my little friend's face. From the many books we have read together, she knows about 'safe' places and 'dangerous' places, and in her mind a synagogue did not fall under the latter category. It's a joyful place where she runs around with the other kids in the playground, attends a children's service that is filled with singing, and then wends her way into the main sanctuary, where she and her playmates help conclude the services and receive lollipops from the rabbi. Why would she need someone to help keep her safe in such a place?"*²²

Why indeed. We all know why, and we are deeply thankful for those who watch over us as we join together in worship and learning during

the troubling times. However, it is critical that we maintain and enhance our pride though Jewish identification, celebration, worship, learning and public gathering. In Lipstadt's words, we must "*balance the 'oy' with the 'joy'.*" On this #ShowUpforShabbat, we pray that any awareness our children have "*of the dangers that may threaten (their) well-being at the synagogue... will never overshadow the joys (they) finds there.*"

Beyond pride, this Shabbat is also about community. One year ago, following the murder of 11 innocent Jews at prayer at Pittsburgh's Tree of Life synagogue, millions of people of all faiths rallied around AJC's #ShowUpForShabbat initiative. They packed synagogues in what became the largest-ever expression of solidarity with the American Jewish community. This synagogue was among those who welcomed so many guests from across our community into this sanctuary. So many of you, our members, our friends, our neighbors, and our community leaders joined us here and we are deeply grateful for the role you played in that historic moment of solidarity.

Following the Tree of Life shootings, AJC CEO David Harris made a call to action seeking our presence in sanctuaries across America and around the world for #ShowUpforShabbat. He also called forcefully for the emergence of a Community of Conscience "*to stand up proudly and loudly for the values of decency, civility, mutual respect, bipartisanship and unity. If nature abhors a vacuum,*" he said, "*so does democracy.*"³ He warned that if such a community "*doesn't stand up and stay the course, then, as we've seen, others, with very different agendas, will fill the space.*"⁴

Tonight, gathered together in this sanctuary, each of us is committing to be a member of that Community of Conscience our troubled world so desperately needs. Each of us - Jew, Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, or Muslim, Gay, or Straight, Black, White, Latino, or Asian - each of us in this rainbow of diversity that is the American ideal must recognize that when anyone of us is targeted, all of us are targeted. We need to recommit to standing together in mutual solidarity. It is, as Mr. Harris noted:

*"...a message to the haters that their America is not ours. Our America champions democracy and pluralism. It celebrates, not bemoans, our diversity. And it mourns, not exalts, what happened in Pittsburgh..."*⁵

And so, let this Shabbat be not just a gathering of comfort and remembrance. Let this Shabbat be a call to action. Beyond responding to antisemitism with vigilance and security, let us answer fear with pride and confront hate with community. Even as we mourn those who were lost, let us look forward to building a society and a world in which the oldest of hatreds finds no acceptance.

*Let us avoid letting this "longest hatred" become the linchpin of (our) identity. Our tradition in all its manifestations—religious, secular, intellectual, communal, artistic, and so much more—is far too valuable to be... replaced with a singular concentration on the fight against hatred.*⁶

Joined together on this #ShowUpforShabbat with friends, neighbors, community leaders and allies of all stripes, let this Community of Conscience gathered here in this sanctuary demonstrate a unity and shared destiny that says: We do not fear, rather we stand together and we rise.

Rabbi David Levy is Regional Director of AJC New Jersey.

1. Lipstadt, Deborah E., Antisemitism (p. 241). Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.
2. Lipstadt, Deborah E., Antisemitism (pp. 241-242).
3. Harris, David, After Pittsburgh, We Need A Coalition of Conscience, The New York Jewish Week, October 30, 2018
4. Harris, David, After Pittsburgh...
5. Harris, David, After Pittsburgh...
6. Lipstadt, Deborah E., Antisemitism (p. 242)

Perspectives

After Pittsburgh, We Need A Community Of Conscience

David Harris *The New York Jewish Week* October 30, 2018

<https://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/we-need-a-coalition-of-conscience/>

We knew antisemitism was out there. We knew it was growing. More and more people felt uninhibited in expressing their hatred and bigotry.

Deadly attacks against Jewish targets had already occurred in other countries, from Belgium to Bulgaria, Argentina to Panama, Turkey to Tunisia, and France to Denmark — not to mention Israel. Yet American Jews nonetheless lived with a kind of innocence: surely nothing on the scale of Pittsburgh was conceivable here.

That innocence has been shattered, of course. It has happened, and 11 Jews, pillars of the proud Pittsburgh community, were murdered in a house of worship by a killer intent on destroying Jewish lives.

Many are understandably dazed, depressed and disoriented. If it could unfold in Pittsburgh, it could take place anywhere. The 11 are us, and we are they. Whether we knew them or not, they were probably not more than two degrees of separation from us, and to look at their photos was to see pictures of our own family, our friends, our neighbors and, yes, ourselves.

After 80 Years, Antisemitism Endures But So Does Our Resolve to Confront It

Brian Siegal and Annette Klein *The Miami Herald* November 8, 2018

<https://www.miamiherald.com/opinion/op-ed/article221353785.html>

One week after the murder of 11 worshipers at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, Shabbat, Judaism's day of rest, took on heightened poignancy. Inspired by an AJC-created campaign to #ShowUpForShabbat,

Jewish communities across the U.S. and around the globe gathered in synagogue, joined by allies of all beliefs, to send a powerful message: We are not afraid, and we are not alone.

3 Lessons About Antisemitism We Should Learn from the Pittsburgh Synagogue Attack

Deborah Lipstadt *Time* October 30, 2018

<https://time.com/5438424/pittsburgh-synagogue-shooting-anti-semitism/>

I was at a resort outside of Phoenix preparing for an uncharacteristically – for me that is – relaxing day. Armed with a stack of books (admittedly, most of them dealt with the

Holocaust), I had planned a day sitting by one of the pools reading. Some would call it a busman's holiday, but I anticipated it with pleasure.

The Future of the Pittsburgh Synagogue Massacre

Jonathan D. Sarna Tablet Magazine November 5, 2018

<https://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-news-and-politics/274291/future-pittsburgh-synagogue-massacre>

In the early morning hours of Oct. 12, 1958, exactly 60 years to the month before the massacre of 11 Jews in Pittsburgh's Tree of Life Synagogue, a nitroglycerine bomb equal to 50 sticks of dynamite tore apart the Temple, the oldest and most distinguished Reform congregation in Atlanta. "The sound of the blast traveled heavily for miles," Melissa Fay

Greene recounts in her all-too-timely history of that sadly forgotten antisemitic episode, The Temple Bombing. The Confederate Underground, the group that claimed credit for the attack, promised in a telephone call "to blow up all Communist organizations. Negroes and Jews are hereby declared aliens."

After Pittsburgh and Poway, Here's What Jews Need to Know About White Supremacy

AJC May 3, 2019

<https://www.ajc.org/news/after-pittsburgh-and-poway-heres-what-jews-need-to-know-about-white-supremacy>

1. It Was Born in the United States

White nationalism, a movement that focuses on preserving the political power and authority of the white race, originated in the U.S. and provided powerful inspiration for Adolf Hitler and the Nazis. "It was America that taught

us a nation should not open its doors equally to all nations," Hitler told The New York Times a year before he rose to Germany's helm. Today's white nationalists often see themselves as patriots, defending America's founding principles dating to colonial times.

Antisemitism: France's experience must serve as a warning for Germany

Simone Rodan-Benzaquen AJC July 23, 2019


<https://www.ajc.org/news/anti-semitism-frances-experience-must-serve-as-a-warning-for-germany>

One week in June in Germany: On a Sunday, a 20-year-old Jew is spit on in Berlin. On the same day, a rabbi in Düsseldorf is threatened and escapes a mob. The following Wednesday, a young Jew is beaten by strangers. On Thursday, a rabbi in Hamburg and another

community member are threatened and verbally abused with antisemitic slurs. As always, politicians express their shock after these attacks and stress that an attack on Jews is an attack on society as a whole.

3 Things to Know About Antisemitism in Germany: 'The Guy Isn't a Lone Wolf'

 AJC  October 10, 2019

 <https://www.ajc.org/news/3-things-to-know-about-antisemitism-in-germany-the-guy-isnt-a-lone-wolf>

As worshipers inside the Humboldt Street synagogue in the eastern German city of Halle focused their prayers on forgiveness and repentance Wednesday, the assailant outside aimed a camera and his gun. He livestreamed his anti-Jewish diatribes. He broadcast his attempts to blow up and break down the locked door of the synagogue. He recorded the man he shot at point blank range and the

lifeless body of a woman he shot in the back.

While millions of Jews around the world observed Yom Kippur, their most solemn and holy day, 2,200 people watched the 35-minute video of murder and mayhem narrated in English and German before the streaming site, Twitch, finally took it down.

To Fight Antisemitism in America We need to Understand its Sources




 Rabbi Joshua Davidson  Times of Israel  November 19, 2018

 <https://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/to-fight-anti-semitism-in-america-we-need-to-understand-its-sources/>

The attack at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh has impelled many American Jews to join the battle against antisemitism in America today, a campaign heretofore waged by a handful of dedicated Jewish communal organizations. But fighting American

antisemitism begins with understanding its source, or more accurately—its sources. The American Jewish Committee's David Harris identifies three: the jihadism of radicalized Islamists, the nativism of the alt-right, and the anti-Zionism of the far left.

To Fight Antisemitism, be a Proud Jew

 Bari Weiss  The New York Times  September 6, 2019

 <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/06/opinion/sunday/anti-semitism.html>

Since you are reading this, I probably don't have to tell you that the news these days is not good for the Jews.

For the past two decades, American Jews

watched antisemitism re-emerge around the world with concern, but perhaps also a bit of condescension. We were the luckiest diaspora in history. Our metal detectors were little more than a precaution.

What You Can Do

Urge your Representative to Join the Bipartisan Taskforce for Combating Antisemitism

Late last year, a gunman walked into a synagogue in Pittsburgh and murdered 11 Jews at prayer. This most lethal antisemitic attack in American history was a wake-up call, highlighting the fact that antisemitic incidents in the U.S. rose nearly 60% in 2018. Less than a year later, another attacker gunned down congregants at a Synagogue in Poway, California, murdering one person and injuring three.

At AJC, we've been sounding the alarm about resurgent antisemitism at home and abroad for nearly two decades. That's because before Pittsburgh, there were Toulouse and Burgas... there were Copenhagen and Paris... innocent Jews killed just for being Jewish. A terrifying report commissioned by the European Union and released in December finds that 89% of European Jews say antisemitism has increased over the past five years. Almost 40% have considered leaving Europe for good. There is an urgent need for American attention to antisemitism at home and abroad, and the Bipartisan Taskforce for Combating Antisemitism is primed for impact. Urge your Representative to join this timely and essential caucus.

📄 https://global.ajc.org/take-action/taskforce?ms=wb_act_20191007_TakeAction

Email Your U.S. Representative – Possible Messages

Act to Combat Antisemitism

Dear (recipient name),

As your constituent, I am writing to encourage you to join the Bipartisan Taskforce for Combating Antisemitism. In the wake of rising antisemitic incidents and rhetoric in the United States and around the globe, it is vital for Congress to exert much-needed leadership. This caucus plays a critical role in coordinating congressional efforts, such as legislation and interparliamentary engagement, to combat antisemitism.

As you know, antisemitism has seen a disturbing resurgence in the United States. Late last year, a gunman walked into a synagogue in Pittsburgh and murdered 11 Jews at prayer. This most lethal antisemitic attack in American history was a wake-up call, highlighting the fact that antisemitic incidents in the U.S. rose nearly 60% in 2018.

The Bipartisan Taskforce for Combating Anti-Semitism — started in 2015 by Representatives Nita Lowey (D-NY), Chris Smith (R-NJ), Eliot Engel (D-NY), Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), Marc Veasey (D-TX), Kay Granger (R-TX), Ted Deutch (D-FL), and Peter Roskam (R-IL) — works with government officials and diplomatic contacts to craft policies aimed at protecting Jewish communities, monitor antisemitic incidents, prevent radicalized young people from turning to terrorism, and educate against antisemitism. I appreciate your consideration of my views on this critical matter and encourage you to join this important taskforce.

Sincerely,

Thank You

Dear (recipient name),

Thank you for being a member of the Bipartisan Taskforce to Combat Antisemitism. Your support for strong and enduring U.S. leadership in the effort to confront antisemitism is necessary to press governments to defend vulnerable Jewish communities and combat hate.

Congress plays a critical role in combating antisemitism at home and abroad. Congress has repeatedly promoted the adoption of the Working Definition of antisemitism, most recently by passing the Combating European Antisemitism Act, which the President signed into law on January 14, 2019.

I urge you to use your leadership position to engage with foreign diplomats and counterparts to encourage tangible steps to combat antisemitism, including the adoption and utilization of the Working Definition on antisemitism. Antisemitism springs from the political right and the political left. It also emanates from extremist ideologies propagated in the name of Islam.

Now, more than ever, it is vital that you and all members of the Taskforce speak out against Holocaust denial, the BDS movement, and the demonization of Israel. Again, thank you for being a member of the Bipartisan Taskforce to Combat Antisemitism.

Sincerely,



AJC Shows Up Against Hate—Co-Sponsor The NO HATE Act

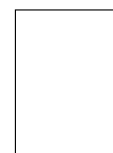
Dear _____,

As your constituent, I encourage you to cosponsor legislation to promote and incentivize hate crime reporting. The National Opposition to Hate, Assaults, and Threats to Equality (NO HATE) Act, introduced by Representatives Don Beyer (D-VA) and Pete Olson (R-TX), the Khalid Jabara and Heather Heyer NO HATE Act, introduced by Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), will improve hate crime reporting through law enforcement trainings, the creation of reporting hotlines, increasing resources to liaise with affected communities, and public educational forums on hate crimes.

Hate crimes divide our society, terrorize communities, and ultimately threaten all Americans. Due to inaccurate and incomplete hate crime reporting, we lack a complete understanding of the national problem posed by these crimes. These measures will allow law enforcement agencies to assess and ultimately reduce bias-motivated crime across the United States.

Please consider cosponsoring and supporting this important legislation. Thank you for considering my views on this matter.

Sincerely,



Appendices

Defining Antisemitism

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism is a crucial first step in addressing the horrific rise in antisemitism, especially in Europe. The Working Definition is a clear and compact description of antisemitism in its various forms, including Holocaust denial, prejudices against Jews, and the denial of Israel's right to exist. The Definition sends a message that governments understand the threat, which is the obvious first step in addressing it. AJC was involved in the original drafting of the definition 14 years ago and continues to urge European governments to adopt it. To date, 15 nations have adopted the definition and the EU, along with the UN's Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion, have called for all member states, respectively, to adopt it.*

Working Definition of Antisemitism:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

*<https://www.ajc.org/the-working-definition-of-antisemitism>

To guide IHRA in its work, the following examples may serve as illustrations:

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.

- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).

Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property — such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries — are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.

Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.

Facts & Figures on Antisemitism in the U.S.

Jewish Population Overview

The global Jewish population was estimated at **14,606,000** in 2018.

The largest Jewish populations outside of Israel are located in **15 countries** in the Americas and Western and Eastern Europe:

- **45% (about 6.5 million Jews)** are located in the **Americas**:
 - The majority are in the U.S., where they account for **2% of the population**.
 - **390,000** reside in Canada.
- Approximately **1,015,000** Jews (6.9% of the world's Jewry) live in **Western Europe**.
- Approximately **320,000** Jews live in **Eastern Europe**.
- Approximately **200,000** Jews live in the **Asia-Pacific & Oceania** regions:
 - The largest populations in these regions reside in **Australia** (91,000), **Iran** (10,000) and **New Zealand** (7,000).
- Approximately **7,179,400** Jews live in the **Middle East** and **North Africa**, mostly in **Israel**.
- Approximately **70,000** Jews live in **South Africa**.

Recent Antisemitic Incidents

In 2016, the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the FBI reported **1,538 hate crimes** motivated by religious bias.

- **54.2%** of perpetrators declared an **anti-Jewish bias**.
- In 2017, this number increased to **58%**.

What is a **hate crime**?

- The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) defines a hate crime as targeting an individual or group for association with one or more of these characteristics: **race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or gender**.
- Offender's perception that the victim belonged to a group identified by these characteristics (e.g., perceived as Jewish because at a synagogue) also constitutes a hate crime.

Comparatively, **41% of all hate crimes** committed in Canada in 2017 were motivated by bias against people's religious orientation.

- There were 842 instances of hate crimes motivated by religious orientation.
- 83% increase from 2016.

The FBI breaks down these instances into six categories: **Physical Assaults, Theft/Robbery, Damage to Property, Arson, Threats/Threatening Behavior, and Unspecified**. In 2017, the FBI recorded:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Physical Assaults: 69 instances. | • Threats/Threatening Behavior: 179 instances. |
| • Theft/Robbery: 26 instances. | • Unspecified: 4 instances. |
| • Damage to Property: 696 instances. | • 311 other offenses were committed with two or more biases. |
| • Arson: 2 instances. | |

📅 Changes from 2017-2018

Antisemitic incidents in the U.S. rose nearly **60%** in 2018, according to the FBI.

In 2017, the FBI reported **1,679 hate crimes** motivated by religious bias.

- **58.1%** were **anti-Jewish crimes**.
- **976** specific **anti-Jewish offenses**.
- A total of **1,017 victims**.

64% of Americans say Jews face at least some discrimination.

- This is a **20% increase** from 2016.
- Jews facing “a lot” of discrimination has risen from **13% to 24%** since 2016.

From 2017 and 2018, global antisemitic incidents **spiked dramatically**.

- **Violent manifestations of antisemitism** (physical attacks) increased worldwide by **13%** in 2018.

❗ What Impact Does This Have on American Jews?

Compared to a year ago, is the status of Jews in the United States **more secure or less secure**?

- **More secure** than a year ago: **15%**
- **Less secure** than a year ago: **65%**
- **About the same** as a year ago: **17%**
- No opinion: **3%**

Compared to a year ago, is the climate on college campuses **less hostile or more hostile toward pro-Israel students**?

- **Less hostile** than a year ago: **9%**
- **More hostile** than a year ago: **57%**
- **About the same** as a year ago: **17%**
- No opinion: **18%**

Antisemitic incidents have become more frequent in Europe. **Do you think that Jews have a future as Jews in Europe, or should they leave now?**

- **Jews have a future** as Jews in Europe: **75%**
- **Jews should leave now**: **17%**
- No opinion: **8%**

🚩 A Worsening Situation for American Jews

Since the mass shootings at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh and a Chabad synagogue north of San Diego, **65% of American Jews feel less secure** as a Jew in the U.S. than they did a year ago.

57% of American Jews believe college campuses have become more hostile toward supporters of Israel.

- This result reflects efforts by the **anti-Israel Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement (BDS)** to **mobilize students** to push their universities to adopt BDS policies.

Generational divides on views of acceptable behavior:

- Americans under 35 are **less likely** to view antisemitism as a major problem.
- Americans under 35 are **less likely** than older Americans to find certain behaviors to be unacceptable.

Source: AJC annual survey of U.S. Jewish opinion; June, 2019

Additional Resources

AJC 2019 Surveys of American, French, and Israeli Jewish Opinion

<http://www.ajc.org/survey2019>

Kantor Center, Tel Aviv University General Analysis (2018)

<http://www.kantorcenter.tau.ac.il/sites/default/files/Antisemitism%20Worldwide%202018.pdf>

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

Antisemitism: Overview of data available in the European Union 2007-2017

https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-antisemitism-update-2007-2017_en.pdf

FRA Survey (2018)

<https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2018/2nd-survey-discrimination-hate-crime-against-jews>

OSCE/ODHIR Hate Crime Reporting (Antisemitism)

<http://hatecrime.osce.org/what-hate-crime/anti-semitism>

FBI Hate Crime Statistics (most recent 2017)

<https://ucr.fbi.gov/hate-crime/2017>

Pew Research--Measuring attitudes toward Muslims and Jews in Western Europe

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/06/01/qa-measuring-attitudes-toward-muslims-and-jews-in-western-europe/>

Jewish Virtual Library Antisemitism page

<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/anti-semitism>

U.S. Department of Justice Summit on Combating Antisemitism (July 2019)

<https://www.justice.gov/opa/gallery/summit-combatting-anti-semitism>

שנאת חנם

A Resource Guide for Rabbis & Others on Antisemitism

on the first anniversary of the attack
at Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh

OCTOBER 27, 2019

This guide was prepared with the assistance of the following AJC Rabbinic Professionals:

Rabbi Andrew Baker

Rabbi Andrew Baker is AJC's director of international Jewish affairs and a leading expert on antisemitism in Europe. Since joining AJC in 1979, he previously served as director of European Affairs, promoting tolerance in the emerging democracies of Central and Eastern Europe.

Rabbi Noam Marans

Rabbi Noam Marans is the American Jewish Committee's Director of Interreligious and Intergroup Relations and Chair of IJCIC, the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations. In this role, he spearheads the agency's national interfaith outreach and advocacy programs. Before joining AJC in 2001, he served as rabbi of Temple Israel in Ridgewood, NJ for sixteen years.

Rabbi David Rosen

Rabbi David Rosen is the American Jewish Committee's International Director of Interreligious Affairs and has been advancing understanding and good relations between religious communities for more than forty years. He previously served as rabbi of the largest Orthodox Jewish congregation in South Africa, and Chief Rabbi of Ireland, and has spent the last thirty years in Jerusalem.

Rabbi Serena Eisenberg

Rabbi Serena Eisenberg is the Northern California Director of the AJC. Before that she served as Executive Director of Hillels at Stanford University and Brown University and was a Jerusalem Fellow at the Mandel Leadership Institute while on sabbatical. She began her career as an advocate and child-welfare ombudsman in a number of different settings.

Rabbi Asher Lopatin

Rabbi Asher Lopatin is Executive Director of Community Relations Council of Metropolitan Detroit (JCRC) and American Jewish Committee (AJC): A Partnership for Community Relations and Jewish Advocacy. He was the founding rabbi of Kehillat Etz Chayim, a modern Orthodox synagogue in metropolitan Detroit, and founding director of the Detroit Center for Civil Discourse, a nonprofit designed to bring diverse people together in enriching dialogue.

Rabbi David Levy

Rabbi David Levy is regional director of AJC New Jersey. Prior to joining AJC, he served as rabbi of Temple Shalom of Succasunna, NJ, Congregation Kol Haverim of Glastonbury, CT, Congregation B'nai El of St. Louis, MO, and associate rabbi of Congregation B'nai Jeshurun of Short Hills, NJ.

Developed for AJC by Bluelight Strategies.

Special thanks to Rabbi Ken Cohen and Jerome Copulsky.

Copyright ©2019 American Jewish Committee

AJC Global Jewish
Advocacy

#ShowUpForShabbat

