



## From Kristallnacht to Hanukkah 5771: Revisiting Global Anti-Semitism

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The waning of fall and early dusk signals the beginning of the dark winter months. We are all reminded of the impending onset of winter by colder temperatures, steel grey skies and the absence of color on our trees following the vibrancy of blue sky days, Indian summer, and the fall foliage of the High Holy Day and Fall Festival season. So it is almost *beshert* that the date of Kristallnacht, one of the darkest days in Jewish history, falls in November on the 9th and 10th for that was the very date in 1938 the Nazis wreaked havoc towards Jews across Nazi Germany and parts of Austria, with over 1,668 synagogues ransacked and 267 set on fire. In Vienna alone, 95 synagogues or houses of prayer were destroyed. Jewish-owned homes and shops were ransacked and attacked by storm troopers with sledgehammers leaving shards of broken glass strewn everywhere. 30,000 Jewish men, over one fourth of all Jewish men in Germany, were taken to concentration camps and tortured for months leaving 1,000 dead.

I just received in today's email inbox the first-ever catalogue offered by Dan Wyman Books ([www.danwyman-books.com](http://www.danwyman-books.com)) of Holocaust-related printed materials. Entitled *Can You Translate The Unthinkable? A Catalog of Holocaust Imprints Issued in Three Parts*, the extensive catalogue is organized according to the following sub-topics:

- Bibliography And Related; Antisemitism And The Jewish Question; Blood Libel;
- Pogroms; Antisemitic And Related Imprints; Prelude To The Holocaust; Nazism ;
- Boycotts Of Jews And Nazis; Music; Art & Illustrated; Holocaust Poetry And Literature; Jewish Imprints from Holocaust-Era Europe; Anne Frank; Children;
- The Roma (Gypsies); Women; Homosexuals; Italy; Civil Rights; Japanese-American Internment

This highly varied array of sub-topics speaks to the breadth and depth of the subject. There are titles reaching back into the history of Antisemitism as far back as the Crusades. And one is overwhelmed by the sheer vastness of the literature on the subject. As comedian Jackie Mason would say, "This is not my area." And yet, just perusing the on-line catalog of many hundreds of items, I could not but be deeply affected by the global pervasiveness throughout history right up to the present time of this insidious, irrec-

oncilable impulse of hatred as evidenced in this collection of publications.

It is in this context of heightened awareness in the month that Kristallnacht occurred some 72 years ago that I announce the upcoming Kick-Off Program for our 5771 Speaker Series. On Friday evening, November 19th in commemoration of Kristallnacht and all acts of hatred against Jews in any time and any place, we will welcome to our community Barbara Wind, Director of the Holocaust Council of MetroWest. Ms. Wind, an active playwright and poet, earned a Masters degree in Jewish-Christian Studies from Seton Hall University. Her two-part thesis, *The Myth of Jewish Non-Resistance During the Holocaust and Vengeance and the Discourse of Consolation in the Poetry of Abraham Sutzkever*, was published by the university. She has lectured in various venues and presented papers at academic conferences including the Annual Scholars' Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches, Jagellonian University in Krakow, Yad Vashem in Israel, and Yale University. Ms. Wind will report to us on Yale University's recent conference, 'Global Antisemitism: A Crisis of Modernity,' held under the aegis of the Yale Initiative for the Interdisciplinary Study of Antisemitism, as well as her current research on the subject. Please show our Jewish solidarity and commitment to 'Never Forget' by coming to shul on Friday evening, November 19th for our Kristallnacht Commemoration.

In keeping with our ever-swinging pendulum of *tsuris* and *simchas*, on November 20th at Shabbat morning services we will celebrate the Baby Naming of our newest B'nai Jacob congregant, Dylan Lemmon, daughter of Jessica and Allan Lemmon. Please join us in witnessing the newest member of B'nai Jacob family as she ascends the bimah with her parents! A festive kiddish will follow services and all are welcome!

Following an enjoyable and meaningful American Jewish heritage field trip to the Hudson Valley for the kick-off to our new Lox 'N Learning Sunday monthly programs, I will be presenting the next Lox 'N Learning program on Sunday, November 14th from 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM on the subject of Synagogue Art and Architecture. Included in my presentation, along with photos of ancient synagogues and modern American synagogues, will be photos of a unique project of virtual reconstruction of synagogues destroyed

in Germany during the Nazi era, as well as new synagogues being constructed in Germany today.

We all know that anti-Semitism goes back much farther than the Crusades of the Middle Ages. All we need to think of are the Hasmonean period and Judah Macabee. As a signifier of Jewish resistance and resilience in overcoming anti-Semitism, we welcome Hanukkah this December with a wonderful musical celebration for Shabbat Hanukkah: On December 3rd and December 4th, we will join with the 2010 Shalsholet International Festival of New Sacred Music by welcoming to B'nai Jacob, from Haifa, Israel, Cantor and Composer Orit Perlman as our guest. Orit and I are among the winners of the Shalsholet Foundation's 2010 international competition held biannually, and we are both multiple time awardees! ([www.Shalsholet.org](http://www.Shalsholet.org))

Our very special Shabbat Hanukkah on December 3rd and 4th will include Friday Night Live! services followed by a delicious Shabbat Hanukkah dinner with musical entertainment by Orit Perlman. On Saturday morning, following traditional Shabbat Hanukkah services, we will have a festive holiday Kiddush which will be followed by a special musical program by Cantor/Composer Perlman. Let us all show our support for B'nai Jacob and give a big welcome to Orit Perlman from Israel by attending both of these very special events for Shabbat Hanukkah. I hope to see you all on December 3rd and December 4th!

On Saturday evening, December 4th and Sunday day, December 5th, Congregation Anshe Chesed on Manhattan's Upper West Side will host the 4th International Shalsholet Festival. B'nai Jacob is honored and privileged to host Orit Perlman as our Shabbat Hanukkah Visiting Cantor/Composer. Her award-winning compositions will be presented in the Saturday night concert at Anshe Chesed and we will be privileged to have the opportunity to hear them right in our own synagogue before everyone else! You are all invited to the Sunday program with brunch on December 5th at Anshe Chesed to hear my special choral piece for women's voices, Va'Tikach Miryam Ha'Niveah, presented in a workshop where I will speak about the process of composing the piece. Details will be provided in a forthcoming flyer, as well. I hope to see many of you there!

On Sunday, December 14th, Lox 'N Learning continues. We welcome to B'nai Jacob our Guest Speaker and Accordionist, Benjamin Laden. Benjamin Laden has been entertaining groups with his accordion for over 25 years. With his first group, The Menschen, he performed a wide repertoire of Israeli and Chassidic folk music. As Klezmer music became popular, he formed Benny and The Vildachayas, a group that plays many kinds of Jewish music including Yiddish, Yemenite, Klezmer, Israeli, as well as popular American and Rock and Roll music. With the Vildachayas, Benny has raised the roof at many joyous events. For over 20 years Ben has served as the music specialist for the special needs program sponsored by Gratz College of Jewish Studies in Philadelphia. He enjoys making music with children and adults living in group homes and he conducts holiday events for residents at larger care facilities.

So while November will engage our attentions on the

important issue of remembering Kristallnacht and the current ongoing issue of global anti-Semitism, both November and December will be filled with many opportunities for great celebration. I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events, as well as our ongoing Sabbath services. With regard to the latter, our volunteer bimah squad is expanding. Please contact Sid Canter at 201-435-1172 if you would like an Aliyah, or would like to chant a Haftorah. And think about celebrating your special birthday or anniversary with a bimah celebration at B'nai Jacob. Perhaps consider the tradition of Simchat Hachmah – Celebration of Wisdom – the new 'later in life' Bar/Bat Mitzvah-style ritual occasion. I would be happy to speak with any members interested in planning such an event. It's never too late to be on the Bimah!

Wishing all of you a tasty Thanksgiving and most happy Hanukkah!

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