



Kristallnacht

9–10 November (1938)
Night of the Broken Glass

The Oranienburger
Strasse Synagogue
that was burnt
by the Nazis on
Kristallnacht.

1964-2020

*Celebrating 56 years
of publishing*

GEORGE FREY OAM -
FOUNDING EDITOR, 1964

(Credit: AP/REX/Shutterstock)

Kristallnacht

COMMEMORATION

ON SUNDAY 8 NOVEMBER, COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND RESIDENTS WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN A SPECIAL KRISTALLNACHT COMMEMORATION SERVICE TO BE HELD AT THE BRISBANE HEBREW CONGREGATION (BHC).

KRISTALLNACHT WAS A POGROM AGAINST JEWS, CARRIED OUT BY PARAMILITARY FORCES, THROUGHOUT NAZI GERMANY AND AUSTRIA, OVER THE NIGHTS OF 9 AND 10 NOVEMBER 1938.

JEWISH BUSINESSES, PLACES OF WORSHIP AND JEWISH HOMES WERE VANDALIZED, LOOTED AND BURNED OVER THIS PERIOD. MORE THAN 100 PEOPLE WERE MURDERED AND **30,000 JEWISH PEOPLE** WERE ROUNDED UP AND **DEPORTED TO CONCENTRATION AND PRISONER CAMPS.**





Kristallnacht is also known as the “night of broken glass”, in reference to the mass destruction of shops and synagogues and the shattered glass of windows. The impact of Kristallnacht is still seen today in the form of neo Nazi and white supremacist marches and provocations throughout the world.

Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies (QJBD) Holocaust Commemorations Chair Eddy Berkovitz said Kristallnacht provided an occasion for all individuals to stand up against hatred.

“In addition to the horrors committed over the two nights, Kristallnacht represented a lost opportunity for people to make a stand against the evils of racism and extremism,” Eddy said.

“In fact, some would argue that the silence (the German authorities and others looked on without intervening) only acted to encourage the rise of the Nazi regime throughout Europe and, subsequently, the murder of more than six million Jewish people.”

The evening will feature a talk by Brigidine College teacher Nidean Dickson, and “Not just a survivor” author Rochy Miller. The book is a portrait of Rochy’s mother – an exploration of how her mother “spent her entire life trying to make sense of an inexplicable trauma that ruled her life and decimated her past”.

**THE EVENING WILL BEGIN AT
6.30PM AT BHC, 98 MARGARET ST.**

Zachor Candles have been distributed across the community and we encourage all of our community members to light a candle in memory of those who were murdered by the Nazi’s. This should be done on the night of the 9th November and will be a part of a worldwide activity coordinated by “March of the Living”. If you did not receive a candle, just light one of your own on this night and if possible put the image on Facebook or any other social media you use.

For more information, contact

Paul Myers

President

Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies

M: 0403 062 007

E: paul.myers@qlbd.org

Kristallnacht

November 1938-2020

#LETTHEREBELIGHT

**INTERNATIONAL MARCH OF THE LIVING GLOBAL INITIATIVE
TO UNITE AGAINST ANTISEMITISM, INTOLERANCE AND HATRED**

1938

On November 9, 1938, over 1000 synagogues were destroyed on Kristallnacht - The Night of Broken Glass, believed to be a seminal moment that led to the Holocaust.

2020

On November 9, 2020, we pledge to relight them by raising our voices against today's attacks on synagogues and all Houses of Worship around the world.

Join this global campaign by pledging to **KEEP THE LIGHT ON** in your Houses of Worship, institutions and private homes on the night of November 9th.

**TOGETHER, WE WILL UNITE THE
WORLD BY SHEDDING LIGHT
ON THE DARKNESS OF HATE.**

Beginning November 2, 2020
enter your pledge by visiting
www.motl.org/let-there-be-light

"The Nazis knew one thing: If you want to hurt the Jew, you have to hurt the synagogue. The heart of the Jewish people is the synagogue...on the night of the 9th of November, make them full of light...it shows that we are not only with the past, with remembrance, but with hope for a beautiful light-filled future."

- Rabbi Israel Meir Lau

Dr. Shmuel Rosenman
Chairman
International March of the Living

Rabbi Israel Meir Lau
Chief Rabbi
Tel Aviv-Yafo

Phyllis Greenberg Heideman
President
International March of the Living

Cedric Geffen, President - MOTL Australia, 0451-150239, cedric@motl.com.au
or Matan Franco, Administrator - MOTL Australia, 0425-720993, admin@motl.com.au

March of the Living launches global interfaith initiative to commemorate Kristallnacht:

#LetThereBeLight

- #LetThereBeLight campaign will invite people of all religions from around the world to illuminate homes, institutions and places of worship
- Frankfurt's main synagogue will be illuminated, as well as other religious institutions around the world
- Personal prayers and messages from the virtual campaign to be projected onto the Walls of the Old City of Jerusalem

On November 9, 1938, a two-day pogrom began during which the Nazis burned more than 1,400 synagogues and Jewish institutions in Germany and Austria on 'Kristallnacht' (The Night of Broken Glass), a critical moment in the chain of events that led to the Holocaust.

On November 9, 2020, March of the Living will mark Kristallnacht with a message of unity and hope, through a unique international campaign. Titled "Let There Be Light", March of the Living will invite individuals, institutions and Houses of Worship across the world to keep their lights on during the night of November 9th, as a symbol of solidarity and mutual commitment in the shared battle against anti-Semitism, racism, hatred and intolerance.

As part of this historic virtual initiative, people from all over the world will be able to add their voice to the campaign. Individuals of all religions and backgrounds are invited to write personal messages of hope in their own words at the campaign website:

www.motl.org/letthere-be-light

The main synagogue in Frankfurt (one of the few not destroyed on Kristallnacht) will be illuminated as well as and at other places of religious and spiritual significance across the world. Personal messages and prayers from the virtual campaign will be projected on the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem. As such, against the backdrop of rising anti-Semitism and racism, the shadow of Covid-19, these individual expressions of optimism and unity will help illuminate the world against darkness and hatred.

March of the Living President, Phyllis Greenberg Heideman & March of the Living World Chair, Dr. Shmuel Rosenman: "We must use our voices to tell the world that attacks on Jews and non-Jews alike, whether on the basis of religion, race, color or creed are inexcusable. In the days when synagogues and holy places for various religions are attacked on a regular basis all over the world, it is our duty to speak out loudly and clearly."

Head of the Jewish Community Frankfurt am Main, Prof. Dr. Salomon Korn: "Anti-Semitism and racism threaten our society as a whole, they endanger our values and our democracy. Together we want to send a signal against the increase of anti-Semitism and hate-speech all over the world. We want to raise awareness against growing discrimination and intolerance and bring the light of humanity in these difficult times".

John Farmer, Director of the Eagleton Institute of Politics, at the Miller Center: "Kristallnacht marked a fundamental turning point in the historical movement from culturally based anti-Semitism to state-sanctioned genocide. On November 9, 1938, the antisemitic propaganda to which the Jewish population had been subjected for years was transformed to open violence, sanctioned by the state. Commemorating that dark day in human history is particularly significant today, as the hatred that has been rising over social media has begun erupting into violence against the Jewish and other faiths. It is imperative that such darkness be refuted by light: the light that will shine on houses of worship throughout the world tonight, and the light of truth that shames all forms of hatred."

March of the Living is the largest annual international Holocaust education program of its kind in the world. The event is considered a major part of the annual Yom Hashoah commemorations. To date, more than 300,000 March of the Living participants, from 52 countries have walked the route of the march, the 3.2-kilometer-long railroad tracks from Auschwitz to Birkenau.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, for the first time since its inception, the annual March did not take place in Poland this year. Instead, as part of a virtual commemorative project, March of the Living launched an international digital initiative in which Israel's President Reuven Rivlin was the first to lay a virtual plaque on the virtual train track of Birkenau, followed by Holocaust survivors and their families. In total, more than 18,000 people from 60 countries around the world took part in the online event.

For further details on how your institution, house of prayer, organization etc can engage in this global initiative please contact:

Cedric Geffen, President – March of the Living Australia, cedric@motl.com.au

Matan Franco, Administrator – March of the Living Australia, admin@motl.com.au



**QUEENSLAND ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH
EX SERVICEMEN & WOMEN (QAJEX)**

Remembrance Day 2020

All Jewish Ex-servicemen & Women, their families & members
of the Jewish Community are again invited to attend;

Annual Pilgrimage to the Lutwyche Cemetery

On

**Remembrance Day,
Sunday 15 November 2020 at 11am**
(Please assemble 10.45am sharp)

Each year to mark Remembrance Day the Queensland Association of Jewish Ex-Service Men & Women (QAJEX) and communal friends attend a special Service at the Gravesites of Jewish Servicemen who died while serving during the 2nd World War & who are buried at Lutwyche Cemetery in Brisbane.

As decades have passed since 1945 fewer & fewer Jewish Ex-Service Men & Women are available to attend this Service to pay tribute to those Jewish service personnel who gave the supreme sacrifice during the World Wars & other conflicts.

QAJEX appeals to you to attend this year's Annual Pilgrimage to the Lutwyche Cemetery on Sunday the 15th of November commencing at 11.00am sharp.

The Service is not lengthy.

Loris Roubin QAJEX (0418 300 529 / loris_r@hotmail.com)

Remembrance Day, 11 November:

Originally called Armistice Day, this day commemorated the end of the hostilities for the Great War (World War I), the signing of the armistice, which occurred on 11 November 1918 (the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month).

Armistice Day was observed by the Allies as a way of remembering those who died, especially soldiers with 'no known grave'.

After the end of World War II in 1945, the Australian and British Governments changed the name to Remembrance Day as an appropriate title for a day which would commemorate all war dead. In October 1997, then Governor-General of Australia, Sir William Deane, issued a proclamation declaring:

“11 November as Remembrance Day and urging Australians to observe one minute's silence at 11.00 am on Remembrance Day each year to remember the sacrifice of those who died or otherwise suffered in Australia's cause in wars and war-like conflicts.”

History in the making: a Holocaust museum and education centre to be established in Queensland



QJBD Vice President Jason Steinberg, Senator Amanda Stoker, Holocaust Survivor Peter Baruch, QJBD President Paul Myers outside the Brisbane Hebrew Congregation Synagogue where the announcement was made

The Queensland Jewish community has welcomed the announcement by the Australian Government to contribute \$3.5m to help establish a permanent Holocaust Museum and Education Centre in Queensland.

The museum will honour the six million Jews and 5 million other minorities murdered in the Holocaust by delivering educational programs about the Holocaust and other genocides.

Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies Vice-President Jason Steinberg said the announcement was an historic day for Queensland.

"Incidents of anti-Semitism and racial vilification are growing in Queensland, with right-wing extremist groups targeting our communities with their hate-filled messages," Mr Steinberg said.

"One antidote to this kind of hate is to educate people about the devastation caused by the world's most evil, racially motivated campaign," he said.

"We appreciate the commitment from Federal Treasurer Josh Frydenberg, Minister for Education Daniel Tehan, and Senator Amanda Stoker for their support for today's announcement to establish the museum in Queensland.

"At its core, the museum will help to empower individuals to stand up against hatred and prejudice, with the aim of preventing such violence and marginalisation from happening again.

"As new research from the United States this month shows, knowledge of the Holocaust is shocking – 23 per cent of adults aged 18–39 surveyed said they believed the Holocaust was a myth, had been exaggerated or weren't sure.

History in the making: a Holocaust museum and education centre to be established in Queensland

"The development of a museum in Queensland is invaluable to ensure our state's adults, children and future generations understand what happened.

"This high-tech and modern centre will support and nurture a more tolerant Queensland – now and in the future."

This announcement means that Queensland can now join the ranks of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia, all of whom have permanent Holocaust museums and education centres.

93 year-old Holocaust survivor and long-time advocate for Queensland's Holocaust survivors, George Stein, said the museum announcement was wonderful news.

"As the number of survivors decreases every year, a memorial to all the victims is very important," Mr Stein said.

"For all Queenslanders and visitors to have the opportunity to hear and learn about the Shoah (Holocaust) is vital for future generations.

"We must never forget what happened in the Shoah."

In July 1982, Mr Stein organised the State's first Holocaust exhibition, held in Brisbane's City Hall over a number of weeks. It was attended by more than 10,000 people and hundreds of school groups. Then-Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen was the exhibition's patron.

It is expected the museum will gather objects and stories from survivors and their families, especially those from Queensland. Other world genocides will also be highlighted in educational programs.

Yad Vashem, the world Holocaust remembrance centre in Israel, has offered to provide resources to support the new centre, as has other Jewish and Holocaust museums.

Using the latest technology to create guided and online education experiences, the museum will be situated as close to Brisbane's CBD as possible.

It will also work with Queensland teachers, including the 30+ teachers who have participated in the Gandel Philanthropy's Holocaust Studies Program for Australian Educators, to help provide quality resources that will provide better learning outcomes for students.

Nikki Marczak, genocide scholar and Atrocity Prevention Coordinator with the Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect at the University of Queensland, commended the project, saying there was a strong imperative to build public awareness of the Holocaust and other genocides.

Education about past and current atrocity crimes can help reduce racial and religious hatred and enhance community cohesion. Indeed, remembrance and education are crucial aspects of genocide prevention," Ms Marczak said.

As the roof body of the Jewish community, one of the aims of the Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies is to raise awareness of the Holocaust and preserve its memory. The organisation has partnered with a range of organisations for the past five years to increase education and progress the concept of a permanent museum.

Queensland Holocaust Museum and Education Centre receives financial commitments from all three levels of government

The establishment of the Queensland Holocaust Museum and Education Centre took a massive step toward becoming a reality with the announcement by Queensland Minister for Multicultural Affairs Stirling Hinchliffe, that a re-elected Palaszczuk Government will commit \$3.5m to the facility.

Brisbane Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner also expressed his support and announced a commitment of \$500,000 towards the museum.

The announcements were made at a special function on 22 October honouring the heroic efforts of a Dutch couple, who saved Jewish lives during the Holocaust.

Last month, the Morrison Government committed \$3.5m to the facility, which was followed by a commitment by LNP leader Deb Frecklington that an elected LNP Government would match the \$3.5m.

Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies Vice-President Jason Steinberg said the commitments from all three levels of government was wonderful news for the Jewish community, survivors and their families, as well as the entire state.

"We are so grateful to all our political leaders at a Federal, State and local level for their support of this project, which will become a legacy for all Queenslanders in learning about the Holocaust and other genocides," Jason said.

"This initiative would not be possible without the commitments from Federal Treasurer Josh Frydenberg, Federal Education Minister Daniel Tehan, Senator Amanda Stoker, Queensland Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk, Queensland Treasurer Cameron Dick, Queensland Minister for Multicultural Affairs Stirling Hinchliffe, Queensland LNP leader Deb Frecklington, Queensland MP Steve Minnikin, and Brisbane Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner.

"Our dream is that when it opens, the museum and education centre will provide a world-class learning in-person and on-line experience that will create a more just, tolerant society."

For more information, contact Jason Steinberg on 0411 239 396 or email: jason.steinberg@qjbd.org



What can the new Qld Holocaust museum teach us?

By Nikki Marczak



NIKKI MARCZAK: It can lay the foundation for students to think about the violent harms caused by prejudice, from the Holocaust to Stolen Generations and, despite 'Never Again', genocides happening under our watch

WHEN SENATOR FRASER ANNING used his maiden speech in 2018 to dog-whistle to Queensland's far right, referring to a "final solution" on Australia's immigration policy, even Queensland's quintessential xenophobe, Pauline Hanson, was appalled. Treasurer Josh Frydenberg said Anning should "immediately go and visit a Holocaust museum".

Anning hasn't taken up the challenge as far as I'm aware, but he will soon be able to in his home state capital, where the Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies (QJBD) has secured \$3.5m Commonwealth government funding for the development of a "Holocaust Museum and Education Centre." It will join Victoria, NSW, South Australia and Western Australia in having a dedicated remembrance and teaching facility, something advocates argue is necessary given the haphazard approach to Holocaust teaching in Queensland schools.

Lee McNamee, board member of the QJBD and Courage to Care (a travelling anti-bullying exhibition that centres on the actions of rescuers during the Holocaust), says that although WWII is

covered in the state's history curriculum, teaching of the Holocaust is not compulsory.

Holocaust education is a core pillar of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), which Australia joined as a member in 2019. It has taken on a higher priority in light of serious cases of anti-Semitic bullying in Victoria, which led to an independent inquiry into anti-Semitism in schools and a subsequent process to develop Holocaust resources for Victorian schools as a mandatory part of the curriculum in Grades 9 and 10.

The government's support for the Queensland museum aligns with its commitment as a member of IHRA.

Conversations about how the Holocaust should be taught and what difference it can make are always evolving, yet they continue to arouse strong opinions. In 2020, the context for those discussions is incredibly complex – escalating anti-Semitism and other forms of racism around the world, ever more polarised communities, the spread of hate speech on social media, and the dismantling of democratic values.

While there appears to be a persistent gap in knowledge about the Holocaust among younger generations, Stephen Smith of the USC Shoah Foundation, cites evidence of positive effects to date, such as a greater willingness among participants in Holocaust programs to take action in bullying situations and to challenge incorrect information.

The importance of developing those skills cannot be overstated in the current climate. Dr Avril Alba, who as former Education Director at the Sydney Jewish Museum (SJM) led the development of a permanent exhibition exploring connections between the Holocaust and human rights, says the success of Holocaust museums "is whether and how they can provide forums for critical thinking and reflection that compel their visitors

What can the new Qld Holocaust museum teach us?

By Nikki Marczak

to aspire to greater personal and communal vigilance with regard to safeguarding societies from destructive, anti-democratic and hateful ideologies".

The local Queensland context will be vital, both in terms of exploring the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and in understanding Jewish history in Queensland and the contributions of migrants and refugees both before and after the Holocaust.

A review of Holocaust education by the IHRA found that "teachers and students perceive and experience TLH [teaching and learning about the Holocaust] to be qualitatively different from other subjects and take the subject quite seriously," a view that is echoed by Holocaust educators who see a shift in their students that continues well after a museum experience.

One staff member of a Sunshine Coast school noted that the Courage to Care (C2C) exhibition "has been a touchstone for students' discernment of ethical dilemmas"; students at a Brisbane private school that hosted a temporary Yad Vashem exhibit speak of similarly profound responses.

There are clear benefits of a dedicated space for Holocaust education. Emeritus Professor at

the University of Sydney and member of the Education Working Group of IHRA, Suzanne Rutland says that even if the visit is short, "... it's very concentrated time and it can be very powerful; indeed for some children, it can be life-changing"

She recalls a group of students who visited the SJM, many of whom had endured their own experiences of war in the Sudan. One girl, she says, was so affected she hugged the survivor-educator afterwards and showed a video of the encounter to her parents.



Qld right-wing MP Fraser Anning

Another inevitable debate relates to the extent to which Holocaust programs should impart knowledge of the specific history of Nazism and the genocides perpetrated by that regime, or highlight universal messages of the dangers of prejudice, using the Holocaust as a symbol to teach about all forms of oppression and discrimination.

Yad Vashem in Jerusalem is based on the former "particularist" model. The announcement about the museum indicates a preference for the latter approach, with QJBD Vice-President Jason Steinberg saying, "at its core, the museum will help to empower individuals to stand up against hatred and prejudice..."

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In Australia, learning about the Holocaust can shed light on the diverse range of strategies used to commit genocide, and motivate students to reflect on our country's own history of genocide including the legacy of the Stolen Generations. The local Queensland context will be vital, both in terms of exploring the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and in understanding Jewish history in Queensland and the contributions of migrants and refugees both before and after the Holocaust.

Other discussions with students could entail, for example, an examination of the concept of 'Never Again' in light of the recent and current genocides of the Yazidi, Rohingya and Uighur communities, and the ways in which genocide denial perpetuates injustice, as in the case of the Armenian Genocide.

The Holocaust should not be diminished by careless equations with school-based bullying or racist encounters, and any effective program should be clear about the specificities of both anti-Semitism and the genocidal process. Yet part of the power of Holocaust exhibitions and narratives is the wider application of fundamental principles of acceptance, equality and compassion.

Speaking about the C2C program, McNamee says "it fuses the human story of the Holocaust with the contemporary struggles and conflicts young students and adults encounter in their daily interactions". The situation of refugees is one example she cites of students applying the lessons of the Holocaust to contemporary issues. Suzanne Rutland agrees. "If we don't do that, then Holocaust education is very narrow, because this is not just a Jewish story, but it's also a story of the fear of difference – of prejudice and stereotypes."

It's a tricky balance to strike. What will be key to the museum's philosophy are deep considerations of its intent and methodologies. In view of the digital revolution and spread of disinformation, teaching about Nazi propaganda and targeting of particular groups could train students to better



A Yazidi woman and her children who fled violence in Sinjar rest at the Iraq-Syria border, 2014. (Youssef Boudlal/Reuters)

interrogate contemporary political messaging, to question the social media echo chambers and discern between facts and stereotypes.

Likewise, learning about the lead up to the Holocaust – the gradual legislative changes to discriminate against Jews, the trend towards populism and strongman leaders, the denigration of democratic processes—could encourage students to better analyse what they are seeing happen in the world today, from Poland and Hungary, to Russia, the US and beyond.

Examining Nazi propaganda could aid in a comparative analysis with the spread of genocidal messages on Facebook that contributed to atrocities against Rohingyas in Myanmar, for example, and open students' eyes to the ease of manipulation via social media.

As much as we may wish it to be the case, a museum visit is unlikely to open up the minds of Fraser Anning and supporters of far-right ideologies. Holocaust education is not an inoculation against, or cure for, racism or prejudice, but it is an important element of history, human rights and social cohesion pedagogy. Holocaust museums and education programs can lay the foundation for students to consider the harms caused by prejudice and its most violent manifestations. If students apply that lens to current global events and are motivated by their museum experience to be active change-makers, we can surely have hope for the future.

Nikki Marczak is an Australian genocide scholar and survivor advocate from Brisbane. She is a member of the Australian Institute for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. She works as Atrocity Prevention Coordinator with the Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect at the University of Queensland.

Point of View

By Philip Freier

Sabbath seems counter-cultural but is as important as ever



An Ultra-orthodox Jewish man blows a trumpet to announce the starting of the Sabbath, Judaism's biblically mandated day of rest, at the Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem.

Living through the COVID-19 pandemic certainly makes each of us aware of real-time data. Each day we wait to hear the new numbers of infections and other familiar indicators. It can often seem as if we are living in an attitude of daily hyper-awareness.

In times of crisis, our urge for survival brings us to a powerful present focus. Perhaps this comes from patterns deep within each of us that go back to the fight or flight responses of our ancient ancestors. Do we ever wonder, though, if there is any wisdom that comes from ancient sources that we can look to in these times?

Hidden in plain sight is a truth that offers us deep wisdom for the modern world. That is the Sabbath principle, which seems highly counter-cultural but

in fact is as important as ever: it could help reduce the stress and striving of 21st century culture. The Jewish and Christian scriptures speak of a foundational principle in Creation – that on the seventh day, God rested. God looked and saw all that had been created and declared it good. God's rest was the capstone of the seven days of Creation so rest on the seventh day was ordered for his people.

This principle may have varied in practice between and within the Christian and Jewish traditions, but there is also something in this Sabbath principle that is of universal importance.

Synagogues and churches observe this Sabbath rhythm, a rhythm that is etched into the way we reckon time and count the days of the week. This was a pattern that was reflected in other related practices of ancient Israel, not just a Sabbath day but also a Sabbath year and on the 50th year, the Year of Jubilee.

Point of View

By Philip Freier

At these anniversaries the people rested, the fields and vineyards rested and at the Year of Jubilee, the one that followed seven sevens of years, property rights were restored and the social order was recalibrated to the divinely ordered state of affairs. Obviously enough, the people of antiquity had as much problem with these observances as we would if we take the utterances of the prophets Nehemiah and Jeremiah as evidence of their failure.

Why wouldn't the people of those ancient times, anxious about their crops and fields, have struggled? For them and particularly for us, these seem like preposterous claims. Not stopping with the assertion that enough is enough, the Sabbath principle asserts that six-sevenths is enough. Enough time to work, enough time to manage our affairs and most importantly, one day giving enough time for us to rest as God did.

While the people of antiquity had a different understanding of the limits imposed on humanity, we often act as if there are none, or if there are, they are there to be broken. In agriculture, we celebrate double and triple cropping and even push to achieve four crops a year; we have bred sheep to consistently birth twins and triplets.

In this and many other endeavours, more and bigger are the watch-words. Investment products that exceed the market average, schools with extraordinarily good year 12 results or skyscraper apartment buildings fit naturally into our expectation that limits are to be exceeded and transcended.

Expectations exposed

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed how we have come to rely on this expectation. We easily react with impatience when a vaccine cannot be developed sooner. The experience of constraint on our choice seems crushing. The limits that we experience on our freedom or our control collide harshly with the expectations of most of us.

We are in an opportune place to reconsider the Sabbath principle and what its wisdom might mean in our times. I think that there is a relationship between expectation and gratitude. The more we elevate our expectation the less we have that life-giving response welling within us. Could we be satisfied with six-sevenths and be grateful for that? As we face the distinct possibility of sustained economic recession, six-sevenths of enough may prove to be a wonderful outcome.

Depending on our experience, our expectation may be tuned to more than enough or even much more than enough and six-sevenths of enough may seem a very poor outcome. I suspect that this is the likely reality for some years ahead. We know that the weight of these things always falls heaviest on the poor, and the Sabbath principle speaks to that as well with universal restoration and participation in the Jubilee Year.

The pandemic and lockdown have exacerbated stress levels, but even without these, people constantly complain they are too busy. This ancient wisdom can make our lives much better.

Dr Philip Freier is the Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne.

Holocaust

THE HAPPIEST MAN ON EARTH by Eddie Jaku



This book is 'The Happiest Man on Earth' and the author is a man called Eddie Jaku. Eddie turned 100 years old in April 2020 and has written the story of his life.

When I saw the book and picked it up I thought to myself this is a book that the entire family should read and after reading it myself I can only confirm that view.

Eddie is a Holocaust survivor who spent 7 years in the horrors of concentration camps in both Buchenwald and Auschwitz. He was actually taken to a concentration camp in 1938, a year before the commencement of World War 2. It is very hard to understand the Hardship and the Terror that Eddie experienced during those years, most of his family perished in the concentration camps and Eddie only survived because he was an engineer before the war, and his mechanical skills were often needed in the camps.

In 1950 Eddie made his way to live in Australia and has since that time raised an incredible family of children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. He has worked as volunteer guide at the Sydney Jewish Museum for many, many years and has told his story to a huge number of school children who tour the museum and in fact last year he gave a

Ted Talk which is well worth watching. Below is a link to Eddie's talk for you to see.

**CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE
TED TALK WITH EDDIE JAKU**



Eddie Jaku is an amazing man with an amazing story. If we take the time to consider it and to think about how a man endures such hardship, faces so many challenges and horrors but still talks about kindness, hope and friendship. I am going to make sure my children read Eddie Jaku's book and understand his story and why we mustn't forget it.

Eddie does believe that with his family around him he is 'The Happiest Man on Earth'.

I will leave it to the man himself to take us into today;

**Life can be beautiful if
you make it beautiful.
It is up to you'.
Eddie Jaku**

**Peter Ellis
MBA, DBA, PhD, JP (Qual)**

Health and Genetics

By Alice Moldovan

Ashkenazi Jews face a higher cancer risk because of the BRCA gene. It means 'scanxiety', surgery — and empowerment



Sarah Charak is still deciding how she will manage her personal risk for breast and ovarian cancer.(ABC RN: Alice Moldovan)

Sarah was 23 when she found out that, most likely, over the next 20 years everything that “made me a woman” would have to be surgically removed.

Her breasts and ovaries were “tainted in some way” and put her at risk.

Sarah has up to a 70 per cent chance of developing breast cancer and up to 40 per cent chance of ovarian cancer, due to a BRCA gene fault — the genetic condition made famous by Angelina Jolie.

“I definitely have had moments of anger about it. It's inconvenient. It's upsetting. The thought of the surgeries is scary,” Sarah says.

For the general population, the risk of inheriting a BRCA gene fault is around one in 400.

Ashkenazi Jews, like Sarah, are 10 times more likely to inherit the fault, meaning their risk of cancer is much higher.

Marrying within the community over generations has led to genetic issues like the BRCA gene mutation and diseases like Tay-Sachs and cystic fibrosis, among others.

It means making difficult decisions about surgery, screening and how far to go to prevent passing the gene fault on to the next generation.

This is how four Ashkenazi Jews are navigating those decisions

Health and Genetics

By Alice Moldovan

Life-changing, not life-ruining

When Sarah was in high school, an aunt developed breast cancer. It came a few years after her paternal grandmother was diagnosed with ovarian cancer.

A large number of family members have since tested positive as carriers, so Sarah knew there was a possibility that she might have the gene fault too.



The Charak family has had many positive BRCA tests.
(ABC RN: Alice Moldovan)

She was 23 when she went with her two sisters for the blood test, and describes how her pessimistic viewpoint steeled her.

"My relationship to the test was, 'I should think that I'll probably test positive because then it'll just be confirming what I already thought'. And then I was correct."

Out of Sarah's three siblings, one has tested positive, one negative, and one is yet to take the test.

Sarah is still deciding how she will manage her personal risk for breast cancer, which increases from the age of 30, and ovarian cancer, which increases from 40.



Sarah sees the BRCA gene as simply another part of her Ashkenazi Jewish heritage.(ABC RN: Alice Moldovan)

Then there's the question of undergoing IVF to remove the gene fault from her future children — an expensive and uncomfortable possibility.

Sarah always thought she'd have children naturally, a topic she is now reconsidering with her fiancé.

But overall, she says knowing her positive status is a privilege.

"It's really incredible that it's information that you can know and you can plan for in advance and that you can actually be empowered to make choices that avoid danger," she says.

Unique and a little bit embarrassed'



Geoff Wolf survived breast cancer and unwittingly passed on the BRCA2 gene to his daughter, Tamara.(Supplied: Tamara Wolf)

Health and Genetics

By Alice Moldovan

These developments have come relatively recently.

In the 1990s, we knew much less about the BRCA gene fault — which meant a diagnosis of breast cancer came as a complete shock to Sydney man Geoff Wolf.

"I was told I had more chance of winning the lottery, which unfortunately hasn't happened yet, than of developing breast cancer," he says.

Geoff was a young father of two when he visited an after-hours medical clinic. He wanted the doctor to lance what he thought was a cyst over his left breast.

"Thanks to the astuteness of that doctor, I was sent for tests and very quickly to surgery," he says.

He had a mastectomy and lymph nodes removed from his left side, followed by 30 sessions of radiotherapy.

Geoff says at the time he felt "unique and a little bit embarrassed" when he was waiting for a mammogram.

They'd call out 'Mr Wolf!' and I was the male in the room amongst all of the women."

Soon after finding out he had breast cancer, he took part in a research project within Sydney's Ashkenazi Jewish community, looking into the familial BRCA1 and 2 genetic mutation.

Because his children were already born by the time he found out he was a BRCA2 carrier, he knew there was a risk he had passed the gene fault onto either one or both of his daughters Tamara and Sarah.

"I was most hurt for the girls," he says.



Sarah sees the BRCA gene as simply another part of her Ashkenazi Jewish heritage.(ABC RN: Alice Moldovan)

"Could we have done anything? No. Do I wish I didn't have it? Probably, but knowledge is power."

Living with 'scanxiety'



The Wolf family is managing the health risks of the BRCA2 gene.(Supplied: Tamara Wolf)

Tamara, now 29, says she always knew about the existence of BRCA in her family, inherited from her father.

She was in her early 20s when she started a six-monthly scan regime, undergoing an ultrasound and mammogram each February and an MRI in July.

When she was 27 she decided to do the blood test to find out whether she had inherited the BRCA2 gene mutation from her dad.

It came back positive.

Health and Genetics

By Alice Moldovan

"It wasn't even so much about what that meant for me. But having to tell my parents, that was my biggest fear because I knew that they were so worried about it," she says.

"I was incredibly emotional."

Both her mum and her younger sister tested negative.

After several years of screening, Tamara didn't want to live with what she calls "scanxiety" anymore, so she started the process of having a preventative double mastectomy and breast reconstruction.

After returning home to Sydney from London, where she lives and works, and having her surgery rescheduled three times due to coronavirus, she's recovering well.

She's confident that her choice to remove her risk of breast cancer was the right thing for her, comparing it to the risk of flying.

"If your plane had a 60 to 80 per cent chance of crashing, would you get on that plane?" she says.

"My risk is 68 per cent chance of getting breast cancer ... I'm going to do something about it and I'm going to find an alternative route."

The body is a sacred thing'

Jill Levy has a different view of managing risk and anxiety.

The 65-year-old BRCA1 carrier hasn't had a preventative mastectomy — yet.

She has, however, had an oophorectomy — the surgical removal of her ovaries. Because there's no effective screening for ovarian cancer, Jill decided that she wasn't willing to risk her health in that regard.



Jill says being flexible in her approach to her health has been a freeing experience. (Supplied: Jill Levy)

"Whereas for breast cancer, the screening is extremely effective, so it was a no-brainer for me," she explains.

Jill says living with an 84 per cent chance of developing breast cancer is something she takes in her stride — it still means there's a 16 per cent chance of not getting cancer.

Jill says a holistic view of her health has allowed her to manage the anxiety that comes with having a genetic fault like BRCA.

"Not only is the body a sacred thing, but the body-mind is one entity ... the lifestyle aspect, healthy diet, healthy lifestyle, healthy attitude and outlook play a part in this."

Jill says emphatically that she is not over-confident about avoiding breast cancer thus far, but that being flexible in her approach to her health has been a freeing experience.

"The second I'm diagnosed with one cell of breast cancer, that is when I'll do a mastectomy," she explains.

"And maybe I'll change my mind about that.

"As I say, it's an ongoing decision that I make. But at the moment, that's how I feel."

The philosopher still 'cancelled' after 300 years

By David Rutledge

The Jewish philosopher Spinoza was one of the great Enlightenment thinkers. So why was he cancelled'?



In July 1656, the young philosopher Baruch Spinoza was cast out of his Jewish community for "abominable heresies". (Getty Images: Adoc-Photos)

We often think of cancel culture as a contemporary phenomenon, driven by social media and rife in our hyper-connected world.

But really, punishing people for their ideas and opinions has been going on for as long as people have been thinking.

Take the philosopher Baruch Spinoza. In the mid-17th century, Spinoza was charged with heresy and cast out from his Amsterdam Jewish community.

Since then, he's gone on to be canonised as one of the great Enlightenment thinkers — and even embraced as a hero of Judaism.

But un-cancelling a cancelled philosopher is harder than you might expect, and three centuries later, there are still plenty of people who would prefer to see Spinoza hang onto his outcast status.

The Jewish heretic

Spinoza was born in Amsterdam in 1632 and raised in the city's Talmud Torah congregation.

He had a traditional Jewish upbringing and education, attending the local yeshiva until the age of 17, when he went to work in his father's importing business.

But Spinoza remained a scholar, and over the next few years, he began to lay the intellectual foundations for what would become one of the most celebrated bodies of work in European philosophy.

At the time, however, Spinoza's ideas weren't being celebrated within his own community.

The philosopher still 'cancelled' after 300 years

By David Rutledge



Baruch Spinoza was ostracised by his Jewish community in Amsterdam, though his exact wrongdoings remain unclear. (Getty Images: Culture Club)

While Spinoza's exact heresies weren't documented, rumours began to swirl of his unorthodox views, and he started clashing with the local religious authorities.

It's said that at one point, a fanatic shouting "Heretic!" attacked Spinoza with a knife on the steps of the local synagogue.

Things finally came to a head on July 27, 1656, when the congregation issued a writ of cherm or excommunication against the 23-year-old philosopher.

A far cry from the God of Moses'

Spinoza is vaguely accused of "evil opinions", "abominable heresies" and "monstrous deeds", but what religious wrongs did he actually commit?

His later philosophical work — particularly the *Ethics*, published posthumously in 1677 — could offer some answers.

In it, Spinoza articulates a conception of God

that would have been highly offensive to any observant Jew at the time.

Spinoza's God lacks all the attributes of the God of the Torah, having no will or emotions, no psychological traits or moral character. His God makes no plans or judgments, issues no commandments, and possesses no wisdom or goodness.

Spinoza's God is neither transcendent nor supernatural, being more or less reducible to Nature. Indeed, Spinoza's preferred term for this entity is "God or Nature".

It's all a far cry from the God of Abraham and Moses, who led the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt — and hardly surprising that Spinoza's ideas landed him in such hot water with the religious authorities of his day.

Controversial, albeit influential

What's more surprising is that Spinoza has, over the centuries, gone on to become a highly regarded figure in contemporary Judaism, if still a controversial one.

The philosopher still 'cancelled' after 300 years

By David Rutledge

But not all modern Jews have adopted his ideas or extracted a definitive theology from them.

Certainly, from an Orthodox Jewish perspective, Spinoza remains as problematic today as he did in the 17th century.

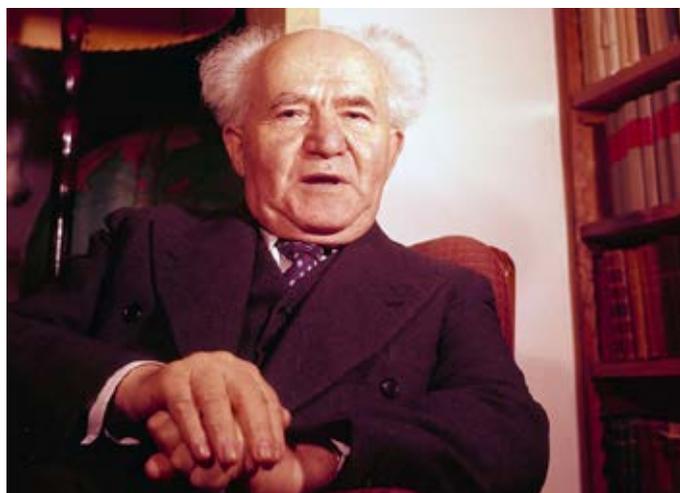
But even anti-Spinozans will admit that many of the big questions that lie at the foundations of modern Judaism — What does it mean to be a Jew? What must Jews believe? Is it possible to have a secular Jewish identity? — are either direct responses to Spinoza, or spring from the history of his interpretation.

Was Spinoza a Zionist?

Spinoza has even been hailed as a proto-Zionist.

The documentary evidence for this is slim — largely based on his assertion in his text *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* that the Jewish people would "one day ... establish once more their independent state", provided they could summon the requisite "manliness" to do so.

The passage is more of a loose speculation than a prescient endorsement of a Jewish state, but 19th-century European Zionists took it to mean that Spinoza had envisaged a Judaism based on nationalism.



Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, embraced Spinoza not only as a Jew, but a Zionist. (Getty Images: PAGES Francois)

Elsewhere in his work they found a champion of the kind of Jewish identity that they saw in themselves and their project: reason-based, democratic, and at pains to separate rabbinic authority from political governance.

And this notion of Spinoza as a secular saint of Zionism carried through to the birth of the modern state of Israel in 1948.

Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, called Spinoza "the first Zionist of the last 300 years", embracing him as not just a philosopher who happened to be born a Jew, but a profoundly and definitively Jewish philosopher. So taken was Ben-Gurion with Spinoza that in 1953, he published a laudatory article about the philosopher that kicked off a raging debate about the justice of his excommunication three centuries earlier.

Calls rang out within the Israeli parliament and the international Jewish press to have the original *cherem* rescinded, and opinions were sought from chief rabbis worldwide.

The debate remained inconclusive, largely because neither David Ben-Gurion nor most of the world's Jewish leaders had the authority to reverse the original decision.

According to Steven Nadler, a long-standing Spinoza scholar and philosophy professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the only people authorised to lift the *cherem* against Spinoza is the community that issued it in the first place — the Talmud Torah congregation of Amsterdam.

The philosopher still 'cancelled' after 300 years

By David Rutledge

Rewriting history?

As it happens, the Amsterdam congregation still exists.

In December 2015, they held a symposium to debate the proposition that the ban should be lifted.

Scholars from four continents were invited to the symposium, to act as an advisory committee. One of the scholars was Professor Nadler.

"They didn't want us to express an opinion as to whether the cherem was good or bad," he recalls.

"They wanted to know: what were Spinoza's philosophical views, what were the historical circumstances of the ban, what might be the advantages of lifting the cherem, and what might be the disadvantages?"

The debate was held before an audience of over 500 people and, at its conclusion, the current rabbi of the congregation handed down his opinion: that Spinoza should remain where he was, officially cancelled, and (to quote the 1656 decision) "expelled from the people of Israel".

Once a renegade, always a renegade

Despite the ruling, Professor Nadler says most members of the community would have liked to see the cherem lifted.

"It would have been a great PR move," he says.

"[To announce,] 'Look, we're not the intolerant community of the 17th century, Spinoza is one of us and we're proud to own him.'"

But the rabbi thought differently.

Professor Nadler says the religious leader asked: "Who am I to overrule my 17th-century predecessors? Am I that much wiser than them?"

The rabbi also held that Spinoza's religious views, considered beyond the pale in 1656, had not really been made any less problematic by the passage of time.

Once a renegade, always a renegade — particularly when the renegade in question remained proud and unrepentant in his heresy. "Spinoza knew the rules of the game," says Professor Nadler.

The rabbis warned him, and his response was Hey, you know what? I'm leaving anyway.'

"So you can't call the cherem a terrible miscarriage of justice."

So Baruch Spinoza, rebel philosopher and abominable heretic, remains officially cancelled for the foreseeable future.

Fortunately — for philosophers and secular Jews, but also for Orthodox Jews who welcome a provocative challenge to their theology — his works remain.



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The Two of Us

By Tim Elliott

Nothing would stop us": the brothers who went from a bunker to an online empire



Gabby Leibovich (right), and Hezi: "When the internet came along, I realised you could merge retail and the internet. Gabby felt the same."

Gabby Leibovich, 50, and his brother Hezi, 44, grew up in Israel near the Lebanese border. Emigrating here with their family in 1986, they have gone on to become two of Australia's most successful online entrepreneurs.

HEZI: We grew up in Israel, in a small town called Nahariya, near the Mediterranean coast. It was a great childhood. We were 10 minutes from the coast, so we spent time with friends at the beach, riding our bikes or playing soccer. Dad had an electronics store and Mum was his right-hand woman. They were really busy so we had lots of autonomy. At five or six years of age, we'd go to the movies together.

Gabby is my older brother, so I looked up to him. [There is a middle sister, Einat, who is 46.] He always had cooler friends. They would go surfing, but I couldn't because I was too small. I'd go down to the beach and wait for someone to flick a board at me and say, "I'll teach you." Gabby was also good at soccer, and I tried to join in with his friends when they set up neighbourhood matches. Every now and again I'd go on as goalie and take a few balls in the head.

Nahariya is only 10 kilometres from the Lebanese border. Lebanon and Israel didn't exactly get along back then. [During the 1982 Lebanon War] Lebanon would shoot rockets into Israel. The apartment block we lived in had a bunker underneath it, so we spent a lot of time in there, a seven-square-metre space with 40 or 50 people in it – no Netflix, no iPads! When we came out, all the kids would go collecting shrapnel.

The Two of Us

By Tim Elliott

In 1986 our family moved to Melbourne, because Dad thought there would be better opportunities here. He worked at a warehouse in Richmond fixing telephones. On Saturday, the family would clean the warehouse for an extra \$80. We talked a lot at dinner about selling stuff, and how to get ahead.

When my dad opened his own shop, Gabby worked with him, selling cordless telephones and answering machines. Then they opened a seconds store, where they sold stock that had been damaged.

We fight for the right reason, which is to make something work that we have built together.

When the internet came along, I realised you could merge retail and the internet. Suddenly, you didn't need to buy a new shop every time you wanted to expand – you just sold stuff online. Gabby felt the same. In 2006, we launched Catch of the Day, which sold one category of product a day, for the best price in the country. We've since started lots of other online businesses together, including Menulog.

We never sat down and said who is going to do what, but it evolved, like synchronised swimming without the talking. Gabby and I are complementary: he's calm and strategic, I'm more emotional. I take things to heart. Also, I'm into details. If we were selling seafood, I'd get a graphic designer to take the eyes out of the prawns in the online photos, because people wouldn't find the eyes appetising. Gabby would be like, "Why are you bothering with that? It's not going to make a difference to a customer!"

As brothers, you can fight. We'd go from zero to 100 just like that, but it didn't matter, because 10 minutes later it'd be like nothing happened. As we got older, that happened less. And anyway, it comes from love, because we are fighting for the right reason, which is to make something work that we have built together.

GABBY: Hezi was always a good boy – an angel! He was smart, intelligent, always studied hard. I looked after him. At primary school, we'd come home together at lunchtime and I'd make him a sandwich with Nutella.

Our bedroom was tiny. My bed was on one side of the room; his was on the other. I had a Samantha Fox poster on my wall; he had a Superman poster. We kept a small TV on the table between us so we could both lie in bed and watch it at night. There was only one channel, called Arutz 1, which was Israeli state TV. Hezi's favourite show was The A-Team, and mine was The Six Million Dollar Man. If we had an argument, we'd draw a line down the middle of the room and say that's your space over there and this is mine here!

In 1982, there was a war between Israel and Lebanon. Even in the bunker of our building it was scary, because the rockets could be falling on my grandmother's house, which was 300 metres away, or on my friend's house just around the corner. It made us resilient. Later, when we went into business together, nothing would stop us. If you try the front door and it's closed, you try the back door, and if the back door is closed, then you kick it in or build a window. [The entrepreneurial brothers have written a book together, *Catch of the Decade*.]

Being brothers, we have full trust. We never challenge each other and say, I have done more than you.'

The Two of Us

By Tim Elliott

When we came to Australia, we went straight into school at Mount Scopus Memorial College in Melbourne. As an immigrant, the younger you are, the easier it is. I went into year 11 when I arrived; I had poor English and was trying to do chemistry, biology and maths. I wasn't the best student. But Hezi stepped into year 4. By the time he finished year 12, he had the highest mark in the school.

Hezi is naturally intelligent, but he is also very driven and self-taught. During lockdown he's tried to work on his weaknesses: gardening, learning to cook, and doing jobs around the house, like painting and fixing things. I admire that about him, because I'm the worst gardener and tradesman.

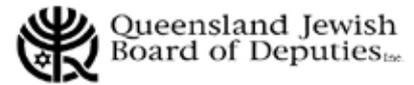
We are very different. He's relaxed in his own company and doesn't need a big circle of friends, but I like having people around me. He's more technical than me. I struggle to save a file onto a USB stick, but he's brilliant at building a website from scratch. And, being brothers, we have full trust. We never challenge each other and say, "I have done more than you."

In 2018, we went back to Israel together, which was amazing. We looked at our old primary school and the soccer field and the beach we surfed at. We knocked on the door of the house we grew up in, and the lady there let us go in. Hezi remembered the style of the tiles in the kitchen. We hadn't seen it for 34 years and he remembered that!

Then we looked at the bedroom we shared for 16 years. We both started crying, seeing the view from the balcony. It sounds quite hard looking back, but our childhood was beautiful. It made us who we are.



Holocaust bravery and courage honoured at special event



Michael Arenson Photography

The heroic efforts of a Dutch couple during the Holocaust were acknowledged at a special ceremony held at the Brisbane Hebrew Congregation Synagogue on 22 October 2020.

The Embassy of Israel, in conjunction with Yad Vashem (the World Holocaust Remembrance Centre) and the Queensland Jewish Board of deputies (QJBD) presented the Righteous Among the Nations award posthumously to Jacob and Klaasje van der Haar.

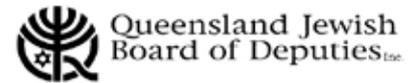
Embassy spokeswoman and attaché for Cultural and Academic Affairs, Eman Amasha, said this Righteous Among the Nations award was the highest honour the State of Israel could bestow upon non-Jews.

"The award recognises the exceptional courage and bravery of non-Jewish people who risked their lives to protect and rescue Jews from the Holocaust," Ms Amasha said.

"Without these people, the state of Israel, as we know it, might not exist today and many more Jews would have been murdered, so it is crucial that we recognise and honour their actions,"

The Embassy of Israel in Australia has been honoured to present several of these awards in recent years to Australians who rescued Jews in Europe during the Holocaust. Many of these awards, like that of the van der Haars, have been granted posthumously, as it often takes many years for their actions to become known and be brought to the attention of Yad Vashem she said.

Holocaust bravery and courage honoured at special event



Michael Arenson Photography

Chargé d'Affaires Dr. Tibor Shalev Schlosser presented the Award to the couple's Queensland family at the ceremony.

The van der Haar family hid, protected and cared for Jewish children Joseph Gokkes and Sonja Peters in the Nazi-occupied Netherlands during World War II.

QJBD Vice-President Jason Steinberg said this award and acknowledgement was vitally important in not only honouring the righteous, but also in ensuring the memory of the Holocaust was kept alive.

"The racism, hatred and intolerance that existed during World War II provided the perfect environment for the Holocaust to occur," Mr Steinberg said.

"Education is a key immuniser against such devastating – and deadly – prejudice. The planned establishment of a Holocaust and Education Centre in Queensland will help to preserve the heroic stories of the Holocaust, with a view to creating a more just, tolerant society.

"The extraordinary efforts of those awarded Righteous Among the Nations, the most famous of whom were Oskar and Emilie Schindler, will be just some of the many educational components of the centre.

"As Elie Wiesel said: 'And so we must know these good people who helped Jews during the Holocaust. We must learn from them, and in gratitude and hope, we must remember them.'"

For more information, contact Jason Steinberg on 0411 239 396 or email: jason.steinberg@qjbd.

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Communal News



The Jewish National Fund of QLD (JNF) wishes Mazel Tov and congratulations to **Dani and Mikki Manne** on the occasion of their recent Bat Mitzvah held at the Beit Or V Shalom synagogue in October.

Surrounded by family and friends from the community they impressed all with their knowledge of and respect for Judaism.

They were a credit to their teachers and their parents who had guided them through the Bat Mitzvah process.

The sisters are the twin daughters of Glenda and Brian Manne and we wish Dani and Mikki all the best and success for their future and may they bring much joy to their parents and family.



The Jewish National Fund of QLD (JNF) sends its sincere condolences on the passing of Leah Werner.

Leah and her husband Richard were long-time supporters of JNF and Israel and Leah was held in high regard and esteem by the community.

We wish Richard and all of Leah's family a Long Life and may her memory always be a blessing.

Some Jewish Attitudes

This article presents brief statements of the Jewish view on some current issues. These are "virtual" statements. They are academic and hypothetical and for general guidance only.

Aboriginal Reconciliation

The destruction of the culture and dignity of the Aboriginal people which has made indigenous Australians feel strangers in their own land resonates with Jews, who have such a long experience of persecution. To restore Aboriginal dignity and ensure Aboriginals have full access to education, health and economic opportunity is an ethical imperative.

Abortion

The unborn child is not considered a "full person". Nonetheless, to terminate its potential life is a grave moral act, basically permitted only to protect the life or health (physical or mental) of the mother.

Adoption

To give a child a family and home is a sacred deed of love, but the child's birth ties remain (for example, if the birth parents are known they are entitled to filial respect). The child should be aware that he or she is a "child of choice".

Animals

Cruelty to animals is forbidden by the Seven Laws of the Sons of Noah which apply to both Jews and non-Jews. Animals are, however, placed by the early chapters of the Bible at man's service. Hence certain animals and birds may be used for food if slaughtered according to the humane procedures laid down in Jewish law. (Fish do not have to be killed in any special way.) Humans must feed their animals before they feed themselves. Hunting is ethically unacceptable.

Antisemitism

Hostility to Jews, whilst known in Biblical times, seems to have gone through three stages – religious antisemitism arising out of accusations that Jews killed Jesus; quasi-racial antisemitism deriving from late 19th century views that Jews were inherently tainted; and anti-Zionism, misrepresenting Zionism as racist and genocidal. The answer to antisemitism is education to eradicate prejudice of all kinds, to promote respect for others and to recognise that every group is entitled to be safe and secure from molestation.

Art

Despite the negative attitude to graven images in the Ten Commandments, Judaism always had a concept of beauty, though not so much beauty of form as of character. Artistry was lavished on religious articles and the commandments were fulfilled as aesthetically as possible. Some rabbis opposed portraits and sculptures of human beings for fear of idolatry, though the first chief rabbi of the modern Holy Land, Rabbi Kook, enjoyed the National Portrait Gallery in London. Synagogues have no depictions of God or the human form.

Artificial insemination

To assist an infertile couple, artificial insemination using the husband's sperm (AIH) is permitted under adequate supervision. AID (Artificial Insemination by Donor) is morally unacceptable; a child is entitled to unambiguous parentage. Sperm banks threaten the privacy and identity of the family unit.

Some Jewish Attitudes

Autopsies

The body belongs to God and must not be put at risk or desecrated, even after death. Autopsies are an intrusion upon the sanctity of the body and are not approved except when the law requires them or if they can directly advance medical science. Even then, an autopsy must be sanctioned by an expert rabbi and performed with the same respect and dignity that would be accorded to a living patient.

Buddhism

Judaism respects the gentleness and spirituality of Buddhism, but cannot support its non-theistic aspects or its denial of the legitimate pleasures of the world, its non-dynamic attitude to human nature, or its non-activist approach to ethical striving.

Business ethics

Honesty and truth are essential in all human situations. Employer and employee must consider each other's well-being. Vendor and purchaser must not deceive each other. One of the questions we face when we die is "Were your business dealings honourable?" The Code of Jewish Law deals extensively with ethical business practices.

Capital punishment

Though Biblical law prescribes capital punishment in certain cases, the death penalty was rarely imposed in practice, and there was great reluctance to take a life. Strict procedural rules developed in Jewish law made capital punishment almost impossible. If it did occur, it had to be carried out with dignity; even a condemned criminal had rights.

Celibacy

Though some people do not marry, celibacy is not encouraged, and certainly not as a policy. Marriage is regarded as natural and good, and congregations are expected to appoint married rabbis. When criticised for being unmarried, the one celibate ancient sage said: "What can I do? My soul is in love with the Torah".

Christianity

As a monotheistic daughter religion, Christianity has much common ground with Judaism. But Judaism does not draw theological conclusions from the life or death of Jesus, even though he was a Jew. Christianity has developed separate concepts of God, man, faith, the good life and the Messiah. The supposed Judeo-Christian ethic does not entirely exist.

Circumcision

Male circumcision is required on the eighth day of a boy's life unless there are medical reasons for postponement. As well as a mark of Jewish identity, this symbolises the moral duty to keep one's passions and desires under control. Jews practise this religious rite regardless of shifts in medical opinion, though many medical studies do regard circumcision as hygienically advisable.

Cloning

As a general principle cloning is not prohibited, but there is a danger that dramatic scientific processes such as this may lead to frightening results in the hands of unscrupulous regimes. There are also technical questions as to the identity of the clone (Who is the clone? Who is the father? Who is the mother?)

Some Jewish Attitudes

Contraception

Because of the Biblical command, "be fruitful and multiply", having children is a religious and moral duty. If pregnancy would endanger the wife, contraception may be used by her, though not by the husband, as this would be a direct contravention of the Biblical law not to "waste seed". Judaism believes that children have a right to be born and bring their own blessing into the world.

Conversion

While one need not be Jewish in order to attain salvation, a person who sincerely desires to become a Jew can be converted. The procedure requires genuine motivation, study of and commitment to Jewish life, circumcision for a male, and immersion in the mikvah (ritual bath) for both males and females. Conversion for the sake of marriage to a Jew is not encouraged; love of Judaism is a higher motivation than love of a Jew.

Cosmetic surgery

Cosmetic surgery is permitted for medical reasons, e.g. after an accident or to enable a person to find a marriage partner or to earn a living, and according to some, even for the sake of vanity, though not if any danger is involved.

Cremation

Burning a body is abhorrent to Jewish tradition, which requires respectful burial in the earth. Though burial does lead to physical disintegration, this happens gradually and in God's way. Cremation is a deliberate destruction of the body, which is God's property, and negates the belief in physical resurrection.

Death

No-one lives forever, though there is a view that Adam's sin brought death into the world. Life is precious and must not be shortened, though there are circumstances in which artificial impediments to dying need not to be continued. After death, body and soul separate; the body is buried and the soul survives. Life after death is spiritual, not physical; heaven is not a place but a state of being.

Divorce

If every effort to preserve a marriage has failed, the chapter should be closed in dignity with a divorce, hopefully with the couple remaining on good terms. A religious as well as a civil divorce is necessary to sever a Jewish marriage tie. Divorce must be the last resort; counselling should be attempted in order to try to rehabilitate the marriage.

Drug-taking

The duty to seek healing, including taking medicine, is axiomatic. However, drugs used for non-medical purposes have harmful effects on the person and personality, and it is forbidden to put oneself at risk. Even smoking is a dangerous drug. The Bible states that wine creates a happy mood, but artificial means of escaping from reality are not approved.



Some Jewish Attitudes

Ecology

The environment must be preserved and not placed at risk by human greed or exploitation. Though the world is given to man to use and enjoy, it is a sacred charge that must be handed over to coming generations in good order. There is a duty, "Do not destroy". Though the needs of nature are a high priority, in an emergency (e.g. to allow for burial of the deceased), genuine human need takes priority.

Euthanasia

Is an infringement of God's prerogative to ordain life and death. ("It is best that He who has given life should take it away; no-one should hasten their own death".) Death has to come normally, though when a person is in great pain it is permitted to pray to God to allow them to die. If artificial impediments are prolonging one's dying, there are circumstances in which they can be removed.

Evolution

Though the theory of evolution has inherent scientific problems, a process moving from the simpler to the more complex forms can be reconciled with the Biblical account of stage-by-stage creation so long as we do not speak of man descending but ascending from what preceded him.

Feminism

Man and woman are equal in the eyes of God, but they are not identical in form or role. Some commandments are specially for women; others are for men. Both males and females have a role in spiritual leadership and may be religious scholars and teachers, but the titles "rabbi" or "cantor" are limited in traditional Judaism to males. Some communities have women's prayer groups. There are endeavours to remove disabilities that some women suffer in cases of divorce.

Gambling

The compulsive or professional gambler is disqualified from being a judge or witness in a Jewish court. They are regarded as not using their time constructively to serve society, they jeopardise their own and their family's stability and as they take risks with their money, they may take risks with the truth. An occasional "flutter", e.g. a lottery ticket, is not a major problem.

Gentiles

All human beings are made in the Divine image and must be treated with respect, even if one disagrees with them. Their sick must be visited, their poor supported and their dead buried, regardless of their ethnic identity or religion. Jews suffered so much because of gentiles that some are still worried about them.

Homosexuality

Homosexuality and lesbianism conflict with the Biblical norm of heterosexual marriage and procreation. Homosexuals and lesbians must nonetheless be respected as people.

Intermarriage

Intermarriage between Jews and gentiles creates problems for the children and complicates the marriage relationship. It weakens Judaism, since it is in marriage, family and the home that Jewish identity is based. In an open society, some degree of intermarriage appears inevitable.

Some Jewish Attitudes

In-vitro fertilisation (IVF)

Provided it is the wife's ovum and the husband's sperm, IVF is permissible but with adequate safeguards to minimise risks.

Islam

A monotheistic daughter-religion of Judaism, which has more in common with Islamic than Christian theology. Jewish influences are evident in the Koran, though Mohammed turned against the Jews and criticised them in many passages. In the medieval period Jewish and Islamic culture co-existed constructively.

Marriage

Marriage and the family are the basic units of society; marriage is the first commandment in the Torah. The unmarried person lives "without joy, without blessing, without good". Mystics say that husband and wife share one soul. Couples, who live together without "kiddushin" (sanctified marriage), may have love and pleasure, but they have no guarantee of commitment and stability.

Media

The verse, "Do not place a stumbling-block before the blind" is interpreted as meaning, "Do not misinform or mislead other people". It ought to be the motto of the media, which do not always deserve the public's trust. Great harm can be done with words, emphases and nuances, and with pictures, especially when complex situations are presented selectively or simplistically. The borderline between honest reporting and editorialising – open or implied – must be honoured if the media are to act responsibly.

Military service

Rabbinic teaching is, "If someone comes to attack you, forestall them." Defence of oneself or one's family, nation or country is a moral duty. War is no pleasure nor an ideal, but until it is eradicated, one must give military service if necessary. "Purity of arms" (the ethics of warfare) must be observed.

Modesty

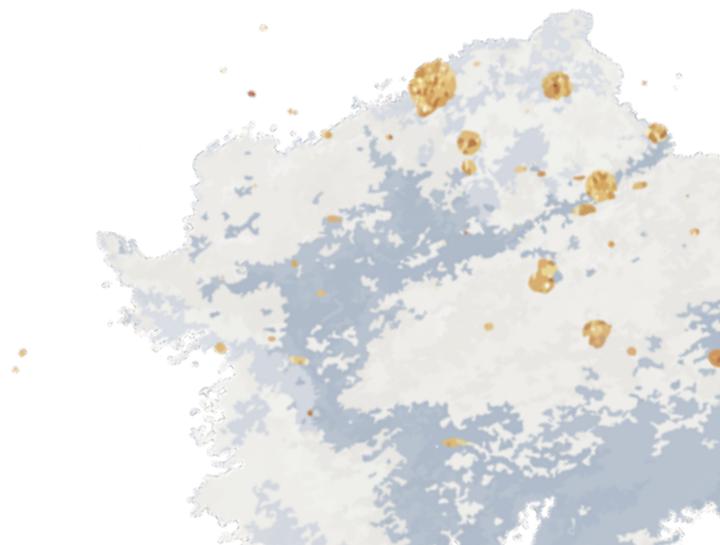
"Walking humbly with your God" is one of the prophet Micah's teachings. It entails modesty in speech, dress and deed. Suggestive flaunting of one's body, or real or simulated sex in public, contravenes the principle of modesty.

Organ transplants

Saving a life is a religious and moral duty. To leave a person in danger infringes the rule, "Do not stand idly by the blood of your neighbour". Organ transplants are life-saving acts, provided they are likely to succeed and do not imperil the life of the donor or hasten his/her death.

Other faiths

One need not be Jewish to achieve salvation. The righteous of all peoples have a place in the World to Come, and their conscience and convictions must be respected. This does not mean that all religions are equally true. There are insights, ethics and spirituality in other religions, but Judaism regards itself as the truest religion.



Some Jewish Attitudes

Peace

The Jewish greeting, shalom, means "peace", not just the absence of war but a state of contentment and security. Peace is so important that the Bible commands, "Seek peace and pursue it"; the Jewish sages say, "Seek it in your own place and pursue it in other places." Concessions and compromises are acceptable "in the interests of peace". If peace begins with oneself and one's own family, it can radiate into one's community and throughout the world.

Paedophilia

Biblical teaching insists, "Sin not against the child". It is an unforgivable sin to prey upon and abuse children and rob them of their innocence. Jewish law prohibits not only genital penetration, but any form of illicit fondling or other inappropriate conduct for the purpose of gratifying sexual desire. People who work with children are especially obliged to protect their young charges.

Pornography

Restraint and modesty are basic moral duties. Jewish teaching, which objects to a "mouth speaking wantonness", also opposes the depiction of sexual conduct in art and literature, on stage and screen. "Everyone knows why the bride enters the bridal chamber, but to speak of it (or publicise it) is a disgrace." True, there were some rather bawdy medieval Jewish writers, but the norm in Judaism is modesty and dignity.

Poverty

Poverty is "no great disgrace, but no honour either". Affluence is a blessing and gives a person the means to help others, but most people cannot expect to be wealthy. Everyone must work hard to be self-supporting but if necessary the community should help, not merely on an ad-hoc basis but (preferably anonymously) to enable the recipient to re-establish him/herself.

Professional privilege

Generally one must keep a confidence and not be "a tale bearer (who) reveals a secret". But disclosure of information can be permitted in order to protect against an offence or injury: "If he does not tell, he will bear iniquity". If required by a court, the testimony must be given "in camera". The professional who feels the need to disclose information should urge the person concerned that he/she should him/herself admit the facts.

Racism

Is a denial of the rights of every human being, whatever their colour, creed or politics. All are equally children of God and members of the human community. No group is inherently superior or inferior. One may democratically criticise their conduct (though the Talmud says, "Criticise yourself and only then criticise others"), but not to the extent of vilifying or victimising them, or perpetrating or provoking violence.

Reincarnation

That the dead live on is axiomatic. Whether a soul can be "recycled" by means of reincarnation is a matter of debate. Some hold that there is no reason why a soul cannot pass into another body; others find it difficult to believe that a soul can have many identities and wonder what will happen when resurrection occurs – into which of many possible bodies will the soul re-enter?

Religion

Human beings need God-inspired vision, spirituality and challenge. They need worship in order to keep in touch with these ideals and religious practices in order to bring principles into daily conduct. Life with religion can be hard but it is good. Religion sometimes divides people but it should unite them in mutual respect.

Some Jewish Attitudes

Republicanism

There are good monarchies and bad republics, but Jewish thinking prefers a republican model where leadership arises from the people and can be democratically changed. Whatever type of government a nation has, it is required by Biblical teaching to act correctly and be approved by God.

Sex-change operations

Sex-change operations are prohibited by Jewish law. Whilst early rabbinic writings acknowledge that a few people have both male and female characteristics, and some are of indeterminate sex, the treatment of a person with gender problems is by psychiatric therapy. Surgery in such cases is a form of mutilation. The Talmud asks how anyone can expect "the order of creation to be changed for their sake".

Smoking

When tobacco first became known, the pleasure it gave led some rabbis to think smoking was like offering incense in the Temple. The tendency these days is to prohibit it in order to protect one's health. It is foolish to rely on the Biblical words, "The Lord preserves the simple."

Stem-cell research

Stem-cells can be coaxed to provide the potential to cure diseases such as diabetes, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. Adult stem-cells are preferable from an ethical point of view; there is a debate about stem-cells from spare early embryos. Some argue that causing such embryos to be destroyed is an invasion of life; Judaism believes that the early embryo is not yet a full person and subject to safeguards can be used in order to save life.

Sterilisation

Castration or surgical sterilisation, except when there are urgent medical reasons, is not permitted. It prevents the fulfilment of the commandment to be "fruitful and multiply", and is a form of self-mutilation. Sterilisation is permitted to prevent danger to life, especially by a woman motivated by serious considerations, e.g. if she fears extreme pain in pregnancy or childbirth.

Strikes

As no-one may willingly be enslaved, even to a job, a worker has the right to withdraw his/her labour when there is no other way to redress a valid grievance, but not if one is in an essential occupation such as medicine and would gravely harm the public. Workers whose strike action causes serious economic injury to the employer may be required to compensate the employer.

Suicide

Life is a Divine gift and must be cherished and preserved. Taking one's own life was once regarded as the ultimate defiance of God, and a suicide was buried away from the main part of the cemetery. Today we say that a suicide is usually caused by extreme pressure and is not done to spite God, and normal burial is allowed.

Surrogate motherhood

In an emergency, a childless couple may resort to a surrogate mother into whose womb a zygote is implanted. Ethical issues that need addressing include hiring out wombs for commercial gain or creating a trade in babies. Further debate is also needed about who the "real" mother is – the one who produced the ovum or the one who carried the baby; does the child, once born have the duty of "Honour your father and mother" in relation to both women?

Some Jewish Attitudes

Tattooing

Tattooing is disapproved as its origins were idolatrous, though technically it is banned only if done with indelible ink and in the form of writing. Even if issues such as self-mutilation, risking injury, etc., are ruled out, it is better to work on one's heart, mind and soul than to concentrate on physical appearance.

Taxes

Because non-payment of taxes is regarded as stealing the government's money, leading to the curtailing of public utilities and services, taxation is valid and moral. To deceive or defraud the tax office is to transgress the prohibitions of stealing, desecrating God's name and telling untruths. However, overpaying taxes may be avoided by legal means so long as facts are not withheld.

Vegetarianism

God originally meant human beings to be vegetarian. He allowed meat-eating as a concession to human appetite, but under strictly controlled conditions. In particular, animals had to be slaughtered humanely and the slaughterer could derive no pleasure out of the act of killing. Eventually vegetarianism will be restored as the ideal when "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain". Some Jewish teachers say that Sabbath and festival joy require meat-eating, but this view does not have the status of a commandment.

Zionism

The Biblical vision of a Jewish return to Zion sustained the Jewish people for countless centuries and has now begun to be realised in the State of Israel, dedicated, according to its declaration of independence in 1948, to the ethical ideals of the Scriptures. The need for a refuge has brought many Jews to Israel; idealism has brought many others. The road to peace with Israel's Arab neighbours and the Palestinians has been difficult, but an Israeli poet sums up the feelings that will eventually make peace work when he writes, "Time is running out, put hatred to sleep; shoulder to shoulder let us water our sheep."



Rabbi Raymond Apple was for many years Australia's highest profile rabbi and the leading spokesman on Jewish religious issues. After serving congregations in London, Rabbi Apple was chief minister of the Great Synagogue, Sydney, for 32 years. He also held many public roles, particularly in the fields of chaplaincy, interfaith dialogue and Freemasonry, and is the recipient of several national and civic honours. Now retired, he lives in Jerusalem and blogs at www.oztorah.com

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Managing Editor

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Designer

Camila Sister

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Shalom Magazine is produced and published in
Brisbane, Queensland, by The Jewish National
Fund of Queensland.

To Contact Us

Email

admin@shalommagazine.com.au

Mobile

0412 578 368

Website

www.shalommagazine.com.au

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WIZO Aviva	2nd Tuesday each Month (n)
	07 3715 6562
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NCJWA Meeting	3rd Monday 7:30pm

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