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CHILDREN OF JEWISH MILITARY FAMILIES LEARN JUDAISM, THANKS TO EFFORTS OF JEWISH CHAPLAINS AND JWB. THE LESSON HERE: 'HOW TO BLOW A SHOFAR.'

TELL TALES

"One Man Plus The Truth
Constitutes A Majority"

BY JACK TELL

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conscience that might be slumbering. On the tenth day of this period of penitence, or repentance, there takes place the observance of the Day of Atonement.

As recommended in the Book of Leviticus of the Bible (Chap. 23), the Day of Atonement is a day of fasting. Fasting makes us uncomfortable, so it makes us think of the discomfort we may have brought to others by our thoughtlessness or negligence. As with all Jewish holydays, the observance of Yom Kippur begins in the evening. The worship service then includes the singing of the hymn, Kol Nidre, which means All Vows, a plea for forgiveness for decisions made in haste and without regard for the feelings of others.

On Atonement Day the worshipper thinks of his faults and tries to atone for them; tries hard also to feel forgiveness for those who have wronged him. The prayerbook, the songs, the sermons, the large gathering in the temple.. all these lift him up to a new level of understanding and tenderness, and give him a new sense of the sacredness of life.

These days are high..that is, they lift the worshipper up in an effort to come closer to the Source of good conduct. They are holy, because nothing is more sacred than improving the relationship between people.

When the High Holydays are over, Jews wish one another a happy new year of the spirit. They say to one another, Good Yomtov, which means Happy Holiday. Or, they say, L'shannah Tovah, which is Hebrew for Happy New Year.

Although the Jewish High Holydays are the most important religious occasions for the Jewish people, there is nothing about the holydays which does not apply to all people. That is why one rabbi once told his congregation, the way that we can really atone is to strive to be at one with everyone.

Issue of Zionism

Zionist leaders in Israel and the United States mounted an intensive campaign in 1953 to counter Arab and Communist claims that Zionism was and is nothing more than a chauvinist, imperialist and "settler" state ideology. These leaders have pledged to continue their efforts in 1976 to combat such spurious ideas.

Unfortunately, the task of presenting Zionism as it really is, have been rendered difficult by some Jews, who have tried to avoid the use of the term Zionism altogether. Others over-react by insisting that anti-Zionism is ipso facto anti-Semitism. One can legitimately reject the philosophy of Zionism as a solution to the problems confronting the Jewish people without being an anti-Semite, and one can legitimately reject the Arab-Communist canards by pointing out precisely what Zionism is and is not.

Zionism is not an ideology of narrow nationalism, imperialism, colonialism or oppression. In fact, during the 1920s and 1930s, Arab leaders insisted that the principles of Zionism were identical to those of Bolshevism.

Matiel Mogannan, secretary of the Arab Executive and Secretary of the National Defense Party, wrote in the 1920s that the Arab poor were influenced "by the social and Bolshevik principles" which Jews brought with them. "A strong Bolshevik element," he noted, "has already established itself in the country (then Palestine) and has produced an effect on the population." In 1923 the Arab Higher Commission wrote: "...the prevalent conditions of the Jewish immigrants are being a very fertile medium for the propagation of communistic principles not only among Jews, but also amongst Arabs." Jamal Hussaini, secretary of the Arab Higher Committee, testified before the Royal Commission in 1937, "As to the communistic principles and ideas of the Jewish immigrants... I need not dwell upon them as these ideas are well known to have been imported by the Jewish community."

Those Arabs were as wrong then about the nature of Zionism as they and the Communists are today.

What is Zionism? It is the international liberation movement of the Jewish people. Jacob Tzur, chairman of the Jewish National Fund, defined Zionism as "A revolt against political oppression, against the loss of identity, against the surrender to fate." Zionism, Tzur continues, "is a revolution" which included "building a new society, fighting and overthrowing a colonial overlordship and victoriously waging

a military struggle for twenty years."

Modern political Zionism, beginning with Moses Hess (1812-1875), was the affirmation by the Jewish people that they and they alone can and must determine their own future, that they can intervene in the historic process and become a force for shaping history instead of merely being shaped by history and that diaspora life is an anomaly that can be ended only by establishing their own homeland as all other peoples had done and are still doing. This is the existential tie that binds all Jews to the world over.

There is nothing in the writing of the Zionist ideologists which can substantiate the views of the Arabs and Communists about the nature of Zionism. On the contrary, in addition to the revolutionary nature of Zionism, Zionists have always been in the forefront of the struggle for the national liberation of all oppressed peoples.

Leo Pinsker (1821-1891), in his famous work, Auto-Amancipation, written in 1882, stated: "Like the Negroes, like women, and unlike all free peoples, they (the Jews) must be emancipated." Nachman Syrkin (1867-1924), outlining his proposal for purchasing land in Palestine in the early years of this century stated that "the best and most honorable way... is to secure the land in alliance with other oppressed nationalities in the Turkish empire and through a common stand against the Turks..." Achad Ha'am (1856-1927) inveighed against Theodore Herzl's view that "Palestine was a land without people for a people without land," and warned that the Jewish settlers must meet the Arabs in the spirit of respect.

During the late 1920s and the 1930s such Zionist luminaries as Judah Magnes, Hugo Bergmann, Hayim Kalvarisky, Henrietta Szold and Martin Buber were involved in intensive efforts through the Brith Shalom (Peace Alliance) or through Ichud (brotherhood) to establish Arab-Jewish relations and the construction of a bi-national state.

Zionism, as the international liberation movement of the Jewish people, has therefore been defined not only in theory but also in practice. The point that is being made by Israeli and American Zionist leaders is that the Jewish people are the only ones who have a right to decide and determine the nature of their own liberation. Black liberation is defined by the Blacks, women's liberation is defined by women, the French in Quebec define their own liberation and the Irish Catholics define their own liberation. This same right must be accorded to the Jewish people. This is the nub of the ongoing effort to place Zionism in its proper context.

Rosh Hashanah Message

By Daniel Rose
Pres National Jewish Welfare Board (JWB)

Rosh Hashanah is an appropriate time for us to pause and reassess where we, as members of the Jewish community in America and the world, are headed, and what problems we face in the future.

This year, the United States is involved in the celebration of the Bicentennial of the American Revolution. As members of the Jewish community, it is important for us to be aware

of the part played by Jews in the building of the United States. To this end, JWB and Jewish Community Centers are carrying out a number of Bicentennial-related programs, emphasizing the contributions that Jews and Jewish Community Centers have made to American culture and the contributions that American culture has made to Judaism.

It is fitting that now, as we are celebrating the birth of "the land of the free," the Jewish community is being called upon to welcome the new wave of Soviet Jews who have emigrated to freedom in the United States. The Jewish Community Centers throughout the country have been noteworthy in their efforts to integrate new Americans from all lands into the mainstream of American life.

Jewish Community Centers are mindful of their commitment to serve Jewish families according to each family's needs. In keeping with this responsibility, JWB has helped to develop programs aimed at reaching the specialized needs of single-parent families, youths, the elderly, and the Jewish military family.

JWB, through its member Jewish Community Centers, is reaching out to enrich the lives of Jews throughout the United States, Israel, Europe and South America. The ties between the world Jewish community are strengthened by programs between Jewish Community Centers here and in other lands.

The many problems which concern us as we enter upon the New Year -- the distance between generations, the plight of the poor and the elderly, the security of Israel -- only serve to remind us of the importance of establishing and nurturing a sense of community among American Jewry.

By addressing itself to the role of traditional Jewish values and customs in the midst of the rapidly changing world, JWB and the Jewish Community Centers are helping to strengthen the common bonds between Jewish people throughout the world in the interests of promoting peace and understanding between citizens of all nations.

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