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## Our Ancestors Didn't Know : rom Latkes

By Tina Wasserman



On Hanukkah we traditionally serve holiday dishes cooked in oil to commemorate the miracle of a single vial of oil lasting eight days.

But oil as the Hanukkah food of choice was not always so. One thousand years ago, in the warmer climates of the

Mediterranean, Middle East, and North Africa, the Hanukkah specialty dish was a cheese latke (pancake), which commemorated Judith's heroic efforts to save her people during the second century B.C.E. As the story (told in the Apocrypha) goes, the Syrian General Holofernes was sent to Bethulia (due east of Caesarea) by King Nebuchadnesser to annihilate the Jews. To make him thirsty, the beautiful Judith fed him salty cheese, followed by wine. The more he ate, the thirstier he became-and the more wine he drank. When the general passed out, Judith beheaded him, and his troops fled in fear. Thus did Oriental Jews come to associate cheese pancakes with the Maccabean victory of their ancestors.

In Eastern Europe, where the climate was considerably colder, Jews did not have easy access to dairy products, so for Hanukkah celebrations they turned to the foods at hand. Raising geese was a Jewish occupation at the time, and in December fattened geese provided meat and fat for cooking. Potatoes, too, were readily available and cheap-and that is how a crisp, golden potato galette cooked in goose fat became a Hanukkah favorite.

In Amsterdam in the late 16th century, stewed vegetables became the Hanukkah dish of choice in commemoration of the Dutch military victory over the invading Spanish army. At dinner time on October 3, 1574 the Dutch launched a surprise attack on the Spanish military encampment in Leyden, forcing the Spaniards to flee-and abandon simmering pots of stewed vegetables with meat. Associating the siege of Leyden with the Hasmonean victory, Dutch Jews established the tradition of serving a mashed stew of vegetables with kielbasa on Hanukkah.

Whichever foods you choose to enjoy in celebration of Hanukkah, eat in good health! [Source: Reform Judaism magazine](#)

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## From Rabbi Louis .....



Why are we Jews still reading the Torah?

If we read it for the stories, we can certainly pick better stories and pieces of literature.

We certainly cannot read it as history as at least some of the historical events are contradicted by archaeology, and there is no independent proof of some other events although many may correspond to actual history.

Can we read it as an ethical guideline? Maybe. Yet we know that the Torah contains events that cause us great moral and ethical concern in our day, e.g. the commandment to wipe out various tribes that lived in Canaan.

Can we read Her as law? Certainly in some aspects and She has certainly influenced our own law system, however, Torah is not an obviously consistent body of law, and much has already been changed over time by its interpreters.

In spite of all these caveats, Jews everywhere, whether ritually observant, culturally identified, nominally Jewish, Zionist, anti-Zionist or Jewishly indifferent, involve themselves with the study of Torah.

The study of Torah is big enough to encompass all of the above positions, to accept them all and to challenge them all. The study of Torah is the way we unite with each other in spite of our differences. Study means involvement; it means wrestling with the text as a way to discover right action; it means getting our spirits, minds and hands dirty with the words and their resonances.

The Union for Reform Judaism has a tremendous learning resource on the Web and there are other incredible resources. Dig in. Share with your family. Make it a habit. Become a wrestler with the text to help understand your unique task in this world.

*r. Louis*



**Happy  
Chanukah!**

## President's Message



*Shalom Kolot Mayim family,*

Joel's Drash reminded us of events that took place in Germany in November 1938, –Krystallnacht, the Night of Broken Glass. It is a sad thing to have to remember such a cowardly and devastating event, and to realize it was the precursor to WWII.

As Thanksgiving was just celebrated in Canada, I am reminded of how many things I am thankful for in my life. I am thankful that I have enough to eat every day and a place of safety to lay my head each night. I am thankful for a partner who is kind and giving and accepting of all my little foibles. I am thankful for my daughter and granddaughter who show me they love me and care about me. I give thanks for my Kolot Mayim Temple family that sustains me, supports me, and helps me grow spiritually and socially. I hope everyone in our congregation has things for which they can give thanks.

Very slowly the fog that has enveloped us is dissipating. Our Summer was remarkable; our Fall is spectacular, and my only wish is that our winter doesn't dump a load of snow on our heads.

We have had our first Executive and our first Board meeting. There is much to be done, not the least of which is to find a new Rabbi for next year. We have a Rabbi Search Committee and trust in them to find exactly what we need.

I did post a list of jobs needing to be filled. Surely someone out there is just itching to get involved and to save those working on behalf of the congregation from burning out.

We have had a successful drive for Our Place: a huge load of mittens, gloves, scarves, toques, socks, toothpaste, toothbrushes, etc. were delivered on Wednesday the 23rd of October. Because you so kindly practice your Tzedakah skills, we continue to support Jewish Family Services and the Food Bank at the James Bay Community Centre.

A gentle reminder to donate to our Chai Fund/General Fund, Rabbi's Discretionary Fund, Parochet Fund, Hebrew School or Social Action Funds.

The 29th of November, beginning at 5:30 pm, we will have a special Family Pot Luck in honour of Channukah. Please bring your children and no/low salt, vegetarian items for the Pot Luck. We will have a brief Kabbalat Shabbat/Channukah Service and Rabbi Louis will lead us in singing after dinner. I hope to see a good turn out.

It is a good time to start planning an at-home event. I look forward to small gatherings in one another's homes for movies, discussions, musical events, etc. I know we plan to have some Havdallah and dessert pot-lucks, maybe another musical jam.

Do you want to celebrate something or someone? Consider sponsoring an Oneg as a way of celebrating. Kolot Mayim will supply tea, coffee, juice. You supply the food and your guests. Rennie's fine china makes every event beautiful.

The ghosts and goblins rang your doorbells on Hallowe'en. I hope you enjoyed seeing them and had some goodies for their baskets. Our carved pumpkins were outside to welcome the kids.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Gerry Marks and his family at this sensitive time.

Until next time.

*Reva*

Discounted Biennial Room Blocks will be Available at: Marriott Marquis San Diego Marina and Manchester Grand Hyatt San Diego Early Bird Registration will open early Summer 2013. This Biennial will also celebrate the Women of Reform Judaism's Centennial Anniversary. Sign up for Biennial Updates at <http://urj.org/biennial13/>.

Kolot Mayim has several funds to which you may earmark your donations. They are: Chai (General Fund), Religious School Fund, Social Action Fund, and Parochet (Ark Curtain) Fund. Undirected donations will go into the Chai.

**The following donations have been received since the last Voice.**

*Arlette Baker*

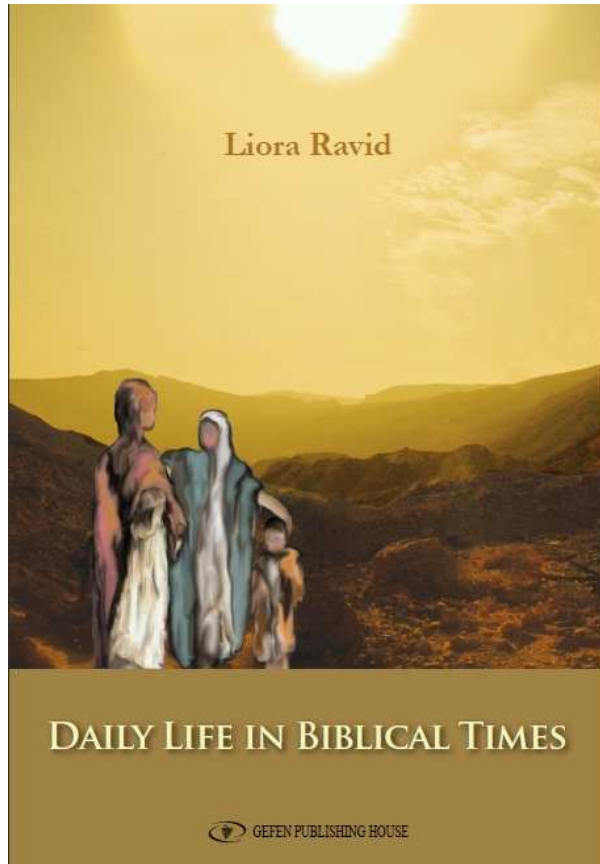
In appreciation of the Trop Workshop  
led by Lynn Greenhough - Julie  
Elizabeth and Reva Hutkin, Joe and Ann  
Gougeon-Ryant, Karen-Marie Perry

In memory of my parents, Harry  
Torontow and Sarah Gottdank-Torontow  
-David Torontow

Hundreds of people rely on the various food banks in town. Torah tells us to leave the four corners of our fields for those in need; today, this could be translated to mean the 4 corners of our shopping carts!

I urge everyone to bring a little something to Shul on Fridays for our Tzedakah Box. We support two food banks: Jewish Family Services and the James Bay Community Project Food Bank. There are often sales at the various stores, so surely, one could find a can or package for under a dollar. Check for case lot sales; you could bring one can from the case each week. If everyone brought one can each week, it would go a long way to helping those in need. Thank you for your support.





## Daily Life in Biblical Times

Why does the Bible support marriage to multiple wives? Why does only one son inherit his father's property? Is it possible that the journey's hardships and the severe shortage of food prevented Sarah from conceiving?

In *Daily Life in Biblical Times*, Dr. Liora Ravid follows in the footsteps of the biblical heroes, examining their stories based on the social and legal reality of their time. The book reconstructs the historical journey of Abraham and his family from Ur of the Chaldees to the land of Canaan – from a land that worshipped multiple idols to the land of the One God, the birthplace of David, the judges, the prophets, and Jesus.

Ravid questions why the Bible begins with stories of the forefathers and foremothers, describing them as simple shepherds. Why were they so important? Ravid demonstrates that according to the pedigree in Genesis, the forefathers and foremothers originated from one noble family, the family that gave rise to

King David, ancestor of the Messiah, and according to the New Testament, to Jesus as well.

Readers of the English Bible are often unaware of the special writing style of the original Hebrew, which uses rich wordplay and double entendre to add multiple layers of color and depth to the text. Especially for the non-Hebrew reader, the author opens a window on this hidden world within the words.

### About the Author

Dr. Ravid, who earned her PhD in biblical studies, is a native Israeli, and has shared the language and landscape of the biblical characters throughout her life. In each chapter, she escorts the reader on a visit to their homeland. This insightful and witty book presents a realistic picture of the daily lives of the heroes who have accompanied us for thousands of years.

ISBN: 9789652296092

Price: \$24.95

Format: Paperback

Page Count: 520

Publisher: Gefen Publishing House

Publication Date: September 1, 2013

Category: Judaism

Wholesale: Baker and Taylor & Ingram

### Related Titles

#### **Very Near to You**

9789652295644 **\$30.00**

#### **Torah of Reconciliation**

9789652295415 **\$24.95**

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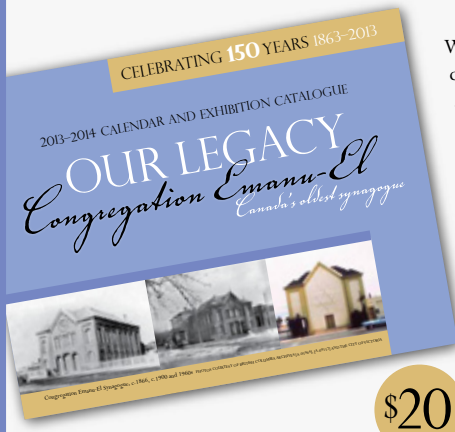
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**The New Year is Coming!**  
**Are you looking for a Jewish**  
**calendar for your home or as a gift?**

To help celebrate our 150th anniversary, we have a 16-month wall calendar, beginning September 2013 complete with Jewish dates, beautiful photographs and accompanying text.



When in Victoria, come by and visit us.

"OUR LEGACY"  
Exhibit of historic and contemporary memorabilia, textiles and Judaica will be open until September 22.

**\$20**

SHRINK-WRAPPED  
AND READY  
FOR MAILING

Congregation Emanu-El, 1461 Blanshard Street, Victoria BC V8W 2J3  
Telephone 250-382-0615. To order: [info@congregationemanu-el.ca](mailto:info@congregationemanu-el.ca)

THE CONGREGATION  
IS INVITED TO SHARE IN

A POT LUCK DINNER  
IN HONOUR OF CHANNUKAH.

THIS IS A FAMILY EVENT. BRING YOUR CHILDREN!

VEGETARIAN ONLY.  
PREFERABLY NO SALT

5:30 PM  FRIDAY NOVEMBER 29TH

BRING YOUR CHANNUKIOT (& CANDLES)

SHORT SHABBAT/CHANNUKAH SERVICE  
LED BY RABBI LOUIS  
FOLLOWED BY A SING-ALONG.

COME ONE, COME ALL.  
THIS WILL BE A JOYOUR EVENT!

## Jerry, A Short Story

by Joe Gougeon-Ryant

Jerry was not the type to harbour grudges. That he was filled with the milk of human kindness was a feature of his personality that pleased him. Immensely.

Jerry needed \$1200 to tide him over. He never intended to go to Vegas but he went. He never intended to play craps but he did. He never intended to go above his \$100 gambling limit, but he didn't stop.

Jerry liked to think of Tyrone as his best friend. He imagined that he would not have to press Tyrone for a short term loan. Tyrone would help Jerry if asked. Without a second thought. Without reservation. Because that's the kind of person that Jerry believed Tyrone to be.

Patting his friend on the arm, Jerry put his case for a loan. "I don't know what possessed me. I just got caught up in the moment. Before I knew it, I lost the child support money. You know Andrea! If I'm a day late, she'll have me! After all we've been through together, I know you'll help me out."

"Jerry, I hardly know you. We've had the occasional drink together but I don't even know where you live. Don't you have somebody closer that you can ask?"

"Ty, I feel closer to you than to anyone else in the world. I know we have a certain chemistry between us. Surely, you feel it too."

"Sorry, Jerry, no."

"That's it, then. I'll never speak to you again. Not now! Not Ever!"

Did you know that [Raffi and Dahlia Beck](#) have a brand new granddaughter?

That [Joe Gougeon-Ryant's son, Richard](#), completed his first full marathon here in Victoria? That [Joel Fagan](#) is addressing the Winston Churchill Association in Vancouver on the topic, "Churchill and the Jews." ? That our estimable [Michael Gans](#) is a Vice-President on the JCC Board? Or that our wonderful [Julie Elizabeth](#) puts out the JCCV Newsletter?

We are saddened to hear of the illness of longstanding member, now moved to Calgary, [Fredericka Bowden](#). We wish her a full recovery. Fredericka was our first congregational Seder Maven.

Comings and Goings: Back from Singapore, Australia, and again Singapore are [Morris Bleviss and Janna Ginsberg](#). Back from La Jolla are [Joel and Sandy Fagan](#). Back from Las Vegas are [Hal and Marla Yacowar](#). Off to Ottawa are [David and Dorothy Torontow](#). [Rabbi Louis and Charlotte](#) are soon off to Israel, as are [Raffi and Dahlia Beck](#). [Julie Elizabeth and Reva Hutkin](#) will visit Ixtapa, Mexico for 2 weeks in November and San Diego for the URJ Biennial in December. [Ann and Joe Gougeon-Ryant](#) will spend two weeks cruising the South Seas of French Polynesia. [Susan and Les Halpert](#) will cruise from Barcelona to Miami. [Jack and Sharon Shalinsky](#) will spend "the worst of winter" time in in Palm Springs.

Get well wishes to [Arline Parrish, Kis Brink, Arlene Leshner](#).

Mazel tov to [Karen-Marie Perry](#) on winning a SSHRC fellowship in her doctoral studies.

Thanks to [Lynn Greenhough](#) for offering an excellent two-part workshop on trop.

If you like this column, and can guess who writes it, feed that person bits and pieces of information about our esteemed congregants.

### The Victoria and Vancouver Island Jewish Burial Society

The Jewish Burial Society of Victoria and Vancouver Island is a service organization founded to assist all Jews with end of life requirements. We administer four totally separate and distinct sections in the Hatley Memorial Gardens and provide space for all persuasions of Jewish life from orthodox to secular, complete with cremation if specified.

The Society works with the Victoria Chevrah Kadisha in preparation of the body for burial, and works with the family in all ways to ensure that the concern and embrace of the entire community for the bereaved.

While we are a non profit Society, regrettably, end of life does not respect one's pocketbook, and costs are dear. There is a small membership charge that must be paid to become a member of our Society, and arrangements for this, and for burial requirements may be made at any time. We recommend dealing with one's self and saving the pain and expense of the survivors at a very stressful time.

For additional information on a highly confidential basis, call Joel Fagan (250 477-2006), Jack Shalinsky (250 477-1012), or Michael Goldberg (250 598-9094).

#### Discover the Past Presents: Pioneers, Shopkeepers, Frontier Merchants, Legislators, and Curio Dealers: A Walking Tour of Jewish Victoria:

This tour is part of John Adam's new Discovery Walks and lead by Gary Cohen.

**November 3, 2013**  
Starts at 10:30 am  
**Rain or shine**

Meet outside of Congregation Emanu-El  
1461 Blanshard Street (Corner of Blanshard and Pandora)

Adults \$15 (cash)  
Students or Seniors (over 65) \$13 (cash)

For more information, obtain group discounts or to arrange for an alternate tour day contact: John Adams: [www.discoverthepast.com](http://www.discoverthepast.com)





OBSERVED DATE	CIVIL DATE YEAR OF DEATH	HEBREW DATE YEAR OF DEATH	NAME	RELATIONSHIP	MOURNER
October 29, 2013	October 29, 2005	26 Tishrei 5766	John Langston	Great Uncle of	Jessi Goss
October 30, 2013	October 30, 2009	12 Cheshvan 5769	Phylis Harbison	Mother of	Glenn Harbison
November 1, 2013	November, 1991	Unknown	Eugene Molina	GrandFather of	Grace Sandell
November 1, 2013	November, 1975	Unknown	Sharon Yacowar-Frohlinger	Sister of	Hal Yacowar
November 3, 2013	November 3, 2011	6 Cheshvan 5772	Ronald Crowe	Cousin of	Murray Frasier
November 5, 2013	November 5, 1971	17 Cheshvan	Katie Kadonoff	Mother in Law of	June Kadonoff
November 8, 2013	November 8, 1950	28-Cheshvan-	Sara Miller	Grandmother of	Don Sher
November 9, 2013	November 9, 2012	24 Cheshvan 5773	Murray Frasier	Congregant & Friend of	The Congregation
November 11, 2013	November 11, 2010	4 Kislev 5771	Doug Whittier	Friend of	Jenny Laing
November 12, 2013	November 12, 1996	1 Kislev 5757	Edith Brodtkin	Sister of	Joe Gougeon-Ryant
November 13, 2013	November 13, 1995	20 Cheshvan 5756	Mortimer Freedman	Father of	Yehudi Freedman
November 13, 2013	November 13, 2009	25 Heshvan 5770	Eric Blitstein	Brother of	Paula Blitstein
November 16, 2013	November 16th	Unknown	Benjamin Sharpe	Father of	Arline Leshner
November 18, 2013	November 26, 1996	15 Kislev 5756	Godfrey Sandell	Father of	David Sandell
November 18, 2013	November 18, 2001	3 Kislev 5762	Ann Knight McChesney	Grandmother of	Heather Gatland
November 19, 2013	November 19, 2009	2 Kislev 5770	José Mario Ferreira Costa	Brother of	Eva Katz
November 20, 2013	November 20, 2003	25 Heshvan 5764	Margaret Gatland	Grandmother of	Heather Gatland
November 25, 2013	November 25 1995	18 Heshvan 5756	George Dinning	Father of-in-Law of	Julie Elizabeth
November 26, 2013	November 26, 2007	16 Kislev 5768	David Marks	Brother of	Gerald Marks
November 28, 2013	November 28 2005	26 Heshvan 5766	Ethel Barnett	Mother of	Fran Rothman
November 28, 2013	November 28, 2010	21 Kislev 5771	Jo Lavitch	Mother of	Kezia Allen
November 28, 2013	November 28, 2011	2 Kislev 5772	Jean Mailhot	Aunt of	Louise Peloquin

November 2013				Cheshvan-Kislev 5774		
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Rabbi Louis will be with us when the squares are white.					1 November 28 Cheshvan  7:30 pm K.Shabbat Service led by JoeG-R	Toldot 2 29
3 30	4 1 Kislev Rosh Chodesh	5 2	6 3	7 4	8 5 7:30 pm Service led by Joel Fagan	9 6 Vayetzei
10 7	11 8	12 9	13 10	14 11	15 12 7:30 pm K.Shabbat Service led by MichaelGans	16 13 Vayishlach
17 14	18 15	19 16	20 17	21 18	22 19 7:30 pm K.Shabbat Service led by Julie & Reva	23 20 Vayeshev
24 21	25 22	26 23	27 24	28 25	29 26 5:30 pm Family Pot Luck and K.Shabbat Service led by Rabbi Louis	Miketz 30 27 4:00 Torah Study