

2025
HAPPY New Year

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January
2025

Temple Talk

1 Tevet—2 Shevat
5785

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
* Check your mailbox! The invitation for the Grand Finale Celebration & Reunion Weekend will be mailed in early January.			1 Last day of Hannukah <i>Happy New Year</i>	2	3 Shabbat Service 7:30 pm	4 <i>Vayigash</i>
5	6	7	8	9 Adult Education 7:30 PM Zoom Check page 9 for details	10 Shabbat Service 7:30 pm	11 <i>Vayeichi</i>
12	13	14	15	16	17	18 Shabbat Service 10:00 am <i>Shemot</i>
19	20 	21	22	23 Adult Education 7:30 PM Zoom	24 Shabbat Service 7:30 pm	25 <i>Va'eira</i>
26* 	27 	28	29	30 <i>Rosh Chodesh 1 Shevat</i>	31 Shabbat Service 7:30 pm 	

**The January 2025
Temple Talk
is sponsored**

***In Loving Memory
of Cheryl Gaal
wife and mother of
Gary and Sara***

January 2025 Shabbat Services

Friday	January	3	7:30 pm
Friday	January	10	7:30 pm
Saturday	January	18	10:00 am
Friday	January	24	7:30 pm
Friday	January	31	7:30 pm

Please Note: Friday night and Saturday morning Shabbat services during the upcoming winter months will be on Zoom only. A Saturday morning Shabbat service will be on the third Saturday of each month.

Check the Temple Talk calendar and weekly e-mail messages to confirm dates and times.

**Shabbat Candle Lighting Times
January 2025**

Friday	January	3	4:47 pm
Friday	January	10	4:54 pm
Friday	January	17	5:02 pm
Friday	January	24	5:10 pm
Friday	January	31	5:19 pm



Executive Committee Message



Shana Tova ~ Happy New Year!

What is the difference between them? Is it proper for Jews to celebrate both? How do these celebrations play out?

Rosh Hashanah literally means the “head” of the year, and follows the Hebrew calendar, a lunisolar calendar. Its celebration begins on the first day of the Hebrew month of Tishri.

The secular new year, which follows the modern Gregorian calendar, is celebrated on the first day of January. So what is the difference between them? The secular New Year’s Eve is a time of merriment, feasting, fireworks and making resolutions. Rosh Hashanah has a more serious and solemn tone. The noise associated with this High Holiday is the blowing of the shofar in the synagogue to mark the beginning of the Ten Days of Awe, a period of soul-searching.

There is a Jewish joke that instead of the ball drop in Times Square, we let our matzah balls drop in our soup! (Maybe not so funny, but so true.)

SECULAR CELEBRATION: Both New Years are celebratory, but the way we go about it is so different. There are New Year’s Eve parties all over the world. Champagne is flowing and people actually dance in the street. At the stroke of midnight people hug each other. Many sing the Scottish song “Auld Lang Syne” at midnight essentially saying goodbye to the previous year. Chances are one gets up late that day and attempts to recover from a hangover.

JEWISH CELEBRATION: While it is true that Rosh Hashanah is a festive holiday, it is also an extremely sobering time as we pause from our daily grind and congregate in synagogue as an extended family. We implore the master of the world to grant us health and a joyous year. Champagne and wine are rarely used. Since the next day is an extended day in synagogue, you will not find any temple-going Jew awake at midnight. Jews sing Avinu Malkeinu/Our father and our King asking G-d for help in this coming year, essentially welcoming in the new year. We get up early and go to synagogue. There are a number of similarities between the two, as well.

SECULAR CELEBRATION: It is a time of new resolution. Be kinder, lose weight, get to bed on time and go to the gym. It is a festive time to share with family and friends. Many cultures wear white. In Northern Europe there is a custom to smash a plate for good luck.

JEWISH CELEBRATION: It is a time for new resolutions. Be kinder, more spiritual and more charitable, lose weight, get to bed earlier and exercise. It is a festive time to shared with family and friends. The emotion of sadness or melancholy is not tolerated and is detrimental to one’s prayers.

The Cantor and Rabbi don a white coat (kittel) as a sign of purity, repentance and new beginnings. If a glass does get broken everyone will shout Mazel Tov.

What I did not know is that the roots of New Year’s Eve go back to Julius Caesar, Pope Sylvester and William the Conqueror. There is a lot of unknown history here, including information on House of Conversion. But for many the idea is to get hammered (not a very Jewish idea). Out of respect for Christians, New Year’s Eve is felt to be a wrong celebration for Jews.

There is so much to learn about this subject. Our first loyalties are to other Jewish Rosh Hashanah holidays, although it is frowned upon by many rabbis there are many Jews who do celebrate the secular New Year’s Eve.

Regardless of the similarities or differences, people from all over share the common wish of peace, health, financial security and a safe environment.

HAPPY SECULAR NEW YEAR TO ALL OF YOU

Janice

Rabbi's Message



What Makes a Great Country

The Talmud tells of a dispute between Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai that lasted for three years, each side insisting it was in the right. Finally, a Divine Voice proclaims the well-known response that “*Eilu v’eilu divrei Elohim chayim hen*—these and these are both the words of the living God.” The conclusion to the Divine proclamation is often overlooked, though: “However, the *halakhah* is in accordance with the Beit Hillel.” The Talmud continues by explaining why this is the case. “... they were agreeable and forbearing, showing restraint when affronted, and when they taught the *halakhah* they would teach both their own statements and the statements of Beit Shammai. Moreover, when they cited a dispute, they taught the statements of Beit Shammai before their own statements, in deference to Beit Shammai.”

It should come as no surprise that there are disagreements among Jews, and that these disagreements are often passionate and longstanding (if not intractable). However, this Talmudic passage teaches us important lessons about how to disagree. The first is that debate and dissent are not sources of difficulty to be avoided. Rather, they are not only natural but desirable. Beit Hillel, by virtue of their disputations with their adversaries, are able to learn and refine their own thinking. Furthermore, because they are able to do so, and to do so with respect for their adversaries, their own views become prevalent.

An equally important lesson is that the two schools remained in a relationship with one another. They not only debated each other as adversaries but remained fully engaged in all aspects of their community with respect for the systems and structures that define that community. They prayed together, ate together, patronized each other’s businesses, cared for each other—all without allowing their disagreements to lead to rancor or repudiation. When legitimate decisions were handed down, they were received by all parties respectfully, and with equal respect for those who dissented.

Torah teaches us repeatedly to care for the widow, the orphan, and the stranger—the most vulnerable members of society, to ensure that all are treated with the dignity appropriate to God’s creation. Any system, whether a nation, a corporation, or a community, only functions as well as the people who make up that system abide by the ethical standards that define that system. A great nation is one in which each citizen holds themselves to a high moral standard, and similarly holds their leaders to account. A great nation is one that metes out justice without regard to social or economic standing, but ensures that all voices are heard and considered. A great nation is one in which the words of Amos prevail, with “judgment flowing like waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.”

Rabbi Howie Stein

To connect with Rabbi Stein you may call or email him directly at:
513-600-5535 | rabbi.howie.stein@gmail.com



Temple B'nai Israel gratefully acknowledges
the following donations



MEMORIAL DONATIONS

Lynne and James Gabriel, in memory of Lynne's father, Milton Shermer; Lynne's aunt Ethel Feldman
 Craig Bondy, in memory of his mother, Eileen
 Cindy Odle, in memory of her father, Robert
 Steve Mayer, in memory of his cousin, Mitch Maizlech
 Lauren, Ben, and Molly Mayer, in memory of their cousin, Mitch Maizlech
 Susan, Jeff, and Sawyer Schonfeld, in memory of their cousin Mitch, Maizlech
 Marilyn Weinblum, in memory of her father, William Morantz
 Gary Gaal, in memory of his mother, Helen; and his wife, Cheryl
 Linda Silberman, in memory of her husband, David
 Judy and Marshall Wolf, in memory of Judy's sister, Carole Simon
 Deby and James Gannes, in memory of Deby's grandmother, Lucy Grossman
 Sue and Steve Braunfield, in memory of Steve's mother, Pauline
 Judy Stein, in memory of her family members

MUSIC, SIMCHA & GET WELL DONATIONS

Judy and Jonathan Beck, get well wishes to our special friends; Herb Cohen, Barry Drossner, and Joan Kober
 Freda Spiegel, wishing Mark Simon strength in his continuing recovery
 Murray Siegel,, Lindi and Ron Kendal, from one 1st time great grandparent to another, mazel tov on the birth of Rose Delores King

*Mazel tov to Diane and Barry Weiss, on their granddaughter Ava's graduation
 from the University of Pittsburgh*

Claudia and Warre Finkel Janice Greenwald
 Marsha and Dick Leffel Diane and Mark Simon

Refuah Shlema—רפואה שלמה

*A Prayer of Healing and
 Return to Good Health*



Mark Simon

Please contact the Temple office if you wish to have a named added or removed from our Refuah Shlema list.

**January Birthdays and Anniversaries
 will be acknowledged during our Shabbat service
 on Friday, January 10**

Birthdays

Alan Finegold, Ron Rutherford, Claudia Finkel,
 Linda Ehrenreich, Jodi Golomb,
 Sanford Ehrenreich, Mahnaz Harrison, Donna Tyson

Anniversaries

Elizabeth & Alan Finegold
 Sue & Richard Linzer





**Thank you for your January
Chai Fund Donations**



Rosalie and Lou Anstandig, *in memory of Lou's sister, Harriet Tyrnauer*
Ruth and Scott Apter, *in memory of Scott's aunt, Ruth Scott*
Anna Dlugasch, *in memory of her husband, Jerry*
Claudia and Warren Finkel, *in memory of Claudia's grandmother, Helen Marcus; in honor of their granddaughters, Madison & Lucy's birthdays*
Gary Gaal, *in memory of his mother, Helen; his wife, Cheryl*
Deby and James Gannes, *in memory of Deby's aunt, Lucy Grossman*
Nancy and Kurt Gutfreund, *in memory of Nancy's mother, Petty Schwartz*
Debbie and Alan Iszauk, *in memory of Debbie's father, Ernie Friedman*
Susan and Mark Johnson, *in memory of Susan's grandmother, Irma Brodsky*
Joel Kaufman (ztl), *in memory of his father, Max*
Lindi and Ron Kendal, *in memory of Lindi's mother, Bertha Kline Siegel*
Roberta Levy, *in memory of her mother, Sylvia Pitts*
Sue and Richard Linzer, *in memory of Richard's father, Sidney*
Bart Rack, *in memory of his grandmother, Freda Love*
Susan Sabin, *in memory of her grandmother, Lucy Odle*
Diane and Mark Simon, *in memory of Diane's father, Albert Supowitz*
Nancy and Gary Tuckfelt, *in memory of Gary's grandmother, Sadie Tuckfelt*
Judi and Marshall Wolf, *in memory of Judi's sister, Carole Simon*
Sheryl Wolf, *in memory of her husband, Bruce*
Terry and Len Young, *in memory of Len's grandfather, Morris Young*

Yahrzeits from 5 Tevet—3 Shevat 5785: January 5—February 1, 2025



If the name is printed in **Bold**, a Yahrzeit Plaque will be illuminated in the Sanctuary on the date the name is read.



Yahrzeit names observed week of: January 5

Joseph Goldberg : Tevet 5 : 1/5/2025
 Ethel Greenberg : Tevet 6 : 1/6/2025
Helen Spiegel : Tevet 6 : 1/6/2025
Madelyn Klein : Tevet 6 : 1/6/2025
Bernat Samuels : Tevet 7 : 1/7/2025
Celia Atran : Tevet 7 : 1/7/2025
Murray Seltman : Tevet 7 : 1/7/2025
Patterson M. Menlowe : Tevet 7 : 1/7/2025
Stella Izsak : Tevet 7 : 1/7/2025
Lucy Odle : Tevet 8 : 1/8/2025
Philip Kessler : Tevet 8 : 1/8/2025
Solomon Chottiner : Tevet 8 : 1/8/2025
Ida Stark : Tevet 9 : 1/9/2025
Rose Skolsky : Tevet 9 : 1/9/2025
Abraham Weihrauch : Tevet 10 : 1/10/2025

Yahrzeit names continued: January 5

Clara Izsak : Tevet 10 : 1/10/2025
 Morris Young : Tevet 10 : 1/10/2025
Andrew Vlad : Tevet 11 : 1/11/2025
Philip Mehlman : Tevet 11 : 1/11/2025
Rosalee Levi : Tevet 11 : 1/11/2025
Sam Weiss : Tevet 11 : 1/11/2025

Yahrzeit names observed week of: January 12

Amy Mannist Abel : Tevet 12 : 1/12/2025
Bella Wein : Tevet 12 : 1/12/2025
Bernard Naimark : Tevet 12 : 1/12/2025
Elsie Keller : Tevet 12 : 1/12/2025
 Isaac Carmen : Tevet 12 : 1/12/2025
Alfred Kaplan : Tevet 13 : 1/13/2025

Continued on page 8

Yahrzeits from 5 Tevet—3 Shevat: January 5—February 1, 2025

- Continued from page 7 -

Names continued from week of: January 12

Isaac Gold : Tevet 13 : 1/13/2025
Osias Gisser : Tevet 13 : 1/13/2025
Robert Stein : Tevet 13 : 1/13/2025
Sidney Linzer : Tevet 13 : 1/13/2025
Bessie Moskowitz : Tevet 14 : 1/14/2025
Helen Marcus : Tevet 14 : 1/14/2025
Arthur Horshman : Tevet 15 : 1/15/2025
Ben Casar : Tevet 15 : 1/15/2025
Ernest Friedman : Tevet 15 : 1/15/2025
Freda Sobel Berkowitz : Tevet 15 : 1/15/2025
Louis Seigle : Tevet 15 : 1/15/2025
Thomas Hochman : Tevet 15 : 1/15/2025
Louis Wilner : Tevet 16 : 1/16/2025
Robert Kaplan : Tevet 16 : 1/16/2025
Simon Kalstone : Tevet 16 : 1/16/2025
Sylvia Pitts : Tevet 16 : 1/16/2025
Helen Gaal : Tevet 18 : 1/18/2025

Yahrzeit names observed week of: January 19

Ann Skolsky Gordon : Tevet 19 : 1/19/2025
Cecile Apter : Tevet 19 : 1/19/2025
Henry Friedman : Tevet 19 : 1/19/2025
Mildred Angerman : Tevet 19 : 1/19/2025
Benjamin I. Brown : Tevet 20 : 1/20/2025
Bertha Kline Siegel : Tevet 20 : 1/20/2025
Edith Ackerman : Tevet 20 : 1/20/2025
Hermine Palkowitz : Tevet 20 : 1/20/2025
Max Levi : Tevet 20 : 1/20/2025
Kate Sable : Tevet 21 : 1/21/2025
Lena Soffer : Tevet 21 : 1/21/2025
Pauline Braunfield : Tevet 21 : 1/21/2025
Abraham Teplitz : Tevet 22 : 1/22/2025
Arthur Moskowitz : Tevet 22 : 1/22/2025
Dora Feinberg : Tevet 22 : 1/22/2025
Abraham J. Ehrenpreis : Tevet 23 : 1/23/2025
Carole Simon : Tevet 23 : 1/23/2025
Gertrude Judy Selkowitz : Tevet 23 : 1/23/2025
Isaac Sunstein : Tevet 23 : 1/23/2025
Mildred Jackson : Tevet 23 : 1/23/2025
Robert Rubenstein : Tevet 23 : 1/23/2025
Edwin Sable : Tevet 24 : 1/24/2025
Howard Reiter : Tevet 24 : 1/24/2025
Martin Simon : Tevet 24 : 1/24/2025
Harry Drexler : Tevet 25 : 1/25/2025

Names continued from week of: January 19

Isadore Klein : Tevet 25 : 1/25/2025
J. William Mendoza : Tevet 25 : 1/25/2025
Judy Lichtenstein : Tevet 25 : 1/25/2025
Max Papernick : Tevet 25 : 1/25/2025
Rose Serbin : Tevet 25 : 1/25/2025

Yahrzeit names observed week of: January 26

Charles Friedman : Tevet 26 : 1/26/2025
Esther Rosenberg : Tevet 26 : 1/26/2025
Gladys Gold : Tevet 26 : 1/26/2025
Ida Hertz : Tevet 26 : 1/26/2025
Lena Spiegel : Tevet 26 : 1/26/2025
Lucy Grossman : Tevet 26 : 1/26/2025
Max Kaufman : Tevet 26 : 1/26/2025
Burton Klein : Tevet 27 : 1/27/2025
Eileen Raden Kobrin : Tevet 27 : 1/27/2025
James Glick : Tevet 27 : 1/27/2025
Fiszel Broder : Tevet 28 : 1/28/2025
Isador Reisberg : Tevet 28 : 1/28/2025
Israel Moritz : Tevet 28 : 1/28/2025
Cecelia Bennett : Tevet 29 : 1/29/2025
George Kline : Tevet 29 : 1/29/2025
Harriet Tyrnauer : Tevet 29 : 1/29/2025
Helen Orth : Tevet 29 : 1/29/2025
Leonard Wingert : Tevet 29 : 1/29/2025
Morris Krow : Tevet 29 : 1/29/2025
Albert Supowitz : Shevat 1 : 1/30/2025
Anna Krow : Shevat 1 : 1/30/2025
Cheryl Gaal : Shevat 1 : 1/30/2025
Phyllis Herrup : Shevat 1 : 1/30/2025
Samuel Weinreb : Shevat 1 : 1/30/2025
Irma Brodsky : Shevat 2 : 1/31/2025
Sam Foster : Shevat 2 : 1/31/2025
Samuel Barnett : Shevat 2 : 1/31/2025
Sophie Irene Loeb : Shevat 2 : 1/31/2025
Ella Mandel : Shevat 3 : 2/1/2025
Henrietta Stein : Shevat 3 : 2/1/2025
Martin Izsak : Shevat 3 : 2/1/2025
Pauline Zlotshewer : Shevat 3 : 2/1/2025
Sadie Miller : Shevat 3 : 2/1/2025
Thomas Amper : Shevat 3 : 2/1/2025

*May their memory continue
to be a blessing z"l*

IMPORTANT UPDATE

Temple Legacy & Grand Finale Celebration & Reunion Weekend

What will happen to all the yahrzeit plaques in the sanctuary?

Any family member that would like their loved ones' yahrzeit plaque(s) may request it. You may call or contact the Temple office at any time to make your request known. Plaques will not be removed from the sanctuary until after the final May 2025 closing ceremony. For those who are local, dates and times will be announced at a later time that will be available for you to stop in to Temple to pick up your plaque(s).

If you are from out of town, plaques can be mailed to you. There will be a small prepaid fee to cover the cost of shipping and handling. MORE INFORMATION TO FOLLOW.

Check the Temple website under the Legacy tab for more information: tbiwhiteoak.org

Please Note: All yahrzeit plaques have been photographed and chronicled and will be available for viewing on the *new* Temple website. More information about the *new* Temple website and a Virtual Yahrzeit plaque will be shared with you soon.

Adult Education with Rabbi Stein

“How Judaism Answers Big Questions” is the theme of Rabbi Stein's new Adult Education series. Beginning on Thursday January 9, Rabbi invites you to join him in exploring a specific question or issue. Using a variety of sources, each topic will be examined and viewed as to how it might be addressed over different time periods.

The class will be offered over Zoom at 7:30 pm, and will meet every other week on Thursdays, through April 17. Each class and discussion will be independent of the previous week. Bi-weekly topics along with the Zoom link will be shared and updated with everyone in the weekly Friday Shabbat e-mails.

If you have questions, you are encouraged to contact the Temple office. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

International Holocaust Memorial Day—January 27, 2025: *A Better Future for All*

In November 2005, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution to assign January 27 as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. January 27 marks the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, one of the most infamous and deadliest concentration camps of the Holocaust.

This Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) marks the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi concentration camp complex, and also the 30th anniversary of the genocide in Bosnia.

80 years since the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, antisemitism has increased significantly, both locally and globally following the 7 October attacks in Israel by Hamas and the subsequent war in Gaza. Extremists are exploiting the situation to stir up anti-Muslim hatred in the UK. Many communities are feeling vulnerable, with hostility and suspicion of others rising. We hope that HMD 2025 can be an opportunity for people to come together, learn both from and about the past, and take actions to make *A Better Future for All*

There are many things we can all do to create a better future. We can speak up against Holocaust and genocide denial and distortion; we can challenge prejudice; we can encourage others to learn about the Holocaust and more recent genocides. *#NeverAgain*



CONFRONTING ANTI-SEMITISM

Ten Things We Say When We Talk About Antisemitism

Adapted from ReformJudaism.org

By: Rabbi Toby H. Manewith serves as the Program Manager for the URJ Antisemitism Partnership. | Before coming to the URJ in 2022, she was a consultant in Jewish Education, an educator, and a pulpit rabbi.

URJ leaders have had thousands of conversations about antisemitism over the past years, especially after October 7th. The following list summarizes the ideas that arise most often in these discussions.

1. Antisemitism encourages other forms of oppression. Antisemitism is oppressive on its own, but it also plays a foundational role in racism, anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric, and other forms of hatred. SPLC Senior Fellow Eric Ward wrote in his article, “Skin in the Game: How Antisemitism Animates White Nationalism,” that, **“To recognize that antisemitism is not a sideshow to racism within White nationalist thought is important for at least two reasons. First, it allows us to identify the fuel that White nationalist ideology uses to power its anti-Black racism, its contempt for other people of color, and its xenophobia—as well as the misogyny and other forms of hatred it holds dear.”**

2. Antisemitism is a tool of political division. It divides groups of people working toward a common goal and asks them to choose sides in what is often a false dichotomy. Anthropologist Dr. Andrea Abrams wrote the following for American Pride Rises, an initiative that is committed to protecting the rights and promoting the voices of those in historically oppressed communities, fighting for a more equitable and inclusive nation for all. **“Purveyors of discrimination often seek to create contention amongst communities in order to fracture their collective power. By falsely separating out the Jewish community from other DEI allies, adversaries intend to isolate voices and make them feel more vulnerable.”**

3. People with intersecting identities experience antisemitism alongside other forms of harm. Many people hold more than one marginalized identity and often experience more than one type of oppression at the same time (i.e., antisemitism and racism, antisemitism and sexism, antisemitism and ableism, et cetera). We must listen to and value each person’s experiences.

Tablet magazine brought ten Black Jews together in October 2023, to discuss racism, antisemitism, and belonging. Here is what 1 participant had to say: **“Although it’s very painful to be thought of as not a Jew on a daily basis by the Jewish community, it is — to me — even more painful to be told antisemitic things by some Black people knowing I’m Jewish and that because I’m Black, it must be more important to me than the fact that I’m Jewish.”**

4. Relationships, allies, and education are critical to fighting antisemitism. Stifling free speech and cancelling opinions different from our own is counterproductive. However, holding people accountable for their statements by calling attention to harmful language and behavior, explaining why it is problematic, and suggesting alternative words or phrases are all important strategies for addressing antisemitism. Rabbi Jonah Dov Pesner is the Director of the Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism. Here is what he has said about allyship. **“We need to be who we are in our full selves in deep relationship, and in humanity with others. And so, by bringing together these entrepreneurial, thoughtful leaders who have communities and networks behind them, we can collectively build the kind of interfaith power, multiracial power that it will take to actually effect change; to change policies, to change culture, to change attitudes, and to actually bring about systems of equity.”**

Continue on page 11

Confronting Anti-Semitism -Continued from page 10

5. It is not the responsibility of the Jewish community to dismantle antisemitism. Often, people outside of the Jewish community don't understand antisemitism's insidious nature. Today, members of the Jewish community must share the role of educator when it comes to their own lived experience. The Interfaith Alliance writes this about challenging antisemitism: **"To protect our friends and neighbors, we must join together across lines of difference to dismantle the machinery that generates fear and divides people against one another. We should never hesitate to call out those who seek to harm members of other faith (or non-faith) communities. All of us can do our part to challenge antisemitism and push back on hate."**

6. Antisemitism is not a naturally occurring phenomenon. Antisemitism is not "a wave," but rather an intentionally designed system of oppression. Antisemitism has been built by people and societies; it can be dismantled by them. In "Dismantling Antisemitism: A Messaging Guide," it is written, **"These metaphors reinforce a flawed analysis of antisemitism: that it is a part of nature and therefore will always exist; that it was not created by humans and cannot ever truly be stopped by humans... that it is indiscriminate, equally present, and equally damaging no matter its source across the political spectrum."**

7. There are many definitions of antisemitism. While these allow for a deeper understanding of its nuances, no singular definition should be written into law. Though many antisemitic tropes have remained the same, there are also newer expressions and tactics. In a 2021 post about the IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) definition, the URJ acknowledged the definition's usefulness, but also observed that, **"Antisemitism evolves, and no single, fixed, static definition can fully capture the ways in which antisemitism can be manipulated and perpetuated by those with nefarious intent or those who are simply ignorant of the harmful ideology they are propagating."**

8. Try to avoid "whataboutism." Arguing about which side is worse distracts from challenging antisemitic systems. Though each of the major political movements in North America have engaged in antisemitism, the rhetoric coming from both the left and the right serves to undermine democracy. At a speech in February 2024, Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism Ambassador Deborah Lipstadt said: **"Unlike most other prejudices, antisemitism is ubiquitous, coming from all ends of the political spectrum. It is not a hatred that is limited to one particular place, orientation, or political outlook. It can emanate from anyone and anywhere: those on the right, those on the left, those in the middle."**

9. Distinguish between oppression and discomfort. A t-shirt with an image of a Palestinian flag may make some uncomfortable, but it is not inherently antisemitic. The watermelon, which has become a symbol of Palestinian resistance, may also only be symbolic of summer on a child's t-shirt or displayed on a sign in a farmer's market. A caricature of the Jewish University president drawn with an oversized nose holding bags of money or a circle with a line through it drawn over a Magen David (star of David) however, is antisemitic.

10. Seek out hope. When encountering antisemitism, anger and fear are two of the most common emotions people experience. However, hope is a powerful motivator for positive action. If you're experiencing anger and fear, seek out hope; listen to music, attend religious services, or get involved in a social justice initiative to help change the world. Jewish tradition is familiar with both pain and joy. As the Psalmist says: **"One may lie down weeping at nightfall; but at dawn there are shouts of joy" (Psalms 30:6)**



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TEMPLE TALK
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 January 2025

