



IFR NEWS Kislev 5783



Chanukah celebrated around the world by Cantor Lauren Phillips

In many parts of North America, we dream of a white Hanukkah (or we wish for the opposite); other Jewish communities – Australia, for example – celebrate the Festival of Lights in the heat of summer or, as in Alaska, in constant darkness.

Here are some of the unique Hanukkah traditions of nine countries around the world – some warm and some cold – to inspire you this year. What are your family's holiday customs?

1. CUBA

In their cooking, Cubans use plantains in much the same way Americans and Canadians use potatoes: mashing them, baking them, and frying them.

It should not come as a surprise, then, that Cuban Jews make fried plantains, tostones or patacones, for their Hanukkah celebrations.

2. SYRIA

The Jews of Aleppo were descendants of Sephardic Jews expelled from Spain in 1492. When they finally found a safe haven in Syria, they vowed to light an additional shamash (helper candle) on Hanukkah as a sign of thanks. Today's Syria is a much different coun-

try. This Hanukkah, consider adopting the Syrian Jewish tradition of lighting an additional shamash in solidarity with the refugees who have fled Syria in search of shelter and peace.

3. FRANCE

In the wine-making region of Avignon in the south of France, it is customary to end the Shabbat that falls during Hanukkah by opening a new bottle or cask of wine. After Havdalah, Jews would travel around the neighborhood to various homes, tasting the wines and toasting the holiday. This is a fantastic way to build community and to celebrate the holiday with family and friends.



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IFR Mission Statement

The IFR is a professional organization of rabbis united by a commitment to Jewish tradition and a desire to facilitate the Jewish spiritual growth and life cycle needs of all.

The IFR provides a progressive, pluralistic forum, linking member rabbis in a spirit of friendship and a sense of community.

The IFR provides support for members in their professional endeavors and offers continuing education.

The IFR encourages professional relationships with rabbis and other rabbinic organizations.

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4. MEXICO

In Spanish, Hanukkah is known as Januca or Lucenarias – the feast of lights. Mexican children play a game called toma todo (winner takes all), which is similar to the version of dreidel that we play except the top has six sides instead of four. The toma toda dreidel is known as a pirinola. For a true multi-cultural experience, Mexican Jews often break a dreidel-shaped piñata filled with Hanukkah trinkets and treats.

Known as Chag haBanot (Festival of the Daughters), girls and women celebrate the courageous act of Yehudit, the Jewish woman who saved the Jewish nation by killing the general sent by Antiochus, the evil ruler of the Syrian-Greek Empire.

In celebration of the day, women would do no work, visit one another, and eat doughnuts and honey cookies. The holiday was particularly special for young women engaged to be married in the coming year. Wishing you a Hanukkah that is filled with love, light, and the celebration of your own unique family customs!

5. ITALY

On Tishah B'Av, we read the Book of Lamentations, often in complete darkness.

There is an Italian custom of saving the candle that was used to help us read on Tishah B'Av to help us light the menorah during Hanukkah. On Tishah B'Av, we mourn the destruction of the Holy Temple; on Hanukkah, we celebrate its rededication. Using the same candle for both occasions connects the two events: On Tishah B'Av we are sad, but on Hanukkah we rejoice as we rekindle this same light as the shamash for our festival of freedom.

6. KURDISTAN

Although Jews no longer live in Kurdistan, many Kurdish Jews still observe two unusual Hanukkah customs. The first is similar to the giving of Hanukkah gelt, but with a twist: a week before the holiday, children lock the doors to their rooms. Their parents must give them coins in order to gain entry. The second custom was developed by Jews too poor to afford a Chanukiyah. They used eggshells as cups for wicks and oil, lighting the required number of cracked shells every night.

7. MOROCCO

Jews in Morocco extended the joy of Hanukkah into a ninth day, which became known as "the day of the shamash." On that day, children would go from house to house, collecting leftover Hanukkah candles. Then, they would make a giant bonfire, dancing and singing around it, and jumping and leaping over it. It was believed that jumping over the fire could bring good luck. Single women would jump over the fire in the hopes of getting married. Married women struggling to conceive would jump over the fire in the hopes of being blessed with a child.





8. ISRAEL

In Israel, Hanukkah is a holiday without the limitations of other holidays: we can go shopping, we can drive, the buses and trains run. And yes, everyone is seemingly in a good mood. The sufganiyot help the atmosphere, of course. It's impossible to be in a bad mood while eating a jelly donut. "But Hanukkah isn't only about the donuts. It's about the entire city coming together in a rare show of cultural solidarity to observe the holiday."

9. TUNISIA

The seventh day of Hanukkah coincides with Rosh Chodesh Tevet, the beginning of the Hebrew month of Tevet, which has become a holiday within a holiday for Tunisian Jews.

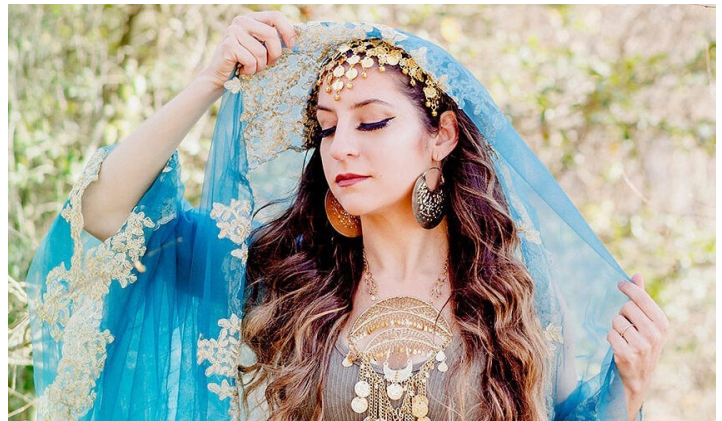
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Chanukah Beit Sefer Yonatan Netanyahu, Israel 1978



Eid Al Bnat (The Festival of Daughters, or Chag HaBanot (in Hebrew) that women and girls from North Africa's Jewish communities have been celebrating for centuries. Chag Habanot is celebrated on Rosh Chodesh Tevet.



Lighting the Chanukiya in the USA early 1960s.



IFR Schmooze and NEWS

מזל טוב

Mazal Tov to IFR Member Rabbi Dr.
and Rebetzin Hara who writes...
My wife and I will be celebrating our
50th anniversary December 23, 2022



Roberta Wojcik

Moshe Ben Etel

Ari Ben Shoshanna

For a man:

מִי שֶׁבֶרַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֲבָרָהִם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב, מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן דָּוִד
וְשְׁלֹמֹה, הוּא יִבְרַךְ אֶת (name) בֶּן (mother's name), בְּעִבּוֹר
שׁ (name) בֶּן (father's name) יִתֵּן בָּלִי גֵדֵר לְצִדְקָה בְּעִבּוֹרוֹ, שֶׁבֶת
הִיא מְלֻעָוִיק וְרַפּוּאָה קְרוֹבָה לְבוֹא, וְנֹאמֵר אָמֵן:

For a woman:

מִי שֶׁבֶרַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֲבָרָהִם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב, מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן דָּוִד
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In Blessed Memory of IFR Member
Rabbi Monte Robert Sugarman z"l
who passed away on October 23,
2021/ Shabbat Cheshvan 17 5782.



The IFR Lapel Pin was minted in 2020
in solid brass with an antique brass
finish and black enamel. The pin is
one inch across, and is available for
IFR Members \$55.00 USD ships free in
the continental USA, shipping rates
are applied outside of the USA.

Meet Your IFR Colleagues - Rabbi Tuviah Schreiber - Florida



Rabbi Paul Schreiber, aka Reb Tuviah, is currently the rabbi and spiritual leader of Temple Beth El of Bradenton and Lakewood Ranch, a Reform congregation on the west coast of Florida.

The soulful, spiritual journey of Reb Tuviah has taken him on many paths. Throughout the years, he has immersed himself in Jewish education and has created, led and participated in numerous Jewish and interfaith programs. Prior to his position at Temple Beth El, he was the rabbi of Temple Beth David in Spring Hill, Florida.

While living in the West Palm Beach and Boca Raton area, Reb Tuviah led weekly Shabbat services and monthly healing circles at local congregations and various assisted living homes.

Additionally, he was the Sunday school music teacher and song leader for kindergarten through sixth grade students at a local Reform congregation.

Having a Master's Degree in education and administration, he has enjoyed a fulfilling career as a classroom teacher and as a principal in both public schools and private Jewish day schools in Miami, West Palm Beach, Boca Raton, and Burlington, Vermont.

Rabbi Schreiber received his rabbinic ordination from The Jewish Spiritual Leaders Institute in New York. He is completing a Masters of Jewish Studies Degree through the Academy for Jewish Religion and is a certified Hebrew Chant Leader through the Aleph Alliance for Jewish Renewal.

His studies have taken him to Or Sameach in New York and Aish HaTorah in Jerusalem and Miami Beach.

Additionally, he has studied with Rabbi Shefa Gold of Kol Zimra, Rabbi Marcia Prager in the Aleph Alliance for Jewish Renewal Davening Leadership Training Institute and Rick Recht at the annual Songleader's Boot Camp.

In his spare time, Rabbi Schreiber enjoys studying the piano and guitar, exploring Florida's natural outdoor beauty, and finding ways to be involved in community theatre as both an actor and director.

IFR NEWSLETTER TEAM

Rabbi Barbara Aiello

Rabbi Frank Tamburello

shosh / Layout

Meet Your IFR Colleagues - Rabbi Joshua Krulwich Klatt - Ohio



Rabbi Joshua Krulwich Klatt

I grew up in Connecticut, studied at the University of Connecticut where I graduated with a BA in Political Science and a minor in Judaic studies. After college I went to Seton Hall University where I graduated with a Master in Public Administration. I worked in the nonprofit sector in New York City where I met my husband Paul Klatt.

I went to the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College where I graduated with a Master of Arts in Jewish Studies. While I was attending RRC I went through a summer CPE program at Christiana Care and fell in love with chaplaincy. I changed from the ordination path to the masters route, entered a CPE residency program, and the ordination program at Rabbinical Seminary International. I completed the CPE residency and ordination program at the same time. After my residency I moved cross country for a one year chaplain fellowship at Cincinnati Children's and then worked PRN at Ohio's Hospice and UC West Chester Hospital.

Presently I am working at Hospice of Miami County which is an affiliate of Ohio's Hospice where I have been working for over five years.

I belong to the Yellow Springs Havurah in Yellow Springs, Ohio and live in Kettering, Ohio with my husband and our four cats.

I became a rabbi because I looked up to my Rabbi as a child, I found home and meaning in the Jewish community and, and I saw being a rabbi as a way of engaging in the Jewish tradition that I love to help people.

Rabbi Shira Galit Levy - Slater Rabbis California



Baby Naming

Rosh Chodesh women at the Wall Event



Rabbi Shira Galit Levy - Slater Rabbinnics - California



Rabbi Levy - Slater during Chanukkah

Rabbi Levy - Slater after Mikve (Conversion)



Rabbi Dr. Adele Plotkin - Arizona

Rabbi Lenny Sarko creator of the world's only Hebrew Braille Sefer Torah - Greensburg, PA



Rabbi Carter (shosh) pulpit prep for High Holy Days 2019



Rabbi Carter (shosh) Eternal Light Mausoleum COVID zoom funeral. Palm Beach County Florida

Weddings This is a selection from the textbook "Jewish Science and Health" written in 1925 by Rabbi Morris Lichtenstein, the founder of the Society of Jewish Science. I have updated the language a bit, and it is a lovely alternate to various reading selections used at wedding ceremonies.

-Rabbi Frank Tamburello

LOVE

Love, particularly love of humankind, is an all-embracing and transcendent expression of our divinity. Love is greater than tolerance, for love breeds tolerance; love is greater than kindness, for kindness is one of the many channels through which love pours itself forth; love is more than tenderness, for tenderness is but the language of love; love is more than forgiveness, for those who love forgive. Love gives rise to all these noble qualities inherent in a human being's higher self, and yet it is more than a sum total of all of these.

Love gives thought and time and effort to the welfare of others without the expectation of compensation in return. Love seeks to help, and not to derive benefit; to serve and not to dominate. Love seeks equality; it seeks to demolish the barriers among races, to destroy partitions among peoples. Love knows no creed, no color, no gender, no station or position. It embraces all of humanity with the same sympathy and affection. And it is only through love that the salvation of humankind will be attained.

(Rabbi Morris Lichtenstein - "Jewish Science and Health")

Unending Love - Rabbi Rami Shapiro

I am loved by an unending love.
I am embraced by arms that find me
even when I am hidden from myself.

I am touched by fingers that soothe me
even when I am too proud for soothing.
I am counseled by voices that guide me
even when I am too embittered to hear.
I am loved by an unending love.

I am supported by hands that uplift me
even in the midst of a fall.

I am urged on by eyes that meet me
even when I am too weak for meeting.
I am loved by an unending love.

Embraced, touched, soothed, and counseled;
may mine too be the arms and the fingers,

the voice and the hands,
the eyes and the smile
that compels another to say:
"I am loved by an unending love."



Letter to a New Rabbi

by **Rabbi Rami Shapiro**

Share: *(I can't remember who asked me to write this, or if it was ever published, but I wanted to get it out there. It is long, it is Jewish, and some of it might not make sense to those who aren't. But the general principles are universal. If you like it please share it.)*

Introduction

When it comes to talking about being a rabbi I lack nuance, but nuance isn't necessarily of value here. A carefully considered, middle of the road, on the one hand/on the other hand look at the rabbinate today will get us nowhere. What we need and what I hope to provide is a contrarian critique that will get us talking about the future. I offer my remarks not to end a conversation, but to start one.

Two Kinds of Jews

There are two kinds of Jews in America today: the minority who are involved in institutional Jewish life, and the majority who are not. Those who are involved are by and large happy with their institutions. Those who are not involved are by and large unhappy with them.

Involved Jews are active, passionate, loyal, and essential to the Jewish community. They are never to be disparaged or disrespected. Uninvolved Jews are also active, passionate, and loyal, just not about institutional Jewish things. These Jews, too, are never to be disparaged or disrespected. In all likelihood you will work for the happy minority, and what they will ask of you is this: make the happy happier, and make the unhappy happy. Unfortunately for you, you can't do both.

Prophets and Clerks

During my first week at HUC-JIR in Jerusalem I sat with my classmates (class of '81) and was told, "You have only one choice to make as a rabbi," he said, "will you be a prophet or a clerk? Most of you will be clerks." The Jewish establishment values clerks, and is willing to pay them well. The Jewish establishment hates prophets, and does what it can to ignore them.

Clerks comfort; prophets discomfit. Clerks legitimize; prophets challenge. Clerks maintain the decency of our lives; prophets reveal the brutality and emptiness at its core. Clerks say what others have said, and find meaning in being an echo rather than a voice; prophets speak what needs to be said that others can find their own voice. Clerks make nice; prophets make waves. Clerks warm hearts; prophets set them ablaze. All rabbis need to know how to be competent clerks. The great rabbis learn to be prophets as well.

Harsh Reality

Don't imagine that happy Jews want clerks and unhappy Jews want prophets. The fact is nobody wants prophets, and everyone wants the status quo. The involved Jews want it because the status quo is comforting. The uninvolved Jews want it because the status quo provides them with excuses for not being involved. And because they both want the status quo they both want rabbis who support the status quo. They both want clerks. Therefore it should be no surprise to you that you are being trained as a clerk. You are learning to teach what has already been taught; to repeat what has already been said, and to say what everyone expects to hear and therefore ignores. This wasn't how it used to be.

The early rabbis were prophets rather than clerks. They based their authority on the conceit of the Two-fold Torah, Written and Oral, and insisted that the Oral trump the Written. They were literary anarchists wielding Gematria, *Atbash*, and other swords of the imagination to create new Torah by deliberately misreading the old one, and, as the story of Akiva interpreting the crowns of the Hebrew letters admits, they knew exactly what they were doing.

The intrinsic chaos and anarchy of the rabbinic promise should have led to an ever-renewing Judaism, but over time the rabbis came to fear their own creation the way Rabbi Loew came to fear the Golem. Their Torah was too strong, wild, and uncontrollable. So they did what Rabbi Loew did: they turned *Emet* into *Met*, Truth into Death, by erasing the *Aleph*—the creative chaos—at the head of the entire project.

As a result Judaism collapsed in on herself. The rabbinate, once the midwife of the new, became its mortal enemy. They turned what was a creative and redemptive wisdom into a fixed body of knowledge to be passed down rather than freed up. They took their Judaism of questions, doubt, and argument, and turned it into a system of answers, certainties, and rote. They stopped being prophets and started being clerks.

Two Strategies

Clerks have two basic strategies when working with Jews: demand more or demand less, neither one works very well.

The “more” of the demand more strategy is *halacha*. Using *halacha* as our standard we admit that Orthodoxy is the more authentic Judaism. The “demand more” strategy fails for three reasons: it always demands too much, there is always

more to demand, and Reform Jews don’t want to be Orthodox Jews.

Take the so-called Cheeseburger Rebellion for example. In the late 1990’s the Reform leadership decided to promote traditional kashrut among the Reform laity. Not eco-kashrut, or some other invention linking diet to justice, but the very kashrut that Reform Jews rejected in 1885 with the Pittsburg Platform. What happened? The people rebelled. They refused to abandon their cheeseburgers, and they didn’t give a damn what God, Torah, and their rabbis had to say about it.

The same thing happened when the Reform leadership tried to promote the use of the *mikveh* among Jewish women. Rather than draw from tradition to invent an old/new spiritual practice based on the cycles of the moon, the body, and the alchemical potential for transformation that is what immersing oneself naked in a mikveh is all about, they just thought that liberal Jewish women would love an opportunity to cleanse themselves of the impurities of menstruation! This mindless imitation of the past only served to enrage liberal Jews in the present, and make it all the more difficult to create a new and vibrant Judaism for the future. The alternative to “demand more” is “demand less.” I grew up in an Orthodox world where the length of services was determined by the speed of the *davnen*.

Shabbat and holy day services would go on for hours, far too long in my opinion. But today’s notion that Jews can’t gather for more than an hour without breaking for cake is demeaning. And the idea that rabbis shouldn’t talk for more than 10 minutes forces you to offer a message that isn’t just simple, but simplistic. No wonder most Jews

avoid services! They aren't given enough time to be moved, or enough wisdom to be enriched. If demanding more always has you demanding too much, and if demanding less leaves you with nothing to offer, perhaps it is time to demand different.

Demand Different

There is only one reason for the Jewish people to survive: and that is to live Judaism. And there is only one reason for Judaism to survive and that is because it offers a path to life in a world obsessed with death. Resting on Shabbat matters because working 60 to 80 hours a week is killing us. Not shopping on Shabbat matters because consumerism is killing us. Pesach matters not because we *were* slaves to Egypt's Pharaoh but because we *are* slaves to the Pharaohs of the military-industrial-financial-media complex.

Judaism matters only if it offers us a way to free ourselves from the killing machine of contemporary culture, and to build a new world based on justice and compassion rather than greed and consumption. And you matter because you are a rabbi, and rabbis matter because they are the only people who can free Judaism to be what it is meant to be: a vehicle for blessing all the families of the earth (Genesis 12:3).

For example: my grandparents kept kosher because God demanded it. My parents kept kosher because Judaism demanded it. I keep kosher because life depends upon it.

For me kashrut is about ethical consumption. It is about living in a way that enhances life. For me kashrut is about **c**aring for myself (*shmirat haguf*), for others (*ahavta l'rayecha k'mocha*), for animals (*tz'ar ba'alei chayyim*), and for nature (*bal tash-*

chit) by linking diet, desire, and consumption to the highest ethical and ecological standards I can muster.

Because I keep kosher I don't eat meat, and someday will stop eating fish, eggs, and dairy as well. Because I keep kosher I don't drive a gas-guzzling car, and someday will ride my bike to work. Because I keep kosher I do what I can to shrink my carbon footprint. Because I keep kosher I drink only fair trade coffee. Because I keep kosher I don't buy products produced in sweatshops (unless of course Apple makes them).

Kashrut helps me live my life in service to life. And what is true of kashrut can be true of every other aspect of Judaism as well. In a world obsessed with work, can you make Shabbat a day of play? In a world obsessed with pornography, can you revive the erotic through *Shir haShirim*? In a world obsessed with sex, can you reinvent love through *Tu b'Av*? In a world that has forgotten how to grieve, can you show people a way to a liberating grief through *Tisha b'Av*? Just look at the world, and imagine it different. Then make your Judaism a means to embody that different world. This is what the rabbi-as-prophet is called to do. Unfortunately it isn't what most rabbis are paid to do.

The Job

Here is the job description most rabbis are given: Judge, Educator, Counselor, Celebrant, Announcer, Jew, Fundraiser, CEO, and Team Leader. Some of these things you can do, most of them you shouldn't do.

Judge. Traditionally a rabbi rules on cases of Jewish law, but I have yet to meet a liberal Jew who lived her life according to Jewish law, or a Reform Rabbi qualified to rule on Jewish law. If you want

to be a Talmudic lawyer and judge go to an Orthodox yeshiva. If you run into someone who needs a Talmudist, send him to a Talmudist.

Educator. If rabbis are supposed to be Jewish educators why aren't we taught pedagogy, curriculum development, learning styles, new learning technologies, working with special needs learners, etc.? If you want to be a top-notch Jewish educator get a top-notch degree in Jewish education. Otherwise insist that your community hire the best professional Jewish educators they can find, and pay them what they are worth. If they aren't worth all that much to your community, find another community. And never hire people who know nothing about Judaism to teach Judaism. The message this sends is that Judaism has nothing to teach.

Counselor. If you were having marital problems would you go to a rabbi or a licensed marriage counselor? The best thing you can do for people who come to you for counseling is to meet with them once, listen to them carefully, and then refer them to the appropriate specialist. Don't practice therapy without a license, and *smicha* isn't that kind of license. If you want to practice therapy, become a therapist.

Celebrant. Officiating at life-cycle events can be fulfilling, but is this the reason you became a rabbi? After all if officiating at life-cycle events is what you want to do with your life, you could have become a professional celebrant in a fraction of the time and at a fraction of the cost, and with a much larger client base. So enjoy this part of the job if you can, but don't make it the centerpiece of your rabbinate.

Announcer. Somebody has to welcome the congregation, tell them what page to turn to, read out

the names on the Yahrzeit list, give a *bracha* for birthdays and anniversaries, and spend 10 minutes commenting on Torah, or reviewing a book or movie, or explaining why we Jews who supported the efforts of African Americans to desegregate the buses in Montgomery must support the efforts of the Israeli government to segregate the buses in Jerusalem. But does this somebody have to be you? Did you spend five years of your life just to learn how to read responsively, or say, "We continue on page 1226" (is the *siddur* too long, or is it just me)? If you want to be Don Pardo, train as a voice actor.

Jew. Some synagogues hire a rabbi to be "the Jew" the way Colonial Williamsburg hires an actor to be "the butter churner". Your job is to pretend that Judaism matters, and to support the illusion that hiring a Jew is the same as being one. This is the fastest path to rabbi burnout. If your congregation doesn't want to be Jewish, leave before they cause you to feel the same way.

Fundraiser. Synagogues have real expenses, and no one should be embarrassed about asking for money. But are you really the best person to do this? If funds need to be raised get a professional with a solid track record of success to raise them. You might be asked to tag along to add gravitas, but leave the actual fundraising to the professionals.

CEO. Managing a small business takes real skills. I've taught these skills to senior executives of Fortune 500 companies, and I've ghost written a best selling book on the subject. I know what managers need to do, but I personally have no desire to do it. Nor was I taught this in rabbinical school. If you know how to manage, and want to be a manager: great, but you might be happier work-

ing for Wal-Mart. If you don't want to be a manager, hire someone who does.

Team Leader. If you're lucky you will work with cantors, educators, administrators, and other professionals who are at least as creative as you are, and hopefully more so. Here's how best to work with them: be clear about your vision, enlist them to further it, and release them to manifest it. You want to work with people who understand your vision, and who can achieve it in ways you may not have imagined. Yes, things will happen that you don't like. So what? Only clerks hire clones.

The Real Job

All of these things may be part of your job, just do your best to make them a small part. Otherwise you won't have the time or the energy for the real job.

A rabbi's real job is to use Jewish traditions, texts, and teachings to help people create, articulate, and live deeply meaningful and purpose-filled lives. Notice that Judaism is a means not an end. Only clerks make Judaism an end; prophets use it to achieve something greater than itself.

Here is what you need to do this job well: Torah, Midrash, and Mitzvot. By Torah I mean the entirety of Jewish literary creativity from TaNaKH and Talmud to Zohar and Tanya; from Rashi and Maimonides to the Besht and Buber; from Nachman of Breslav to Kafka of Prague; from Agnon to Jabes to Chabon and beyond. By Midrash I mean the capacity to boldly and deliberately misread this Torah to create new meanings. If all you can do is repeat what long dead rabbis have said, refer your congregation to Wikipedia and sleep in on Shabbos. And by Mitzvot I mean those traditional practices that can, when reworked in your

hands, translate newly discovered meaning into purpose-filled living.

Are you learning how to be this kind of rabbi? Are you learning not only how to study Torah but also how to reveal Torah? Are you learning not only how to study midrash but also how to create it? Are you learning not only how to use mitzvot as they are, but how to shape them into what you need them to be? To borrow from Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, are you being taught how to "make the old, new; and the new holy"? If so, fantastic! If not, what can you do about it? Ask your professors for help. Some of them are clerks whose only interest is in making you a clerk. But some of them are prophets dying for the opportunity to share what they know, and stymied because the establishment doesn't value it. The best learning I did at HUC was after hours and under the table. Give your teachers the chance to teach and there is no limit to what you can learn.

Balance

You are not only a rabbi. You may also be a friend, spouse, partner, parent, sibling, and child. Don't expect your congregants to honor your other roles. They like it when you praise family values, but they hate it when you live them. Set boundaries and stick to them.

First, make yourself unavailable. Schedule family time, personal time, and study time before you schedule time for anyone or anything else. Second, refuse to attend meetings unless your opinion and presence are absolutely necessary. The community belongs to the people, not to you. Let them work matters out for themselves.

Third, don't care about most things. Care only about those things that are fundamental: your vision and your values. These are the things you will

quit over; the things you are willing to be fired over. If these are threatened, be their champion. If they are not, stay home and read a book or plot a revolution or play with your kids.

Fourth, avoid the part-time rabbinate. The term is code for full-time work for part-time pay. If your community wants to hire you part-time, charge them by the quarter-hour like a lawyer using lawyerly rates. They will complain, but chances are they are lawyers themselves, so stick to your guns.

Who Owns You?

You know you are owned if there is some one or some group in your congregation to whom you cannot say "no". Rabbis who are owned come to hate their jobs, their communities, and themselves. They are slaves preaching a tradition of liberation. The irony poisons them. What can you do to stay free?

First, be clear about what you will and will not do, and don't cave.

Second, live debt free as quickly as you can.

Third, live well below your means so that you can survive financially if you decide that getting paid is no longer worth the cost.

Fourth, cultivate a second career, something you do and might even like doing if being a rabbi is no longer feeding you and those for whom you work.

I was a congregational rabbi for twenty years, and worked as a business consultant for 15 of those years. I also wrote books and cultivated a national and eventually international speaking career. When I left congregational life I had other skills to fall back on and a resume to back them up. The early rabbis didn't earn their living from

Torah. Follow their example. Shammai was a general contractor. Go to night school and get an MA in Concrete Management.

Leave a Legacy

I had five congregational rabbis in my youth (all of whom were Orthodox), and not one touched me. I can't even remember their names. They were interchangeable cogs in an institutional wheel that chewed them up and spit them out leaving no taste behind. They weren't memorable. If people won't miss you when you're gone, they don't notice you while you're there.

I had five amazing rabbis in my adulthood: Mordecai Kaplan, Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, Eugene Mihaly, Ellis Rivkin, and Alvin Reines. Not all of these men were ordained, but they were rabbis nonetheless. I remember them because they touched and changed my life. I want to honor them by doing the same for others. So should you.

This might come about from something you said or something you did, or it might come about because you were wise enough to say and do nothing at the very moment when doing or saying anything would have blocked the transition the other was about to make. The skills of a transformational rabbi are three: deep listening, bold reframing, and knowing how to make meaning in a way that creates purpose. You won't learn these at school. You learn them by being transformed by someone who has them, and then hanging around long enough to learn them yourself.

Be Bold

Spinoza is one of my heroes. He wore a ring on which he personally engraved a thorny rose and the Latin inscription, *Caute*, "cautiously". His ring

reminded him to be a thorn in the side of the establishment, but to prick cautiously.

Thankfully, he didn't take his own advice. Neither should you.

Know your vision and don't let others blind you to it. Know what you stand for, and be willing to be knocked down on account of it, and ready to stand back up because of it.

Know why you became a rabbi, and settle for nothing less. Know who you are, and don't let others get you to be who you aren't. Be bold. Be a prophet. This may not be what Jews want, but it is what we need.

I have been a rabbi for over thirty years. I would not want to be anything else. I hope some day you will be able to say the same.

About the Author



Rabbi Rami Shapiro is an award-winning author, essayist, poet, and teacher. In the print version of our magazine, he has an advice column, "Roadside Assistance for the Spiritual Traveler," addressing reader questions.

DAVENOLOGY

**Example story from
Rabbi Rami Shapiro**

We parked a few blocks from the Chabad *shul* in Boulder, Colorado, and walked the rest of the way. It was chilly and Reb Zalman wore a jacket over his black caftan.

As we entered the *shul*, Reb Zalman pulled off his coat and said, "Who wants to learn?"

This must have been expected as the men and women, already assembled in their respective sides of the *shul*, swiftly crossed the gender barrier so central to Orthodoxy and came to sit together at a long table to learn the week's *parsha*. One young man stood by the window facing the street to act as lookout for the *shul*'s regular rabbi.

Half an hour later the lookout shouted, "The rabbi is coming." People scrambled to their lawful places. The rabbi entered with his two sons. After a few moments of preparation, the *davenen* began.

The Chabad kids were running all over the *shul*, and after a few minutes I detected a pattern. The kids would run to Reb Zalman and beg him for candy. He would point to some text in the *siddur* and send them off to read it.

They would run away, read, and run back again where Reb Zalman rewarded them with Hershey's Kisses he carried in the pockets of his caftan.

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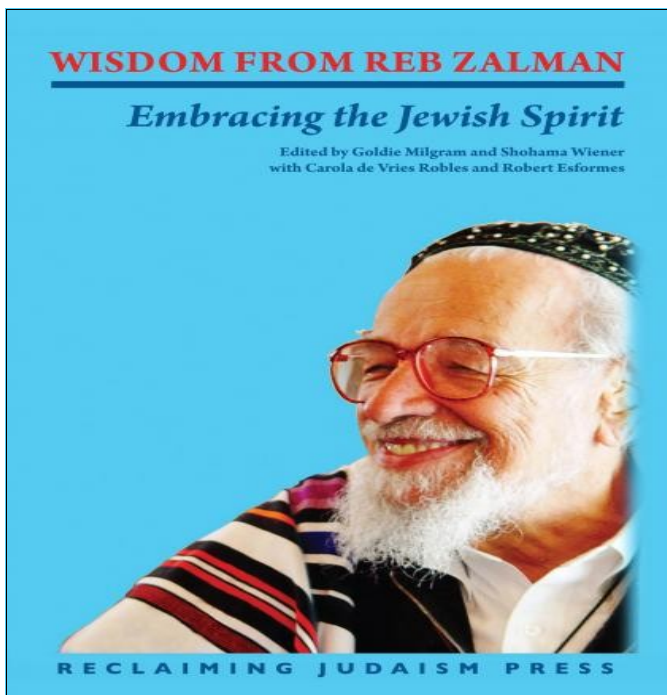
The longer the service ran, the more they ran to Reb Zalman. The more they ran, the more they read. The more they read, the more Kisses they consumed. The more Kisses they consumed, the more they ran.

Reb Zalman noticed I had substituted watching the kids for praying. He pulled a Hassidic text off a shelf behind him, and handed it to me. "Read this," he said, pointing to some passage.

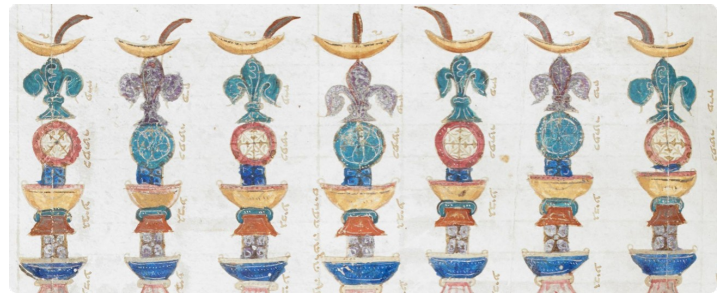
"Kisses?" I thought. I read. No Kisses. I walked up beside him and made some comment about the text to show that I had read and understood it. No Kisses. He pointed to another passage. I read it. No Kisses.

Even after being called up to the Torah and reciting the blessings, still no Kisses, just decades of wisdom, support, and guidance. But Hershey's Kisses? Not even one.

Rami Shapiro (6.19). WISDOM FROM REB ZALMAN (This book is a Candidate for the National Jewish Book Award)

**Safed Kabbalah and Renaissance Italy**

How Lurianic mysticism made its way to Europe—and back to the Middle East - By Moshe Idel



Attempting to establish an affinity between the prominent Safedian kabbalist Isaac Luria and the Renaissance Italian interest in kabbalah is not a simple historical task. It presupposes the possibility of documenting an acquaintance, fascination, or even an obsession on the part of kabbalists in the Land of Israel with the quandary sparked by the emergence of Christian kabbalah in Italy. That an awareness of the problems generated by this form of kabbalah was found in Jerusalem and Safed is obvious from quotations from R. Abraham ben Eliezer Halevi and, more important, from R. Moses Cordovero, Luria's acknowledged master in kabbalah. The most eminent Christian kabbalist, William Postel, visited the Land of Israel, mainly Jerusalem, in 1549-1550, the beginning of the flowering of Cordovero and Safedian kabbalists, who could have learned about this visit. Cordovero was familiar with R. Moses Basola, himself an acquaintance of Postel from their Italian years. There is, therefore, little doubt that Safedian kabbalists knew of this visit, though Postel himself is never mentioned by any of them.

Even in a passage by one of the closest kabbalists to Luria, his disciple R. Hayyim Vital—too, a former student of Cordovero's—we may discern interest in

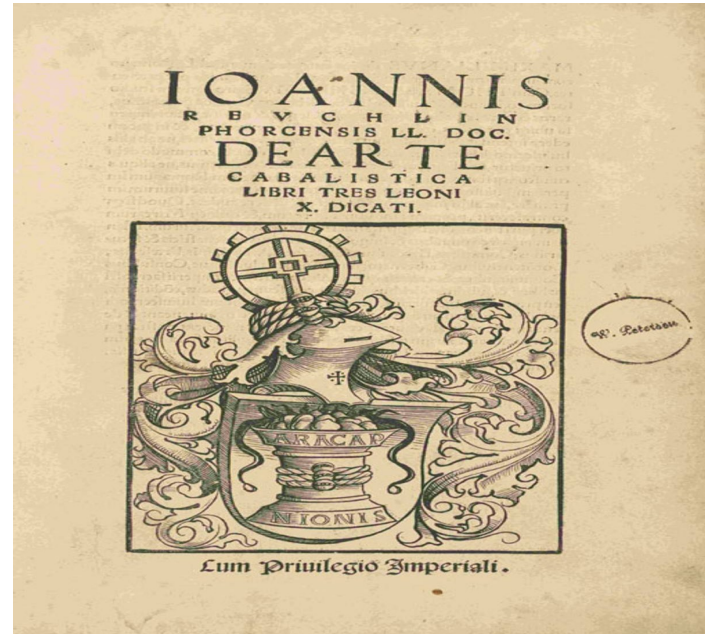
the transmission of secrets to Christians.

In one of his dreams he committed to writing, he reported that he arrived in Rome, only to be arrested by the officials of the "Roman Caesar." He is brought by soldiers to the "Caesar" and the latter orders the hall cleared, leaving them alone. Vital reports his dream as follows: "We were left by ourselves. I said to him: 'On what grounds do you want to kill me? All of you are lost in your religions like blind men. For there is no truth but the Torah of Moses, and with it alone can exist no other truth.' He (the Roman Caesar) replied: 'I already know all this and so I sent for you. I know that you are the wisest and most skilled of men in the wisdom of truth. I, the most knowledgeable, want you to reveal to me some of the secrets of the Torah and the names of your blessed Lord, for I already recognized the truth.' ... Then I told him a bit of the wisdom (of kabbalah) and I awoke."

It is likely that "Caesar of Rome" refers to the pope, with whom at least two messianic figures, Abraham Abulafia and Solomon Molkho, sought an audience. Vital was certainly an aspirant to a messianic mission. There is no doubt from the context, where Vital portrays himself as dwelling in a cave with the paupers in Rome, that a messianic background informs the dream.

According to the above passage, the pope offers total recognition of the superiority of Vital over other kabbalists, as well as his own acceptance of the truth of Judaism over Christianity. However, Vital must have ultimately associated the phrase Keisar Romi (Roman Caesar) with the destruction of the Second Temple by Titus. The sudden interruption of the dream reflects an unconscious resistance, even while asleep, to the teaching of kabbalistic secrets to a gentile. Vital nevertheless started to reveal some parts of kabbalah before

awakening.



Title page of 'De arte cabalistica,' by Johann Reuchlin (1455-1522), 1517 THE CENTER FOR JEWISH HISTORY

Thus, though only in a dream, intellectual exchange between the greatest of the kabbalists, the student of Luria who had forbidden the export of kabbalah from the Land of Israel, and the pope was imagined to have taken place. Indeed, there is historical background for this assumption. There are at least two examples of dedications of kabbalistic books to the pope prior to Vital's dream: Reuchlin dedicated his *De arte cabalistica* to Pope Leo X; and around 1575, Lazarus da Viterbo dedicated a Latin kabbalistic treatise on the Jubilee to Gregory XII. Vital, a kabbalist of Italian extraction and a member of a Calabrian family, had been born in the Land of Israel, yet was still called Hayyim Calabrese.

This dream is also interesting from another point of view: Safed is located in the Galilee, an area where Muslim and, to a certain extent, Druze cultures were dominant, not to mention the Ottoman administration. Some kabbalists active there in the

16th century came from Muslim countries, especially North Africa. Vital even studied occult sciences with Arab masters. R. Joseph Karo visited a tekia, a small Sufi monastery, as he himself confessed.

Yet while there is little reason to doubt that kabbalists were acquainted with Muslim thought and mystical practices, both the attraction and repulsion documented in the writings of Safedian kabbalists are formulated relative to cultural processes that were taking place in Italy. To recall a statement of Karo: "Someone is where his thought is." Nevertheless, it will be too simplistic to relate all the main developments in Safedian kabbalah to Italy, even less to the awareness of the dangers inherent in Christian kabbalah. As mentioned above, there were various factors behind the arrival of the kabbalists in Safed and the interaction between them there, and all of them contributed to the creativity in the town. So, while emphasizing these topics, I do not rule out the possibility of a substantial impact of additional sources—Muslim, Druze, or other, such as Orthodox Christianity—or the importance of other spiritual trends that flourished in the kabbalistic center in Safed.

Awareness of the emergence of Christian kabbalah may account for a crucial turn in Isaac Luria's politics of dissemination of his type of kabbalah. According to one of the most important documents describing the study of Luria's secrets in his circle, he explicitly forbade the disclosure of those secrets to kabbalists outside his small circle and their dissemination outside the Land of Israel. Luria's students and those of Vital, themselves mature kabbalists, had to sign pledges not to disclose Lurianic secrets. This is a clear-cut change that has not as yet been satisfactorily explained, given

the quite exoteric propensity of his master Cordovero and his disciples. Is it connected with the danger of another "exile of the Torah"? I am not sure that the connection between the claim and a certain aspect of the ritual of tikkun hatzot regarding the secrets of the Torah, on the one hand, and the change in Luria's politics of esotericism, on the other, can be demonstrated in a conclusive manner. Yet such a nexus seems plausible. Finally, Lurianic kabbalah as formulated in the Galilee in its different versions is reticent toward philosophical thought. This anti-philosophical bent is certainly not new in the history of kabbalah, and not the strongest. We can easily trace it to earlier sources in Spanish kabbalah, and its reverberations outside the Iberian Peninsula after the expulsion. It is obvious that the powerful reliance on the Zohar, conceived of as an inspired book, was accompanied by the rejection of intellectual speculations in matters of kabbalah.

In the case of Luria, the centrality of the Zohar—a bit less evident in Cordovero—was accompanied by a certain purist approach, far less synthetic, harmonistic, or eclectic than Cordovero's books. Luria's works are more homogenous, unlike the more harmonizing and eclectic works of Cordovero, at least as regards his most influential book, *Pardes Rimmonim*. To a certain degree, we may describe what is imagined to be Luria's thought as a case of counter-Renaissance, to echo Hiram Haydn's term. Indeed, the more magically oriented system of Cordovero is more consonant with a Renaissance mode found in Pico and his many followers in what is termed the "occult philosophy." Moreover, Cordovero's cosmoeroticism is much closer to Renaissance theories. In a certain propensity to purism and counter-

Renaissance, Luria, surprisingly, is in the same camp as the most adamant critic of kabbalah, Leon Modena.

On the other hand, Luria, like several of his contemporaries in Safed, lived in an ambience of adherence to an ostensibly ancient text, the Zohar, attempting to relive the life of the "ancient" kabbalists by returning to the place where they believed the Zohar had been composed. Indeed, Liebes has compared Luria to Marsilio Ficino, another figure who revived an ancient body of learning.

There is no doubt that Safedian authors, kabbalists and non-kabbalists, enjoyed a special status among Italian Jews, as they did in other Jewish communities. Not only did important figures visit Safed, such as R. Mordekhai Dato and R. Moses Basola. The numerous laments expressed by Italian rabbis over the death of R. Joseph Karo are clear testimony to the veneration in which he was held in Italy.

The economic assistance extended by Italian Jewry to the Safedian community is also well known; one of the main figures in this respect was the most important kabbalist in Italy at the end of the 16th and the early 17th century, R. Menagem Azariah of Fano. In his preface to Pellaḥ Harimmon, his compendium of Cordovero's Pardes Rimmonim, his reverence for Cordovero and Luria knows scarcely any limit. Thus, it is clear that almost all Italian kabbalists in the late 16th and early 17th century accepted Safed's superiority. That recognition was not only a matter of reverence, a feeling welling up from the special geographic location of Safed in the Holy Land, or the propinquity to sacred tombs. That is doubtless a fact, yet there are additional important dimensions to the veneration of the Safedians. Their intellectual

achievements were impressive. Karo and Cordovero wrote comprehensive systems, and Luria was imagined by his students, though in different ways, to have produced the most systematic exposition of kabbalah, the first in halakhah and the latter two on kabbalah, exemplary achievements that are milestones in the creativity of generations of Jewish writers before and since. It is this outstanding contribution to Jewish thought that spurred recognition by Italian thinkers and Jewish authors elsewhere.

If the objective attainments are the main source of reverence, there is another factor that must have played a role in the aura of sanctity surrounding the image of the Safedians: they were not only preeminent minds in matters of Judaism but belonged to powerful groups, and their cooperation must have enhanced their achievements as individuals. By contrast, the Italian counterparts of the Safedian kabbalists were not organized in a definite grouping. There is no extant written agreement about keeping secrets with respect to any group of Italian kabbalists. In general, Italian kabbalists showed no interest in maintaining secrecy. The names of R. Isaac de Lattes, R. Abraham ben Meshullam of San Angelo, R. Berakhiel Kaufmann, R. Mordekhai Dato, R. Abraham Yagel, and R. Moses Basola hardly constitute a group. With the exception of the family relationship between the first two, and their common sources, it is hard to document a significant common literary activity except the participation by some in the project of printing the Zohar.

Unlike Safedian kabbalah in both its major schools, which emerged in a small compact place and was organized in relatively coherent study groups, Italian kabbalah in the second half of the 16th century is marked by the presence of

various individuals. Viewed from this vantage, they bore more similarity to the Spanish kabbalists immediately after the Spanish expulsion. Though they may have known one another, no one ever described them as a group. They thus represent a mode of creativity that differs dramatically from the emphasis on the importance of the group found in some kabbalistic circles in Spain: Nahmanides' circle in Catalonia, the circle of the Zohar in Castile, and the Sefer Hameshiv circle apparently likewise in Castile, or their reverberations in Safed. In the Galilean town, there is solid evidence that a group, the havurah, sometimes called the havurah kedushah, the holy fraternity, not only afforded an opportunity to pursue rabbinic and kabbalistic studies in common, but was also a fraternity that undertook peregrinations around Safed for mystical purposes. Nor do the Italian Jewish kabbalists follow the pattern of the Accademia in Florence in the 15th century. To an appreciable extent, kabbalistic literature of the Italian Renaissance among Jews and Christians relied on kabbalistic traditions articulated and widespread in Italy in the two centuries preceding the end of the 15th century, basically the writings of Abraham Abulafia and Menahem Recanati. They were studied without a kabbalistic master. The classic work of the Spanish kabbalah, the Zohar, had little impact before its first printing in the mid-16th century. This is part of a more philosophical orientation among Renaissance Italian Jews, who differed intellectually from the far more particularistic state of mind dominant in Spain and then Safed.

R. Abraham Yagel did not become a Lurianic kabbalist, notwithstanding the fact that he was aware of the existence of this sort of kabbalah. In contact with R. Menahem Azariah of Fano, the

chief Italian kabbalist who introduced versions of Lurianism, Yagel apparently resisted the new wave of kabbalism. He writes, for example, that he heard that R. Hayyim Vital was a wondrous kabbalist, a student of Luria and head of the kabbalists in the Galilee. Does this statement imply that Vital was indeed an important kabbalist, but only insofar as the kabbalists of Safed are concerned? Such a reading would strongly support a claim made in this study that an awareness of the



difference between the two centers is not only a matter of the phenomenology of a modern scholar, but part of the awareness of the 16th-century kabbalist, and that such an awareness influenced his evaluation and allegiance. Yagel's reticence to adopt the system of Vital and Luria may indicate that this is the real significance behind the above formulation. In any case, it is obvi-

ous that his propensity for both kabbalah and philosophy, including that of the Renaissance, sparked a resistance toward the mythical tenor of Safedian traditions.

It is important to note the long Italian tradition that identified the sefirot with Platonic ideas. It perhaps began in the late 13th century with R. Nathan ben Sa'adiah Harar, becoming explicit in R. Judah Romano, R. Isaac Abravanel, R. Yebiel Nissim da Pisa, Mordekhai Rossilo, R. Abraham Yagel, R. Azariah de' Rossi, and then in Leon Modena. Thus, the association of Platonic philosophy with kabbalah, evident in Herrera and in Delmedigo, represents just another more intense phase in the history of the affinities, real or imaginary, between the two types of speculation. Nonetheless, it is still an open question whether some concepts of sefirot might have been connected historically and directly (or indirectly) with Platonism. However, it is certain that beginning in the 16th century in Italy, the nexus between the two is mentioned.

After the disintegration of the center of kabbalah in Safed, Lurianic kabbalistic writings arrived in Italy as early as 1580, when R. Samson Bakki, a student of R. Joseph ibn Tabbul, sent an entire Lurianic treatise from Jerusalem to Italy, and R. Ezra of Fano copied Lurianic material, apparently in the Land of Israel, which he then brought to Italy. We are concerned here with one of the changes Lurianism underwent in Italy, especially in the manner it was formulated by R. Israel Sarug. Let me start the short survey of the affinities between the two types of lore with a citation from Joseph Delmedigo's *Novelot Hokhma*. After quoting at length the descriptions of the first stages of Creation according to the malbush theory identified as that of R. Israel Sarug, Joseph Delmedigo writes: "As I announced beforehand, most of what I

wrote here is taken almost verbatim from the books of the disciples of Luria. Therefore, let no philosopher criticize our words, but if his opinion is proper, he should interpret and divert them to the view of the true philosophers, and he will be blessed by God."

The positive attitude toward a philosophical interpretation is conspicuous: the philosopher will be blessed for such an enterprise. What is fascinating is the manner in which this interpretation should be done: the words of Luria and his disciples should be diverted (the Hebrew is *yatteh*) so that they may become closer to, or perhaps even coincide with, the opinion of the true philosophers. This means that the latter may possess a sort of truth that kabbalistic writings, including Luria's, may perhaps approximate but do not express in clear terms.

It is useful to examine the manner in which an Oriental kabbalist was portrayed by Leon Modena. He describes the activity of R. Israel Sarug: "And I have heard, too, from the mouth of the kabbalist R. Israel Sarug, an outstanding pupil of Luria, blessed be his memory ... that there is no difference between kabbalah and philosophy. And all that (Sarug) taught about kabbalah, he interpreted through philosophy." I assume that this passage contains the words of two speakers: those of Sarug, to the effect that there is no difference between philosophy and kabbalah, and Modena's own statement about Sarug's interpretation of kabbalah.

Though Modena mentions Plato in connection with two other kabbalists—R. Jacob Nahamias (according to a testimony of R. Joseph Delmedigo) and his own student R. Joseph Hamis—the Greek philosopher is not mentioned in Sarug's own statement or in Modena's: both use

Nevertheless, Gershom Scholem interprets this term as “certainly” referring to “Platonic philosophy.” Alexander Altmann has already questioned this view and pointed out that there is insufficient evidence for such an interpretation. A perusal of Sarug’s works reveals no quotation of Plato or any Platonic thinker. We thus have to ask ourselves whether Modena’s statements about Sarug are reliable or perhaps only a weapon used by Modena in his attack on kabbalah. I think it almost inconceivable that Modena would falsify a statement of Sarug and then add his interpretation. Sarug presumably taught his version of Lurianic kabbalah without any philosophical quotations. This version was written by Sarug himself or his pupils; this is the meaning of the phrase “all he taught about kabbalah.” Afterward, and apparently only orally, a philosophical interpretation was given.

Yet how could Sarug offer a philosophical interpretation that had nothing to do with the original kabbalistic text, even more so in Italy, where some among the Jewish elite were engaged in exploring the philosophical culture of the Renaissance? A probable answer to this question may be that though Platonic philosophy cannot be detected in Sarug’s works, traces of another philosophy could be hidden in his works and taught orally by Sarug through his kabbalistic terms.

I analyzed Modena’s short statement to emphasize the selective will of Jewish Italian circles: though transmitting the sacrosanct Lurianic teachings, Sarug claimed that there was no difference between kabbalah and philosophy, whatever that philosophy may be. Perhaps we have a reverberation of the Renaissance attitude toward

religious knowledge known as *prisca theologia*, which assumed a correspondence between various bodies of ancient knowledge. I would argue that the insistence on a correspondence between kabbalah and philosophy stands in strong opposition to the Safedian reticence toward philosophy, as mentioned above.

The above dynamics of rapid exchange between Safed and Italy is unparalleled insofar as Safed and another center are concerned, not only in Europe but throughout the entire Jewish world. Nothing similar is known regarding the arrival of Cordoverian kabbalah, or regarding the availability of Lurianic kabbalah in print and by oral teaching, paralleling the content of the aforementioned documents.

In fact, as we learn from the very first lines of the introduction by R. Menabem Azariah of Fano to his *Pelah Harimmon*, he compiled at least the second version of his compendium of Cordovero’s *Pardes Rimmonim* at the request of R. Isaac ben Mordekhai of Poland (described as a distinguished scholar who came to study with him) and for the rabbis of Ashkenaz.

This is evidence that Italy around 1600 became a center in itself, a hub from where kabbalah radiated to the North.

Adapted from “Italy in Safed, Safed in Italy: Toward an Interactive History of 16th-Century Kabbalah,” in David B. Ruderman and Giuseppe Veltri, eds., Cultural Intermediaries: Jewish Intellectuals in Early Modern Italy



Ravenous Ravs

**Rabbi Frank Tamburello's
Jewish Food Column
Featuring Eats and Treats**



Mandarin Salad with cherry tomatoes, raisins, nuts and feta cheese.

INGREDIENTS

- 100 grams mixed greens (such as green and red batavia, lollo rosso, spinach and rocket)
- 2 mandarins
- 4 nuts
- 30 grams raisins
- 8 cherry tomatoes
- feta cheese

DRESSING INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons orange vinaigrette (olive oil and orange juice)
- 1/2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon mango jam
- Salt

PREPARATION

Prepare the vinaigrette by mixing two tablespoons orange vinaigrette, balsamic vinegar, mango jam, and salt.

Separate the slices of mandarins and cut each slice in half. Cut the cherry tomatoes in half.

Combine all ingredients with the vinaigrette, add crumbled feta, mix well, and enjoy!.

Winter is the best season for oranges and mandarins. We need lots of vitamin C to prevent colds and flu and increase our immune system, incorporate capsicum and oranges (which both contain lots of vitamin C) as often as possible into your recipes.





Ravenous Ravens

Rabbi Frank Tamburello's Jewish Food Column Featuring Eats and Treats



Egyptian Golden Potato Soup Recipe

Shabbat soup from the Egyptian Jewish community.

- Olive oil, as needed
- 2 medium yellow onions, chopped
- 3 ribs celery, chopped
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 3-4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp ground turmeric
- 3 lbs (6-7 medium large) Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cubed in about 1" pieces
- 8 cups water or chicken stock (if using water you can add a vegetarian bouillon cube)
- Juice of 1 large lemon, about 1/4 cup, or to taste
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions

1. Add a few tablespoons of olive oil to a large pot over medium heat. Add the chopped onion, celery, and carrot to the pot. Sauté until very softened and the onions are completely translucent and starting to get golden, about 10-12 minutes.
2. Add the minced garlic, and sauté for an additional 2-3 minutes, or until the garlic is softened and fragrant but not beginning to brown. Add the turmeric and a generous amount of salt and pepper, and sauté for an additional minute or until all of the vegetables are well coated in the spice.
3. Add the peeled and cubed potatoes, and the water/stock to the pot (if using water, you can also add a vegetarian bouillon cube for added flavor). Bring the liquid up to a simmer, then lower the heat and simmer for 30-40 minutes or until the potatoes are tender and fully cooked. Remove the soup from the heat. For a smooth soup, use an immersion blender or blender and purée the soup.
4. Take off the heat, add the lemon juice, stir and taste. Add more lemon juice, salt, and/or pepper to your liking. Soup can be made in advance and freezes well.





Ravenous Ravs

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Syrian Leek Pancakes Recipe

Ingredients

- 1 bunch leeks (approx. 3)
- 1 large Idaho potato
- 1/3-1/2 cup matzah meal
- salt & pepper, to taste
- 3-4 eggs
- canola oil, for frying

Directions

Wash and clean the leeks: trim off the dark green sections and the root. Slice each stalk in half lengthwise and run under cold water, fanning the stalk so water runs through each layer.

Chop the leeks into small pieces, roughly the size of a thumbnail. Soak in a bowl of cold water. Lift the leeks out of the water and set on clean towels. Pat leeks dry. (If you have a salad spinner, use it to dry the leeks.)



Make the batter: Whisk 3 of the eggs in a large mixing bowl. Peel the potato and grate it into the bowl.

Add the leeks, matzah meal, salt and pepper.

Mix well with a fork to combine. Batter should be thick and relatively scoop-able. Add additional egg or matzah meal depending on texture. Set batter aside.

Fry the pancakes: Heat a thin layer of oil in the skillet. To test salt level, fry a teaspoon of batter. Taste and season again if needed.

Fry 2 tablespoons-sized scoops of batter, flipping when one side is brown. Remove to a paper towel lined plate.

The pancakes can be baked in mini muffin cups instead of fried. Spray muffin tin well with cooking spray and bake in a 375 degree F oven until set. Cool and remove.

Note: *The leeks can be prepped one day ahead. The prepared pancakes can be frozen on a sheet tray. Transfer to zip-lock bags when frozen solid.*

Ravenous Ravens



**Rabbi Frank Tamburello's
Jewish Food Column
Featuring Eats and Treats**



Kreplach

Kreplach are stuffed dumplings, often made with a dough that is similar to Italian ravioli or tortellini. They became a staple of Ashkenazi cooking in Germany and Eastern Europe by way of Italian Jews. Kreplach are traditionally served in chicken soup for holidays and Shabbat meals.

Fillings for kreplach vary from home to home, as do their shapes and sizes. Here you'll find two filling options: classic chicken and onion, and vegetarian mushroom and cabbage. The chicken filling can be made with the same chicken you use to make your chicken soup, or with any pre-cooked chicken. The chicken gets shredded and then mixed with caramelized onions and fresh herbs, making the kreplach flavorful and light. The mushroom and cabbage version is meaty with a rich flavor.

Ingredients

For the dough:

- 2 cups (270 g) all-purpose flour
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 Tbsp oil
- 1 tsp kosher salt

For the chicken filling:

- 1 ½ cups shredded, cooked chicken
- ½ a medium yellow or white onion, diced fine
- 2 Tbsp chopped parsley or dill
- salt and pepper, to taste
- oil, as needed

For the vegetarian filling:

- ½ a medium yellow or white onion, diced fine
- 8 oz cremini mushrooms, chopped fine
- 2 cups finely shredded cabbage
- 1-2 Tbsp soy sauce or Worcestershire sauce
- salt and pepper, to taste
- oil, as needed

Directions

To make the dough by hand: Add the flour to a large mixing bowl. Make a well in the middle of the flour, then add the eggs, oil and salt. Using a fork, beat the eggs in the center of the well, then slowly begin to incorporate the flour into the egg mixture.

Once you can no longer mix the dough with the fork transfer it onto a clean surface. Begin to combine the dough with your hands until it forms a ball; if it is very sticky add a little more flour. Knead the dough until silky and smooth, about 5-6 minutes. Wrap in plastic and refrigerate for at least one hour or up to 8 hours.

To make the chicken filling: Add a drizzle of oil to a pan over medium heat, then add the diced onion to the pan and cook until golden brown, about 10 minutes. Season with salt.

In a bowl, combine the shredded chicken, browned onion and chopped parsley, and season with salt and pepper. The filling can be made up to one day in advance. Once the dough is rolled out, cut it into equal sized 3" squares. Fill each square with approximately 1 teaspoon of filling, be careful not to overfill your kreplach.





Ravenous Ravs

**Rabbi Frank Tamburello's
Jewish Food Column
Featuring Eats and Treats**



Kreplach

Directions

Fill a small dish with water, then begin to form your kreplach. Dab the edges of the dough with water, then fold into a triangle shape, seal the edges by firmly pressing the dough, or by using the tines of a fork.

Place the formed kreplach on a parchment-lined baking sheet; dust lightly with flour if they are sticky on the outside.

You can cook the kreplach immediately, or place them in the freezer in a single layer.

Once frozen, transfer them into an airtight container; they will last in the freezer for up to 3 months.

Cook

Fill a large pot of water to a boil. Simmer the kreplach for 15-20 minutes, or until very tender.

If cooking the kreplach from frozen, simmer for 5-10 minutes longer.

Once cooked and tender, add the cooked kreplach to your soup and serve.



Moroccan beet latkes brussels sprouts petals

One Big Recipe is all about cooking for family and friends and so are the holidays! Check out cool Chef Kimberly Lal-louz's take on holiday favourites in her seasonal special 'One BIG Holiday Dinner', a multi-course upscale take on holiday dinner all broken down in classic OBR fashion with every step timed out... Her first course is a Moroccan spiced Beet Latke with lightly dressed Brussels sprouts petals and crème fraiche.

Orange-Argan Vinaigrette:

- 1 tablespoon (15 ml) Dijon mustard
- 1 orange
- 2 tablespoons (30 ml) apple cider vinegar
- 2 teaspoons (10 ml) orange flower water
- 3 tablespoons (45 ml) argan oil
- ½ cup (120 ml) olive oil
- Salt and pepper

Beet Latkes:

- 2 tablespoons (30 ml) vegetable oil
- 3 large red beets, grated
- ½ cup (120 ml) potato starch
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 tablespoon (15 ml) Ras el Hanout (Moroccan Spice Blend)
- Salt

To Serve:

- 6 tablespoons (90 ml) crème fraiche
- 6-8 Brussels sprouts
- 1 tablespoon (15 ml) butter
- Beet Latkes
- Orange-Argan Vinaigrette

Preparation

For the Orange-Argan Vinaigrette:

In a bowl, whisk together mustard, orange juice and zest, cider vinegar, orange flower water, and argan oil. Whisk in olive oil, season with salt and pepper.

For the Latkes:

Heat oil in a heavy skillet over medium-high heat.

In a second pan, melt butter over medium-low heat.

Use gloves to prevent staining your hands, quickly mix the shredded beets, potato starch, eggs, and Ras el Hanout (Moroccan spice blend). Season with salt. Continue working quickly and form the mixture into 12 small cakes.

Fry the cakes in the hot skillet, about 2-3 minutes per side. Set aside to drain, keep warm.

Add the Brussels sprouts leaves to the pan with the butter and toss lightly to warm only very slightly. Toss the slightly warmed Brussels sprouts petals with a bit of the Orange-Argan Vinaigrette. Plate Latkes, 2 to a plate, with petals on top.

Serve immediately.



Timballo Di Ricotta

(Ricotta Souffle)

(Roman Jewish Recipe from "Cucina Ebraica"! by Joyce Goldstein)

- 1 lb. (2 cups) fresh ricotta
- 4 eggs, separated
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons cognac, dark rum or Marsala wine.
- Grated zest of 2 lemons
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon (optional)

Spoon ricotta into a sieve placed over a bowl and let drain in refrigerator for 1-2 hours.

Preheat oven to 300 degrees. Butter 2 quart souffle dish.

In a bowl, using an electric mixer beat together the egg yolks and sugar until very thick and pale. Add the drained ricotta, flour, cognac, lemon zest, and cinnamon.

Mix gently until well combined. In another bowl beat egg whites until stiff peaks form.

Stir about 1/4 of the egg whites into the cheese mixture to lighten it, then fold in the

remaining whites just until no white streaks remain.

Pour into the prepared souffle dish. Place in a baking pan and pour hot water into the pan to reach halfway up the sides of the dish. Cover pan with aluminum foil.

Bake until set but still a little jiggly, about 40 minutes. Remove from oven and place on a rack. Serve warm. Serves 8-12



Blue Crinkle Cookies for Hanukah

Ingredients

- 1 stick (8 tablespoons) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar, divided
- Zest and juice from one large lemon, separated
- 1 large egg, room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- Blue gel food coloring
- 1/2 cup confectioner's sugar

Directions

Pre-heat the oven to 350 degrees; line 2 baking sheet with parchment paper.

Beat the butter, 1 cup of the granulated sugar and lemon zest in your mixer till light and fluffy; scrape down the sides. Add the lemon juice, egg and vanilla and beat again; scrape down the sides.

Add the flour, baking powder and salt and beat again till ingredients are well combined.

Add a bit of food coloring to the dough and beat until the color is completely incorporated. Add more color, a bit at a time, till the desired shade is reached.

Place the remaining 1/2 cup of granulated sugar in a small bowl, and the confectioner's sugar in another bowl.

Use a tablespoon or cookie scoop to scoop the batter right into the granulated sugar. Gently turn so that the scoop is completely covered in the sugar, then roll into a ball. Place the ball into the confectioner's sugar, turn to coat and roll into a ball again. Place on your prepared baking sheet. Repeat with the remaining batter.

Bake for 8 – 10 minutes, or till the cookies are puffed up and the edges are just set. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.



We “wax eloquently” on bringing back the shine - By Rabbi Barbara Aiello from her Blog.

Although Chanukah is a minor Jewish holiday, it is “major” in the eyes of many Jewish families, especially where there are children who enjoy festivities that continue for eight nights.

Chanukah itself derives from the Hebrew word, “dedication,” and it is during this festival that Jews all over the world rededicate themselves to the ideals of religious freedom for all people. Speaking of dedication, it takes a special sort of perseverance to return the Chanukah menorah to its original splendor, especially when it is encrusted in last year’s wax.

So, when it comes to **Cleaning Your Chanukah Menorah**, with Mrs. Maccabees as our role model for tackling difficult jobs (after the military victory legend has it that she was the organizer who cleaned the Temple), let’s get down to the dirty work.

When David Grossman of “Jewish Homes,” asked for suggestions, he found out how our mothers and our bubbyes bring back the shine to the centerpiece of the Chanukah season.

The Freezer – place your metal menorah in the freezing compartment of your refrigerator. After just one half hour the wax should chip off easily. (not appropriate for ceramic chanukiyot)

Warm Water – Use a dishpan and fill it with warm to hot water. Dunk the menorah into water and allow the wax to float to the top. Use a sponge to wipe it clean. Note: the dishpan contains the wax pieces so that they are not

washed down the drain, which can damage your kitchen plumbing!

Wax Removal Product – Craft stores carry this product, called “Un-Do.” It is designed to remove candle wax and it works well on menorahs.

Warm Iron – Test this out on an old piece of silverware. Heat your iron to low. Cover your menorah with an old cloth towel or several layers of paper toweling. As you “iron” the menorah, the towel absorbs the melted wax.

Blow dryer – Your hair dryer works well, too. Use it to warm and loosen the wax. Wipe clean with a soft cloth.

In the Oven – Yes, that’s right. Your oven isn’t just for kugel anymore. You can use it to remove years of hardened wax from your menorah. Line a cookie sheet with heavy-duty foil. Wrap the menorah in paper towels (to absorb the wax) and then wrap again, this time covering the menorah with foil.

Place on the cookie sheet and heat the oven to a low temperature, about 200 F. SET A TIMER for one half hour. Use oven mitts to remove the menorah and wipe away the last of the melted wax.

