interpreted as a general prohibition against taking advantage of situations where one might have greater knowledge or insight about a certain matter than others involved in the transaction.

The second is taken from two places in Genesis. In Genesis 1:27, we are told that "God created *adam* in His image, in the image of God He created them."

Later, in Genesis 33:10, Jacob is encountering his feared and hated brother Esau after many years of separation. We know from his previous behavior that Jacob is dreading this confrontation and is very much afraid of what might happen to him.

Nevertheless, when he finally meets his brother, he says, "...to see your face is like seeing the face of God."

This represents a major breakthrough for Jacob—a breakthrough that we all need to make to be effective leaders. We must understand that all people are created in God's image—not just ourselves and those who agree with us, but people with different points of view and even those whom we would consider our enemies.

We must remember that we have a responsibility to use our insights not to gain personal power but as a source of light for the entire community.

We should get in the habit of turning to Jewish sources for guidance and to always "SHOW OUR WORK." Because when we are graded at the end of the term, much more attention will be paid to the way in which we solved life's problems than to whether we reached the right answers. \(\displaystyle \)

Endthoughts

Nine fine books for gift—giving—and a homage

Eugene B. Borowitz

The fall flood of Judaica has been so impressive that only thoughts of limited budgets got me to list some personal non-fiction favorites in this arbitrary order:

Yes, the world needs another coffee table book called *Jerusalem* (Cohen and Liberman, eds., Collins, \$35) simply because the city is inexhaustibly beautiful and this collection of old-new photographs, drawings and essays

RABBI EUGENE B. BOROWITZ, who founded this magazine 27 years ago, is now a Senior Editor of Sh'ma.

gives one, as it were, new eyes with which to see. Are you as intrigued as I was by a title as daring (and promising) as The Five Books of Miriam (Ellen Frankel, Grosset/Putnam, \$30)? This sedra by sedra commentary on the Torah turns out not to be by one voice but the multi-vocal reflections of various biblical women, each seen as personifying an aspect of feminist experience. I was by turns enchanted, aroused, enlightened and challenged by their interpretations. Marcia Falk's longawaited The Book of Blessings (Harper Collins, \$50) showers us with elegant word streams, Hebrew and English, which refresh familiar berakhot and give life to new occasions for prayer. Her spiritual and linguistic gifts will uplift any but the stone-hearted. But I wish the book were less cumbersome, less expensive and celebrated more than nature's life-force.

Shabtai Teveth's Labor Party passions occasionally obtrude in Ben-Gurion's Spy (Columbia), his fascinating, detailed account of the infamous Lavon affair that forced Ben Gurion out of power and reshaped Israeli politics. Still, we are not likely to get a fuller, clearer, more persuasive account of this debacle and anyone who wants to know how the State of Israel became different than it once was needs to confront this data. A radically different, deeply touching insight into the realities of Israeli politics today is provided by Gorkin and Othman's tapes of Palestinian women telling of their lives in Three Mothers, Three Daughters (California, \$25). These pairs live in a camp, a village and a city and the simplicity and honesty of their observations makes one heartrendingly aware of how much we have in common and how much powerfully separates us. J. J. Goldberg's Jewish Power is an uncommonly revealing account of the operations of the various players in the American-Jewish political world. Unity or coordination at the top being mythical, he wisely discusses what happened in specific situations and demonstrates why the generally smart, occasionally dumb antics of our leaders yield the not completely unrealistic notion of "Jewish power."

If science rather than politics appeals to you, get a copy of God & the Big Bang (Daniel C. Matt, Jewish Lights, \$21.95) and revel in the informed, unexpected correlations this young master of our mystic literature finds between his kabbalah and our cosmologists' learned imaginings. Even my restlessly question-asking soul was often momentarily stilled by the insights in Matt's work. Ivan G. Marcus's extended essay on the medieval ceremonies connected with the beginning of Jewish education, Rituals of Childhood (Yale, \$25) has such interesting material in it about the realities of Jewish life that lay readers will overlook its occasional heavy-handed anthropological hermeneutic. We like to think that was

long ago and our lives are very different but reading this kind of more intimate, human-centered Jewish history reminds us how little people change. Norma Rosen can't easily be reconciled to a history in which Jewish women were all but left out. No wonder why she calls the collection of her compelling short story *midrashim*, *Biblical Women Unbound* (Jewish Publication Society, \$29.95). Her well-attested artistry is brought to bear on nine of the by-now familiar women's figures in the Bible and others as obscure as Lot's daughters. Regardless of how many commentaries you have read, you will enjoy her novel insights.

Finally, the homage. Vastly more people speak of Rosenzweig and Heschel than actually read them, though we know ourselves to be their spiritual offspring. So though you may not be giving their new books to anyone, you should care about the greater access we now have to their thinking. Rosenzweig's much mentioned late master work on poems of Yehudah Halevi has been translated and subtly discussed by Barbara Ellen Galli in Franz Rosenzweig and Jehuda Halevi (McGill-Queen's University Press). A massive collection of many previously unpublished papers by Abraham J. Heschel, edited by his daughter Susannah, is available under the title Moral Grandeur and Spiritual Audacity (Farrar, Straus, Giroux, \$27.50) and two major Hebrew papers of his have been translated as Prophetic Inspiration After the Prophets (Ktav, \$22.95). May all who shared in bringing us these gifts be richly blessed. +

But others say about...

Jewish Music

I believe that Rabbi Freelander comes closest to having his fingers on the pulse of the topic (Sh'ma 27/518), when writes, "this is a discussion over the role of Jewish music in worship: Is it a means to an end (that is, does it help individual worshippers pray the prayer with more kavannah) or is it an end to itself (a self-validating tradition)?" I vote the former but I'd change the parenthetical content to read: Does it help get Jews back into the synagogue?

For most Americans who call themselves Jews, the value of greatest importance is not Judaism (surprise?!); it is their freedom of choice. (This insight is from a wonderful psycho-sociological study, *The Saving Remnant* by Sara Bershtel.)



We invite you to send us your favorite text and comment. Submissions should not exceed 200 words. Be sure to include proper citation of sources. Hebrew will appear in transliteration.

Brent Sims

And God saw all that He had made, and found it very good.

GENESIS 1:31

Nothing—absolutely nothing is more precious than the gift of life. Each breath comes with an opportunity to start anew. It is never too late for change. Dreams can and often do become reality for those who have nothing more than the audacity to chase them. Sometimes it seems that we miss the basic simplicities of things: We've been blessed with the gift of life. Instead of complaining about hard it is to be a Jew, perhaps the time has come for us to realize just how wonderful this thing called life really is.

BRENT SIMS is the spiritual leader of a small farbrangen in Pueblo, CO.

The question, how do we get people to return to the synagogue has been asked all too often. Solutions offered are typically retreads of prior failures. I suggest that the answer is to be found elsewhere.

Synagogues in general, and worship services in particular, must become more user friendly. Worship services should be viewed as a product whose function is to get people to want to come to *shul*. This is done by having the teaching that emanates *from the bimah* not be about Judaism, but about what Judaism has to say about the everyday concerns of people the synagogue wishes to have as its congregants. Examples of such concerns might be: forging strong values, talking about the breakdown of families, and the importance of the community and its role in family life.

The creative use of music, drama, video, the arts, multimedia, etc., should complement and/or set up the topic of the service. Music should be idiomatically consonant with that which is listened to by prospective congregants outside of the synagogue. Needless to say (I hope), the use of the above-mentioned media must have production values which strive for no less than excellence. People demand excellence from all other goods and

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services that they choose to use. Thus, should it be any surprise that Jews opt out of worship services that do not meet their felt needs and otherwise fall far short of the standards of excellence that they rightfully demand from the rest of the marketplace?

The application of this strategy would go a long way to demonstrate to the unaffiliated (57%) and the marginally affiliated (the majority of the remaining 43% minority), that Judaism does indeed offer something of value: something worth giving of both one's time and one's money.

Jordan Goodman Northbrook IL

Liberalism

I would like to comment on the recent piece by M. Michael Sharlot (Sh'ma 27/520).

This may be a *Christian nation* but the treatment of Christians by the ascendant Christian population at any given time in the nation's history is not one in which there has been perfect tolerance, respect or charity. This nation's Christians have at one time forced Quakers to strap guns to their backs during the Revolutionary War and face the British guns with sure death awaiting them. In other periods, this nation's Christians have persecuted and hounded Mormons, Seventh Day Adventists and Catholics.

The inclusion in the Bill of Rights of the amendment concerning federal guarantees for freedom of religion was at the behest of the Anabaptists, who like other small religious enclaves, had been denied the right to vote and serve in the militia because they were not part of the elitist religious group so privileged.

Historically, freedom of worship for the population of New York stems from the guarantee given to citizens of Holland. When Peter Stuyvesant surrendered the Dutch colony to the British, this freedom was continued as part of the agreement; a rarity at the time.

Small wonder that the Jews of America fear the inclusion of religious activities in the public domain and if that perspective remains part of the Democratic Party it is no wonder at all that it should be endorsed.

Bettylene W. Franzus Johnson City TN

Jewish Culture

In "Kitsch, schmaltz and other jewish values" (Sh'ma 27/521), David Klinghoffer writes, "Surely their (The Klezmatics) message...has never inspired or will ever inspire a secular Jew to perform teshuva." I am one of the secular Jews who has returned to Judaism precisely because I heard the Klezmatics and remembered that I have a neshama. After hearing them play in a small theater in New York while I was in college, I did not feel that they "assured their listeners that Judaism, as traditionally understood, is cute, charming, harmless, and dead" but rather, their music spoke to me and said, "Judaism is alive, it is inside of you, and it is your connection to the Divine." Since at the time I was studying music, I began to play with some other Jewish musicians interested in Klezmer music. With them I learned about Shlomo Bar, John Zorn, Jack Kessler, Miguel Herstein, the Ferbrengen Fiddlers and Reb Shlomo Carlbach, z'l. These artists, I would argue, are not interested in "culture." They are interested in answering the challenge Mr. Klinghoffer poses, i.e., "What we want to know is what's true about God: what He wants from us; exactly what, in creating the world. He had in mind..." God wants music. And instrumental music. We learn this from the words of the man who serves as a model of teshuvah, King David (most notably in Psalm 150), and also in God's commands to the Leviim to fashion instruments. Klinghoffer writes: "Torah civilization has not sustained an outstanding tradition in the arts in part because it has had something far weightier to contend with." I would argue that Torah civilization did have an outstanding tradition in the arts that tragically ended with the destruction of the second Temple. Now we are finally coming to a time in Jewish history when Jews are beginning to play sacred music again, which will ultimately lead to the music that will be played in the next Temple. The music emerging from the Klezmatics and many others is just the beginning of a rebirth of the music that God instructed us to play. Why, I ask, does Klinghoffer want to stall the process?

> Daniel Mordecai Brenner Bordentown NJ

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