

The Millie Arbesfeld
Midreshet Yom Rishon

Sunday Morning Learning Program for Women

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**“ALL THINGS ARE
MORTAL BUT THE
JEWS”**

Anti-Semitism Throughout the Ages



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1. Pesach Haggadah

והיא שעמדה לאבותינו ולנו. שלא אחד בלבד עמד עלינו לכלותנו, אלא שבכל דור ודור עומדים עלינו לכלותנו, והקדוש ברוך הוא מצילנו מידם.

And it is this that has stood for our ancestors and for us, since it is not [only] one [person or nation] that has stood [against] us to destroy us, but rather in each generation, they stand [against] us to destroy us, but the Holy One, blessed be He, rescues us from their hand.

2. Rashi 33:4

וישקהו – נקוד עליו, ויש חולקין בדבר הזה בברייתא דספרי, יש שדרשו נקודה זו לומר שלא נשקו בכל לבו. אמר ר' שמעון בן יוחאי הלכה היא בידוע שעשו שונא ליעקב, אלא שנכמרו רחמיו באותה שעה ונשקו בכל לבו:

וישקהו has dots above it. In the *Sifrei* we find a dispute about how to interpret [these dots]. Some say that the dots mean that he did not kiss him wholeheartedly. [However] Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai says, “It is a well-known *halakha* that Esau hates Jacob. Nevertheless, at that moment he became merciful and he kissed him wholeheartedly.”

The phrase הלכה בידוע (it is a well-known halakha) is unusual. It appears nowhere else in classical rabbinic literature and it is unclear what is “halakhic” about it.

3.

שמות א:ט-י

וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-עַמּוֹ הַזֶּה עִם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל רַב וְעַצוּם מְמֹנִי:
הֲבֵיאָה נִתְחַכְמָה לּוֹ פֶּן-יִרְבֶּה וְהִיא כִּי-תִקְרָאנָה מִלְחָמָה וְנוֹסֶף גַּם-הוּא עַל-שְׂנְאֵינוּ וְנִלְחַם-בָּנוּ
וְעָלָה מִן-הָאָרֶץ:

And he said to his people, “Look, the Israelite people are much too numerous for us.

Let us deal shrewdly with them, so that they may not increase; otherwise in the event of war they may join our enemies in fighting against us and rise from the ground.”

4.

אסתר ג:ח-ט

וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּן לְמֶלֶךְ אַחַשְׁוֵרוּשׁ יִשְׁנֵנו עִם־אֲדוּד מִפְּזָר וּמִפְּרָד בֵּין הָעַמִּים בְּכָל מְדִינֹת מְלְכוּתְךָ
 וְדַתֵּיהֶם שְׁנוֹת מִכָּל־עַם וְאֶת־דַּתִּי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֵינָם עוֹשִׂים וְלְמֶלֶךְ אֵין־שָׁה לְהַנִּיחָם:
 אִם־עַל־הַמֶּלֶךְ טוֹב יִכְתֹּב לְאַבְדָּם וְעִשְׂתָּם אֶלְפִים כִּכָּר־כֶּסֶף אֲשֶׁקוּל עַל־יְדֵי עוֹשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה לְהַבִּיא
 אֶל־גַּנְזֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ

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

If it please Your Majesty, let an edict be drawn for their destruction, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the stewards for deposit in the royal treasury."

EARLY CHRISTIANITY

5.

We wish to make it known to the Jews and their elders and their patriarchs that if, after the enactment of this law, any one of them dares to attack with stones or some other manifestation of anger another who has fled **their dangerous sect** and attached himself to the worship of God [Christianity], he must speedily be given to the flames and burnt together with his accomplices. Moreover, if any one of the population should join **their abominable sect** and attend their meetings, he will bear with them the deserved penalties.

Laws of Constantine the Great, October 18th, 315 CE

6.

"For the wickedness of my people he was led to death" [Isa. 53:8] This is said about Jesus, whom you, in your parents, led to death.

Augustine, 354-430 CE

7.

When the time for meeting calls you to Church, if your wives are indifferent...but if they respond with alacrity when the devil calls to the trumpets, you fail to hold them back, but let them get caught in the crimes of godlessness and drawn away into immorality. For harlots...habitually gather there. But why am I talking about the immorality that goes on there? **Are you not afraid that your wife will come away from that place possessed with a demon? Didn't you hear the argument in my earlier sermon which proved clearly that the demons inhabit the very souls of the Jews, as well as the places where they gather?** Tell me, how do you dare to return to the congregation of the apostles after you have cavorted with demons? After you have gone off and joined those who shed Jesus's blood, how can you keep from trembling when you return and eat from this holy Table and drink this precious blood? Does it make you shudder? Doesn't such lawlessness appall you with terror? ... Rescue them with every earnestness. Snatch them out of the devil's teeth and bring them to me on the Day of the Fast so that...we may with one voice praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus, to whom is glory into the ages. Amen.

John Chrysostom, 347-407 CE

8.

No Jew - or no Samaritan who subscribes to neither [the Jewish nor the Christian] religion - shall obtain offices and dignities; to none shall the administration of city service be permitted; nor shall any one exercise the office of a defender [that is, overseer] of the city. Indeed, we believe it **sinful that the enemies of the heavenly majesty and of the Roman laws should become the executors of our laws - the administration of which they have slyly obtained** - and that they - fortified by the authority of the acquired rank, should have the power to judge or decide as they wish against Christians, yes, frequently even over bishops of our holy religion themselves, and thus, as it were, insult our faith.

Theodosius II, January 31, 439 CE

9.

Since many judges, in deciding cases, have addressed us in need of our decision, asking that they be informed what ought to be done with witnesses who are heretics, whether their testimony ought to be received or rejected, we **therefore ordain that no heretic, nor even they who cherish the Jewish superstition, may offer testimony against orthodox Christians who are engaged in litigation, whether one or the other of the parties is an orthodox Christian** [But a Jew may offer testimony on behalf of an orthodox Christian against someone who is not orthodox.]

A Law of Justinian, July 28th, 531 CE

10.

The more the Christian religion is restrained in the exaction of interest so much more does the knavery of the Jews in this matter increase, so that in a short time they exhaust the wealth of Christians. Wishing therefore to provide for Christians in this matter lest they be burdened excessively by the Jews, we ordain through synodal decree that if they hereafter extort heavy and unrestrained interest, no matter what the pretext be, Christians shall be withdrawn from association with them until the Jews give adequate satisfaction for their unmitigated oppression. Also the Christians shall be compelled, if necessary, through Church punishment from which an appeal will be disregarded, to abstain from business relations with the Jews.

Pope Innocent III, 4th Lateran Council, 1215 CE

In some provinces a difference in dress distinguishes the Jews or Saracens from the Christians, but in certain others such a confusion has grown up that they cannot be distinguished by any difference. Thus it happens at times that through error Christians have relations with the women of Jews or Saracens, and Jews or Saracens with Christian women. Therefore, that they may not, under pretext of error of this sort, excuse themselves in the future for the excesses of such prohibited intercourse, we decree that such Jews and Saracens of both sexes in every Christian province and at all times shall be marked off in the eyes of the public from other people though the character of their dress.

Pope Innocent III, 4th Lateran Council, 1215 CE

11. TIMELINE:

- a) Rabbeinu Gershom 960-1040 France
- b) Rashi 1040-1105 France
- c) 1st Crusade 1096

- d) 2nd Crusade 1145
- e) Blood Libels: 1144-England; 1171-Blois, France
- f) Burning of the Talmud 1242 France
- g) Jews expelled from England 1290
- h) Jews expelled from France and Germany 1306; throughout 14th & 15th centuries.
- i) Jews expelled from Spain 1492

“Modern Anti-Semitism”

12.

To say that the Egyptians, the Persians, and the Greeks were instructed by the Jews is as if one were to say that the Romans learned the crafts from the people of Brittany. The Jews never were natural philosophers, nor geometricians, nor astronomers. So far were they from having public schools for the instruction of youth, that they had not even a term in their language to express such an institution. The people of Peru and Mexico measured their year much better than the Jews. Their stay in Babylonia and Alexandria during which individuals might acquire wisdom and knowledge trained the [Jewish] people as a whole in on art save that of usury.

Voltaire, 1756 The Jew in the Modern World

13.

Herr Dohm admits candidly that the Jewish brain is far more harmful and more corrupted than that of other Europeans, an admission which several defenders of the Jews were hitherto unwilling to make. He seeks the reason for this, however, in the condition in which the Jew lives, reviled, oppressed, and forced to support himself almost exclusively from trade. Herr Dohm has probably no idea to what extent I agree with him in this matter. I wrote exactly the same thing thirty years ago in a piece...I would like to express my opinion as it was then and as it still is today. Mine goes one step further, however, than does that of Herr Dohm in that it takes account of the deceitfulness of the Jews.

Johann David Michaelis, “Arguments Against Dohm,” 1782. The Jew in the Modern World

14.

There is no stopping them...Are there clear signs that the twilight of the Jews is setting in? No. Jewry’s control of society and politics, as well as its practical domination of religious and ecclesiastical thought, is still in the prime of its development, heading toward the realization of G-d’s promise: ‘I will hand all peoples over to thee.’”

By now, a sudden reversal of this process is fundamentally impossible, for if it were, the entire social structure, which has been so thoroughly Judaized, would collapse. And there is no viable alternative to this social structure which could take its place.

Further, we cannot count on the help of the “Christian” state. The Jews are the “best citizens” of this modern, Christian state, as it is in perfect harmony with their interests.

It is not a pretentious prophecy but the deepest inner convictions which I here utter. Your generation will not pass before there will be absolutely no public office, even the highest one, which the Jews will not have usurped.

Yes, through the Jewish nation, Germany will become a world power, a western New Palestine. And this will happen, not through violent revolutions, but through the compliance of the people...

We should not reproach the Jewish nation. It fought against the eastern world for 1800 years, and finally conquered and subjugated it. We were vanquished and it is entirely proper that the victor shouts “Vae Victis! [Woe to the vanquished]” German culture has proved itself ineffective and powerless against this foreign power. This is a fact; a brute inexorable fact. State, Church, Catholicism, Protestantism, Creed and Dogma, all are brought low before the Jewish tribunal that is, the [irreverent] daily press [which the Jews control].

The Jews were late in their assault on Germany, but once they started there was no stopping them.

Wilhelm Marr, “The Victory of Germandom” 1879. The Jew in the Modern World.

15.

A Jewish question would still exist, even if every Jew were to turn his back on his religion and join one of our major churches. Yes, I maintain that in that case, the struggle between us and the Jews would make itself felt as ever more urgent - although the struggle certainly is felt now even when the Jews have yet to convert [in large numbers]. It is precisely the baptized Jews who infiltrate furthest, unhindered in all sectors of society and political life.

Karl Eugen Duehring, “The Question of the Jew is a Question of Race”. 1881

16.

Richard Wagner (1813-1883), German composer who sought to achieve a union of music and dramatic poetry, utilizing a wide range of symbols, with special emphasis on national and romantic themes. He hoped that his music would give expression to, and foster the rebirth of, what he called the Germanic hero-spirit, a “racial characteristic” he believed to be possessed only by the “pure-bred Germanic branches of the Aryan race.” His essay “Jewry in Music,” first published under a pseudonym and later, in 1869, under his own name, is considered to be one of the first formulations of racial antisemitism. Wagner’s works, which enjoyed a large audience among the educated class of his day, **made antisemitism culturally respectable and generally facilitated the diffusion of racist doctrines. His political essays were greatly admired by Adolf Hitler, and his operas were regularly performed in Bayreuth in connection with Nazi party conventions.**

17.

Antisemitism as a political movement should not and cannot be determined by emotional factors, but rather by a realization of the facts. And these facts are:

First, Jewry is clearly a racial and not a religious group...All that which is for men a source of higher life - be it religion, socialism or democracy - is for the Jew merely a means to an end, namely the satisfactions of his lust for power and money. His actions will result in a racial tuberculosis of people.

Hence it follows: Antisemitism based on purely emotional grounds will find its ultimate expression in the form of pogroms [which are capricious and thus not truly effective]. Rational antisemitism, however, must pursue a systematic, *legal* campaign against the Jews, by the revocation of the special privileges they enjoy in contrast to the other foreigners living among us. But the final objective must be the complete removal of the Jews.

Adolf Hitler, "A Letter on the Jewish Question." September 16, 1919

...Today it is difficult, if not impossible, for me to say when the word "Jew" first gave me ground for special thoughts. At home I do not remember having heard the word during my father's lifetime. I believe that the old gentleman would have regarded any special emphasis on this term as cultural backwardness.

Adolf Hitler. Mein Kampf 1923

18.

Moved by the understanding that purity of German blood is the essential condition for the continued existence of the German people, and inspired by the inflexible determination to ensure the existence of the German nation for all time, the Reichstag has unanimously adopted the following law, which is promulgated herewith:

Article 1

1. Marriages between Jews and citizens of German or related blood are forbidden. Marriages nevertheless concluded are invalid, even if concluded abroad to circumvent this law.
2. Annulment proceedings can be initiated only by the state prosecutor. [\[45\]](#)

Article 2

Extramarital relations between Jews and citizens of German or related blood are forbidden. [\[45\]](#)

Article 3

Jews may not employ in their households female citizens of German or related blood who are under 45 years old. [\[45\]](#)

Article 4

1. Jews are forbidden to fly the Reich or national flag or display Reich colours.
2. They are, on the other hand, permitted to display the Jewish colours.

The Nuremberg Laws. "Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor." Sept. 15, 1935

Contemporary Anti-Semitism

19.

Anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed toward Jewish and non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities. Such manifestations could also target the State of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. Anti-Semitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms, and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia, 2008

20.

In addition to the evolution of Muslim anti-Semitism, in the last 30 years, a new form of anti-Semitism has arisen globally with a focus on Zionism and Israel as a proxy for hostility to Jews. A key reason for the rise of the new anti-Semitism is the fact that traditional, overt anti-Semitism has become unacceptable in mainstream democracies (it is still perfectly acceptable in Muslim nations). The new anti-Semitism is, by design, more subtle, thereby more frequently avoiding condemnation. The European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia, whose definition of anti-Semitism was cited earlier, offers examples of how anti-Zionist and anti-Israel criticism becomes anti-Semitic, regardless of the motive: “denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination; applying double standards [to Israel] by requiring of it behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation; using symbols and images associated with classical anti-Semitism to characterize Israel or Israelis; drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis; holding Jews collectively responsible for the actions of the state of Israel.” One feature of contemporary anti-Semitism that continues an old stereotype is the concept of “Jewish Power,” or the idea that Jewish lobbies and shadowy groups control the levers of economies and governments.

Salo Aizenberg, Hatemail: Anti-Semitism on Picture Postcards. 2013

21.

The Department of State has used a working definition, along with examples, of anti-Semitism since 2010 (<https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/drl/rls/fs/2010/122352.htm>). On May 26, 2016, the 31 member states of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), of which the United States is a member, adopted a non-legally binding “working definition” of anti-Semitism at its plenary in Bucharest. This definition is consistent with and builds upon the information contained in the 2010 State Department definition. As a member of IHRA, the United States now uses this working definition and has encouraged other governments and international organizations to use it as well.

Bucharest, 26 May 2016

In the spirit of the Stockholm Declaration that states: “With humanity still scarred by ...antisemitism and xenophobia the international community shares a solemn responsibility to fight those evils” the committee on Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial called the IHRA Plenary in Budapest 2015 to adopt the following working definition of antisemitism.

On 26 May 2016, the Plenary in Bucharest decided to:

Adopt the following non-legally binding [working definition of antisemitism](#):

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

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

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity.

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

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

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust)
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

U.S. CONGRESS 2019

22.

“Israel has hypnotized the world, may Allah awaken the people and help them see the evil doings of Israel.” 2012

February 2019 Omar created another stir when [she tweeted](#) that support for Israel in the US Congress was “all about the Benjamins,” suggesting that the pro-Israel lobby AIPAC was buying off American politicians.

March 2019:

What I’m fearful of — because Rashida [Tlaib] and I are Muslim — that a lot of our Jewish colleagues, a lot of our constituents, a lot of our allies, go to thinking that everything we say about Israel to be anti-Semitic because we are Muslim. And so to me, it’s something that becomes designed to end the debate because you get in this space of — yes, I know what intolerance looks like and I’m sensitive when someone says, “The words you used, Ilhan, are resemblance [*sic*] of intolerance.” And I am cautious of that and I feel pained by that. But it’s almost as if, every single time we say something regardless of what it is we say that is supposed to be about foreign policy or engagement or advocacy about ending oppression or the freeing of every human life and wanting dignity, we get to be labeled something, and that ends the discussion. Because we end up defending that and nobody ever gets to have the broader debate of what is happening with Palestine. **So for me, I want to talk about the political influence in this country that says it is okay for people to push for allegiance to a foreign country. And I want to ask, why is it okay for me to talk about the influence of the NRA, of fossil fuel industries, or Big Pharma, and not talk about a powerful lobby?**

23.

אסתר ו:יג

וַיִּסְפֹּר הָמָן לְזֶרֶשׁ אִשְׁתּוֹ וְלְכָל־אֶהְבִּיו אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר קָרָהוּ וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ חֲכָמָיו וְזֶרֶשׁ אִשְׁתּוֹ אִם מִזֶּרַע הַיְהוּדִים מְרֻדְכֵי אֲשֶׁר הַחֲלוֹת לְנַפְל לְפָנָיו לֹא־תוּכַל לוֹ כִּי־נָפֹל תִּפֹּל לְפָנָיו:

There Haman told his wife Zeresh and all his friends everything that had befallen him. His advisers and his wife Zeresh said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of Jewish stock, you will not overcome him; you will fall before him to your rui

24.

"If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one percent of the human race. It suggests a nebulous dim puff of stardust lost in the blaze of the Milky Way. Properly the Jew ought hardly to be heard of, but he is heard of, has always been heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people, and his commercial importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his bulk. His contributions to the world's list of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine, and abstruse learning are also away out of proportion to the weakness of his numbers. He has made a marvellous fight in the world, in all the ages; and has done it with his hands tied behind him. He could be vain of himself, and be excused for it. The Egyptian, the Babylonian, and the Persian rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, then faded to dream-stuff and passed away; the Greek and the Roman followed, and made a vast noise, and they are gone; other peoples have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished. The Jew saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind. **All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?"** **Mark Twain**