

## FROM RABBI ZEMEL

### CREATING THE GAME OF JUDAISM – AND KNOWING ITS LIMITS

DEAR FRIENDS,

In my Kol Nidre remarks, I mentioned that I had learned from my teacher Rabbi Larry Hoffman that Judaism could be viewed as a “game” played with pieces rather than a game in which one must follow certain rules. We can take the inherited pieces (Torah, Shabbat, Zion, bar mitzvah, chuppah - our entire Jewish legacy) and create our



own way of playing the game called Judaism. In other words, each of us can design the Jewish life we wish by selecting from the almost endless array of pieces that comprise the Jewish enterprise.

I also suggested that there were clear limits to what we can do. I side-stepped the question of what the limits are. I simply noted that the people who ask about the limits or question the right to change the rules are usually opposed to innovation. They believe that there is a given and correct way to play the Jewish game. I believe in using our inherited pieces to creatively form a new game.

Naturally, at “Ask the Rabbis” the following day, a sharp questioner asked whether there are any limits in Judaism. My short answer was “Idolatry.” I think that Judaism stops being Judaism when it veers into idolatry. What is idolatry? We begin with the Second Commandment:

“You shall have no other gods besides Me. You shall not make for yourself a sculptured image, or any likeness of what is in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in

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## Hanukkah’s Message for Jewish Diversity

BY STEVEN R. WEISMAN

WHEN A SMALL group of Orthodox Jews in Philadelphia revived Hanukkah observance in the 19th century, they were trying to counter the loss of ancient traditions among Jews of their day. Their rationale was not to compete with Christmas or celebrate the miracle of the oil. Instead, it was to mark Judah Maccabee’s recapture of the ancient Second Temple in Jerusalem and to remind secularized American Jews that restoring the Temple in modern times remained central to Jewish faith.

After nearly two years of long-ing for a post-Covid return to our synagogues, that goal

resonates. But I would also associate Hanukkah this year with Prime Minister Naftali Bennett’s repeated warnings, since taking office last summer, against the “baseless” internal hatreds plaguing Israel (and Judaism) today. As Bennett has noted, the Talmud teaches that these internal conflicts in antiquity helped hasten the destruction of the Jewish kingdoms of old.

The Maccabees were more than liberators. They were in fact the anti-assimilationists if not the Taliban of their era. True, they sought to overthrow their Seleucid overlords. But they also wanted to purify Judaism from alien “Hellenizing” practices adopted from the Greeks after Alexander the Great’s invasion in the late 330s BCE.

The Maccabees and their descendants were brilliant military commanders, skillful also at forging diplomatic alliances. But their savage infighting left them repeatedly vulnerable to external antagonists. Their self-destructive factionalism provides a lesson about the dangers of many Jews insisting that only their brand of Judaism is authentic or genuine.

The basic narrative of Hanukkah is familiar. Judah, whose *nom de guerre*

was Maccabee, was the scion of the Hasmonean priestly family. Inspired by his father, Mattathias, he led an insurgency from the

western hills of Palestine in 164 BCE to retake Jerusalem and its desecrated Temple, which had been rededicated to Zeus by Antiochus Epiphanes, the Seleucid ruler who also viciously banned Jewish practices in his realm.

The Hasmonean dynasty went on to rule until the Romans laid siege to the Temple under Pompey the Great in 63 BCE. (A century later, in 70 CE, the Romans suppressed another Jewish revolt, which was partly inspired by the Maccabees. Rome military forces destroyed the Temple and murdered and dispersed Jews on a genocidal scale.)

Why Antiochus persecuted the Jews is not clear. His Seleucid predecessors mostly tolerated Jewish practices and

*First in a new series in The Vine featuring contributions from Temple Micah community members and friends*

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"Every person shall sit under  
his grapevine or fig tree with  
no one to make him afraid."  
MICAH, CHAPTER 4, VERSE 4

# Vine

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TEMPLE MICAH—  
A REFORM JEWISH CONGREGATION  
2829 Wisconsin Ave, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20007  
Voice: 202-342-9175  
Fax: 202-342-9179  
Email: info@templemicah.org  
vine@templemicah.org  
Web: templemicah.org

Daniel G. Zemel  
RABBI

Josh Beraha  
ASSOCIATE RABBI

Stephanie Crawley  
ASSOCIATE RABBI

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# TRADITIONS IN THE DESERT

By JOSHUA BERMAN

In mid-November, I found myself in an incredibly remote part of southern Arizona, several miles north of the Mexico border. Several friends and I were riding horses, along with two local guides and their 10-year-old son. As we rode, the young boy (who, let's be honest, was providing needed riding guidance for my limited "city slicker"



abilities) described for me how, given the very rural environment in which he lived, his mother was home-schooling him. He told me about some of the online academic exercises he was doing, and how his mom was

responsible for teaching him other subjects.

And then, out of the blue, he blurted something that sounded like: "and on Sundays and Mondays I study Hebrew." I was relatively certain I had not heard that correctly. I gently asked, "what is it you study?" And his mom answered "Hebrew. You see, I was raised in a conservative Jewish family in Tucson before I moved out here in the hills. I'm raising my son Jewish. We've even been doing some virtual Shabbats."

After picking my jaw up from the saddle, the youngster and I engaged in a lively chat about many things Jewish. But the heart and soul of our conversation was really about Hanukkah. He shared with me thoughts about gelt and how great it was that he continued to enjoy chocolate well after Halloween. We discussed how many candles adorned his Menorah and "the miracle" we celebrated. But most importantly, he made sure I was up to speed on his "house rules" of dreidel — and rest assured, whether it be remote Arizona or Wisconsin Avenue in D.C., it turns out the rules are the same: the Gimel takes it all; the Nun stands for "none;" "halfies" for the Hey; and for Shin, drop in another gelt (or, as he put it, "that seems unfair!").

As I fell asleep that night, I was reminded

that Jewish traditions can be found in all corners of the globe. Friday night candle lighting. Spring seders. Coming of age b'nai mitzvah. Tzedakah boxes by the front door. And, of course, spinning the dreidel at Hanukkah.

Traditions are what bind us together as Jews in so many ways. Indeed, Sheldon Harnick captured "Tradition!" so perfectly through his indelible lyrics from *Fiddler on the Roof's* opening number. Some of our Jewish traditions are so very personal—how we greet each day, how we mourn our loved ones, or how we look deep into our own soul as the sun sets on Yom Kippur. Others may be traditions we share with family and friends—how we break our Yom Kippur fast, how we reward the finder of the afikomen on Passover, or how we slice the apples and dip them in honey as we toast the new year.

But some of our warmest traditions stem from our *community*. And for so many of us, that's our Micah community. We can close our eyes and feel the warmth of dozens of dozens of menorot burning brightly in the center of the sanctuary with lights off and voices carrying as the center of our Hanukkah tradition. We smile as we picture our Purim tradition of our rabbis campily belting out a song at the intermission of our very Micah Purim spiel, celebrating the story of Esther. We dance (even in front of the zoom screen) and joyously sing "Sweet as Honey" as we unroll the scrolls as part of our Torah tradition.

As we continue to gradually emerge from Covid, I know I am eager to jump back in safely to so many of our Micah traditions. I look forward to sharing them with this wonderful community. I don't think that it was a "great miracle" that I stumbled across an engaged, spirited, equine-talented (fortunately) 10-year-old in the Arizona desert—although we have many traditions of miracles in the desert. But I do know it was a beautiful reminder of the ties that link us, wherever we are.

Chag Sameach.

## Temple Micah Welcomes Its New Executive Director

Beth Werlin joined Temple Micah as executive director in August after 20 years of championing the cause of immigrants as a lawyer and in top positions at a major immigration rights organization. Not surprisingly, it was Temple Micah's combination of Jewish spirituality and social justice that appealed to her.

"I loved my life as a lawyer and also supporting staff, boards, and leadership," Beth said of her years at the American Immigration Council, where she served as executive director from 2016 to 2020. "But the pandemic and Trump gave me a lot of food for thought. I needed a break from immigration and decided it was time to look for a new environment and new setting that would be exciting and moving."

Beth grew up in the Boston area where her parents, a public school teacher and a government lawyer, brought Judaism and her family history to life, including stories about immigrating from the "old country" and her grandmother's escape from Vienna in 1939. Her upbringing instilled a belief in the importance of making religious faith and social justice part of her life's work. "I always felt that my Judaism and being from an immigrant family were closely connected," Beth said.

While casting about for a new environment, Beth

looked at a range of nonprofits. "When I saw the job position for Temple Micah, a light went off—I knew this was the job for me," she said. "Micah just fit all of that altogether." As a proud mother of Sarah Rose and Aaron, both still in school, she was eager to meet and interact with the synagogue community's boisterous family atmosphere.

Beth earned a BA from Tufts University and a JD from Boston College Law School, where she first got involved in protecting the rights of immigrants and asylum-seekers. After a stint at the Justice Department, she joined the American Immigration Council as a litigator and policy advocate, rising eventually to the position of executive director. In that job, she oversaw management, hiring, fundraising, budget, programs, and outreach.

Beth and her husband Michael are longtime members of Adas Israel, where they recently celebrated her daughter's bat mitzvah. Beth is also a runner, avid sports fan, and challah baker. It obviously has not taken her long to fit right in at Temple Micah.



### Hanukkah FROM PAGE 1 ►

worked closely with the priesthood. But Antiochus felt besieged by enemies and distrusted his Jewish subjects. There was little stability in Judea at the time. The Hasmonean rulers also suffered losses of territory during their reign and had to fight to regain their land. They brutally forced gentiles to convert and killed Jews deemed disloyal, while embracing former enemies and distant powers like Rome when necessary.

The Hasmonean saga of internal rivalries reads like "I, Claudius." Their opposition to the "Hellenizers" is well known. But they also alienated traditionalists by grabbing power from the council of elders, or Sanhedrin, and declaring themselves High Priests and later as kings. Simon, a successor to his brother Judah, was assassinated, and two of his sons were killed, with the complicity of

his own son-in-law. Much later, after the death of Queen Salome Alexandra, warfare erupted between her two sons, opening Jerusalem to Pompey's assault.

Economic divisions aggravated the political turmoil of Judea. Landowners and priests who served as tax collectors were resented by rural lower classes, fostering a tense climate that later incubated the rise of anti-establishment Jewish holy men like John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth.

Much of the "Hellenization" of old seems harmless today, and the Hasmonean attempts to eradicate it largely failed. Jews adopted Greek names, and Jewish landowners and merchants did business and socialized with Greek counterparts. Greek culture fostered institutions like municipal government, Socratic learning, theaters, sports, and gathering places called synagogues. Judah's own declaration of Hanukkah drew on the Greek custom of holidays

commemorating military victories.

Going further, some Jews also abandoned dietary restrictions and engaged in idol worship. The Greek gymnasium in Jerusalem rivaled the Temple in Jewish social life, even attracting members of the priesthood. It featured athletic contests in which young males competed nude, likely engaging in forbidden sexual relations. Historians say that it was embarrassing for circumcised Jews to compete naked with uncircumcised gentiles. Many Jews stopped circumcising sons as a result.

Judaism in antiquity was fractious, reminding us of the divisions among Jews today, especially the bitter conflicts over tradition, identity, and assimilation. The Jewish Festival of Lights can therefore illuminate our history of pluralism and the need to prevent factionalism from degenerating into hatred and violence, making us more vulnerable to the real enemies of Judaism. ♦

## A Message from Rabbi Daniel G. Zemel

With this issue, we are entering the next phase of *The Vine*.

Our longtime editorial team, Fran Dauth and Kate Kiggins, informed me earlier this year that they wished to turn over the reins of our newsletter's editorial leadership. In the transition process, as I met with Fran, Kate and several others, I happened upon the idea of trying to move our newsletter in a slightly different direction. I wished to see if we might deepen the Jewish content, to include more Jewish ideas, thought,



and history.

At a time when many online Jewish publications seem to be trending toward Orthodox or traditional theology and outlook, I am seeking to offer a more progressive approach.

Steve Weisman has graciously agreed to serve as editorial adviser for the experimental journey on which we now embark.

### Rabbi's Message FROM PAGE 1 ►

the waters under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them..." (Exodus 20:1-2)

Idolatry begins with worshipping a statue or what this translation calls "a sculpted image." But that's not all it is. Idolatry can take many forms. One is tradition itself.

In those Kol Nidre remarks, I referred to Jaroslav Pelikan's book, *The Vindication of Tradition*, in which he compares tradition to parents:

"Maturity in relation to our parents consists in going beyond both a belief in their omniscience and a disdain for their weakness...So it must be in our relation to our spiritual and intellectual parentage, our tradition."

Mature people eventually sift through what their parents have bequeathed to them and create their own lives, their own value systems. They are neither total imitators nor total rejectors. We become "our own people." This is Pelikan's model for religious inheritance - maturity. We learn to play our own Jewish game.

What of idolatry?

Pelikan continues:

"It is...a mark of an authentic and living tradition that it points beyond itself...An idol purports to be the embodiment of that which it represents, but it directs us to itself rather than beyond itself; idolatry, therefore, is the failure to pay attention to the transcendent reality beyond the representa-

tion...Tradition becomes an idol...when it makes the preservation and repetition of the past an end in itself."

For Pelikan, an idolatry encompasses anything that is an absolute or an all-encompassing whole with no exceptions. (Wholesale rejection of the past might also be seen as a sort of idolatry - a worship of the sovereign self.)

Judaism requires us to take our lives seriously and to balance among competing beliefs, values and demands. Idolatry is the prioritizing of any one thing above everything else all of the time.

This is what our beloved Micah member, Henry Zapruder z"l, was saying when he wrote to me after the Holy Days many years ago: "In every act, with every idea, behind every argument there should rest a grain of doubt and a willingness to listen..."

Fascism and ultra-nationalism become forms of idolatry precisely because their followers adhere to them blindly, without question. In this regard, I do not exclude fundamentalist religion as a form of idolatry.

Rabbinic Judaism applies the Torah's command in its most vivid formulation.

"Rabbi Aha said in the name of Rabbi Akiba...Behold, the commandments were only given to Israel that they might live by them, as it is written 'Which a man shall perform and live by them' - he shall live by them, and not die by them. Nothing takes precedence over saving a life, save idolatry, sexual sins, and murder." (Tosefta Shabbat 16:14)

You can do almost anything to save a life. You can steal, lie or cheat, but you cannot commit a sexual sin (e.g. rape or incest), murder or an idolatrous act. Why did the rabbis forbid idolatry? Why did they put idolatry in the same category as the heinous crimes of rape and murder? They did so because the entire rabbinic value system is rooted in the notion of One God as the only absolute, the root from which all else grows. Deny that, give precedence to something else, and there is no value system at all. We have then entered a value-free world where anything goes.

I sometimes think that we are being strangled in a web of idolatry, unable to listen to another point of view. Too many follow a political ideology that combines total rejection of compromise with absolute adoration of a particular figure. This is a dangerous brew.

Judaism rests on the Second Commandment. It can be seen, in a way, as a game whose rules we create and recreate through time and circumstance. We can change and adapt, moving pieces here and there. In modernity, we have done so. But not with total abandon. We play the game while adhering to a fundamental principle: the absolute rejection of anything that is idolatrous. God alone is God. We can discuss the idea of no God - and will at another time - but there can never be a different God.

Shalom,  
Rabbi Daniel Zemel



Dear Micah Family,

Studying Torah teaches us how to read two things at the same time. We read what is there, and we read what is not there. Sometimes, what we are missing is the emotion—the incredulity at an event or action, the outwardly expressed fear or anxiety or love. Sometimes, what we are missing are voices—of women, of traumatized children, of God. And sometimes, what is left for a footnote or up to the imagination is a sense of finality or justice. And so, we imagine.

What you'll see following this introduction is part of the millenia-old tradition to imagine, to read silence. Sometimes it calls out to me loudly, sometimes I hear a whisper. And it is in those margins, between the lines and letters, where I found these poems.

The three poems of mine I've included here are inspired by my reading of Genesis. The first, "What if Abraham got it wrong?" is a response to the story of the "Binding of Isaac," and the intergenerational wound it may have left behind. The second, "Garden of Eve", imagines Eve as a farmer, after the expulsion from the Garden of Eden. The final poem, "I want to be one of the angels," is a personal exploration of what it means to be made a fallible and flawed human, amidst an imagined universe of angels. If, as Genesis, and the interpretive tradition suggests to us, it is so often angels who are messengers and rescuers, what might that mean for us mortals?

Lastly, I believe that this (and all poetry, and Torah, for that matter) is meant to be a conversation. If you want



to know more, about the sources that inspired them or that are referenced within, do reach out. I'd love to imagine more worlds and words together.

Thank you,  
Rabbi Crawley

## What if Abraham got it wrong?

Shvarim –  
the earth is shattered.  
the contract broken.

Or did the man misunderstand.

was the father supposed to teach the right way  
the way to be a person is

to give & sacrifice & appreciate

but instead he taught  
fear.

he said you are only powerful if you're the one holding the weapon  
the test of strength he passed  
but he failed us all –

taught his son that connection is weakness  
and he taught his sons to acquire and tie more knots and stand with tight fists  
first two – then 12 – then to all the generations of sons  
and so we cry – still

Shvarim – the earth is shattered.  
what will bring repair?

When fathers help their sons stand up  
when they teach that tears strengthen  
they don't wound you permanently  
keeping you from seeing

the suffering of a gentle ram stuck in a bush  
of a woman fighting to be heard  
of a crying boy who just wants to be held and loved  
until then –

Shvarim – the earth is shattered.

### Garden of Eve

She is full of seeds

Eve's first garden of her own  
her place of exile

Should she grow the pain?

see how its lengthening vines can strangle and overwhelm  
all of those seeds

the ones called anger  
called hurt  
called alone  
called afraid

And there are the other seeds

seeds that bear her name –  
Chavah –

Life  
Living  
Alive

the seeds that she shared  
not stole

from that beautiful tree that changed it all  
made it so so hard

So she does the only thing that she can do  
she plants it all

plants her heart  
and waits to see what grows

## I want to be one of the angels

Those angels without knees  
 I want to stand at attention & see it all.  
     to be sent.  
 I want to come into the world  
     And see who offers me water  
     Who reaches in their cabinet for the good snacks  
 I want to know who I can trust  
 It's hard, you know, because God took our friend Truth and buried her here  
     maybe I'll find her.  
 I want to be one of the angels –  
     Maybe the one who pushes knives out of their hands  
     Who calls them by their name and sees their pain  
 I want to be one of the angels –  
     Maybe the one whose tears can melt metal  
     Wow – what would they make instead?  
     Would they learn from me the power of their own tears?  
 I want to be one of the angels –  
     Maybe one of the chorus girls who  
     Seems to have holiness on her lips  
     she says it so easily  
     Holy times three  
 I want to be one of the angels –  
     So easy to serve when you don't need  
     anything for yourself  
     Easier to visit her bedside  
     To wrestle with his demons  
     To block the path of the enemy  
     To crown God as the King of Me always  
     To stand in front of every soul  
     Crying  
     “Make way for the image of God”  
 I want to be one of the angels –  
     But I am earthbound  
     Merely, Divinely mortal  
 And still –  
     I can lift my eyes to compassion  
     And I can appeal to my better  
     And I can see her laughter and yearning in the same breath  
 And so I'll dig up truth and cry & love and when I whisper  
     Holy, Holy, Holy,  
     When I answer – Hineini –  
     I'll know our job is the same.

# TZEDAKAH

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## MAZAL TOV

Jon Berman and Teri Husfloen on the birth of their son, Levi Rian Berman, grandchild of Howard and Jill Berman

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Jared Blum and Kate Kiggins, on the marriage of their son, Eli, to Caitlin Watson

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Matthew Cooper and Alex Leo, on the birth of their son, Leo Daniel Cooper

Rebecca Perry and Lou, Holden, and Oaklee Kolodner, on the birth of their daughter and sister, Mara Andrea Kolodner

Steve Rockower and Ann Sablosky, on the birth of their granddaughter, Orla Maeve Hotz

John and Trudy Saracco, on the marriage of their son, Steven, to Patricia Yan

Jennifer Steinhauer and Jonathan Weisman, on their marriage

Rhiannon Walsh, on her marriage to Julia Singer

## CONDOLENCES

The Temple Micah community extends its deepest condolences to:

MARTHA ADLER, on the passing of her nephew, Sam Ransohoff

SHELLIE BRESSLER, on the passing of her mother, Janice Berlin

ALAN BURCH, on the passing of his mother, Mary Lou Reck

RABBI STEPHANIE CRAWLEY, on the passing of her great aunt, Leona Stein

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JODI ENDA, on the passing of her uncle, Gregory Gaymont

SALLIE FORMAN, on the passing of her husband, Jonah Gitlitz

RABBI RACHEL GARTNER, on the passing of her father, Josef Karl Gartner

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HELENE GRANOF, on the passing of her brother, Walter Leo Schiff

JAN D. GREENBERG, on the passing of her father, Edward Greenberg

RACHEL GROSS AND DOUG TAPHOUSE, on the passing of Doug's son and son-in-law, Michael Taphouse and Nick Fletcher

JACK HADLEY, on the passing of his aunt, Renia Chadajo

RABBI LARRY HOFFMAN, on the passing of his wife, Gayle Hoover

TEDDY KLAUS, on the passing of his mother, Gertrude Klaus

MARTHA LESSMAN Katz, on the passing of her mother, Ida Lessman

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MARY BETH SCHIFFMAN, on the passing of her brother, Jack Schiffman

AMY SCHUSSEIM, on the passing of her friend, Cielito Narvasa

AMY SHILO, on the passing of her husband, Alex Schiffman-Shilo

PAULETTE SHULMAN, on the passing of her brother, John Pasco

MARLYN SOCOLAR, on the passing of her husband, Milton Socolar

CAROLE WILSON, on the passing of her husband, David Wilson

May their memories be for a blessing.



# LOOKING AT THE PAST TWO YEARS – THROUGH THE LENS OF KOHELET

BY RABBI JOSH BERAHA

To participate in the Jewish Conversation is to be in constant dialogue with our ancestors. Throughout the unfolding of the pandemic the words of Ecclesiastes (*Kohelet* in Hebrew) have echoed loudly in my ears.

Who was Kohelet? He tells us he is the “son of David, king in Jerusalem,” in other words, Solomon. But biblical criticism shows otherwise. More likely, Kohelet was a fictional character, a mouthpiece for the narrator to preach his message.

Kohelet’s mission is to make sense of life. What does it mean to be a person? How should I live? Unlike other biblical narratives, the book reads like a work of philosophy. Philosopher Kohelet does not speak in prose or through story. He asks life’s ultimate questions directly. “What real value is there for a man in all the gains he makes beneath the sun?” he asks.

In this quest for meaning and purpose, Kohelet sounds like a modern existentialist. He would not be out of place in a smoky, French cafe, drinking coffee with the likes of Sartre, Camus, and Simone De Beauvoir, or hiking in the Swiss alps with Friedrich Nietzsche.

That air of existential angst is reflected in the way Kohelet does not look to tradition for answers. His approach is modern, rational, and philosophical by way of personal observation. God plays a part in the story, but is distant.

The rabbis of the rabbinic period kept Kohelet at a safe distance. His message was out of line with most of the rest of scripture. In one Talmudic debate, the rabbis even ask whether Kohelet should be considered a sacred text. But to our good fortune, the book wasn’t thrown out. Despite its odd differences with the rest of the Bible, it stayed in the cannon.

So why does Kohelet speak to me right now, in these months

before the two-year anniversary of the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic? The answer is that Kohelet’s questions are the exact questions raised by these past two years: what should I prioritize? What is most important in life? It’s true that these queries were present in our lives before Covid, but the pandemic created a new kind of space to reflect on life in a way we hadn’t before.

Peter Kreeft, professor of philosophy at Boston College, writes that Kohelet “rips off the cover and plunges our squeamish and reluctant eyes into this blinding abyss. It is a revelation in a literal sense: a revealing, an unveiling, an uncovering. (Kohelet) blows our cover.”

Replace the word Kohelet with Covid. How much did the past two years reveal? Did not our recent experiences rip off the cover and send us into a blinding abyss? If we didn’t see before March of 2020, the pandemic opened our eyes to a previously hidden reality. Now we ask, like Kohelet—is progress possible, or do we live at the whim of too many powers beyond our control? What is the way forward? Will philosophy bring fulfillment? What about pleasure, wealth, or power?

As Kohelet explores each of these avenues as a source of fulfillment, he finds himself still wanting. Maybe, he thinks, life is senseless, like chasing after the wind.

But beyond anguish-or maybe along with it-Kohelet does offer hope, and it is this hope that speaks to me most.

Kohelet observes the world. He



watches, and notices. He sees that we live and we die, that we plant and we uproot. There is light, and there is dark, and back to light again. For this mysterious ancestor, none of life’s contradictions go unnoticed. But through the contradiction, Kohelet finds comfort.

Given our lack of any real understanding of the bigger picture, he says, we must understand what we can control and what is beyond human capabilities. In this way, Kohelet is not only a proto-existentialist, but an optimist as well. The world may be absurd, and seemingly meaningless, but we can, he seems to say, transcend the harshness of it all. We can be our own creators, even if only because we have no other choice.

In this season of Hanukkah, we light our menorahs to displace the darkness of the night. Will the light remain with us indefinitely? Certainly not, and that’s okay. As Kohelet teaches, life is full of complexity, and it’s in our power to react to that truth as best we can.

