

Human Rights



**WRITTEN BY YOUNG JEWS
FROM 40 COUNTRIES**

HUMAN RIGHTS

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I - Prologue

By Gabriela Cantergi,
President of B'nai B'rith International Portugal

It is comforting to read texts about human rights, written by young Jewish men and women from forty countries. In Portugal, Australia, Guatemala, Thailand, the United States, India, China, Israel, Curaçao, the Ukraine, Russia, Tunisia, France, Iran, Turkey and Germany, young people are committed to the future of humanity.

The rights to dignity, justice, security, equality, education, culture, work, nationality, positive freedoms, religion, and family must be tempered with duties and responsibilities based on global ethics. Peace is possible. Suffering, extreme poverty, discrimination, war, terrorism and everything harmful to life must be rejected.

The idea of collecting the writings of young Jews about this topic deserves an explanation. Often, Jews are forgotten or neglected. Jewish human rights must exist everywhere. The extreme defence of minorities shows that Jews don't count. They are seen as plutocrats, oppressors and not the oppressed.

B'nai B'rith Portugal plays an active role in defending human rights. These include Jewish human rights, in a world that persists in associating the Jewish people and the Jewish State to negative realities and never to its virtues.

The activities of B'nai B'rith occur in conjunction with the International Observatory of Human Rights, based in Portugal, and in association with national and international Jewish organizations. The objective is to contribute to a fairer world.

Progress has little to do with material things. It results from a better application of known truths and the basic principles of human existence, shared in all the great ethical traditions. Natural rights, the product of a continuous creative process, deserve a primary place throughout the world, with local bodies being responsible for legislating and monitoring their defence.

II – PROLOGUE

By Luís Andrade, President of the International Observatory of Human Rights

This book is a wake-up call by young Jewish men and women scattered around the four corners of the Earth. Through texts dedicated to this theme, these young people wish to express their most intimate concerns regarding human rights in various areas.

As a civic duty of solidarity that concerns us all, a duty embedded in active and global citizenship, all these human beings who are determined and inspired to contribute to a better world with this extremely noble gesture, have become an example to be emulated.

In the light of the principle of the dignity of the human being, this exercise of active citizenship leads these young, who are governed by the highest moral and ethical values, to contribute to the construction of a more just, more equal world of greater solidarity that is also fraternal, tolerant and happy.

Enshrined in these virtues of civic participation, viewed as a source for good, all these young people promote practices of citizenship with a greater degree of awareness regarding the principle of human dignity that establishes that all people must be treated with respect, equality and freedom.

This wake-up call by young Jews and Jewesses should raise the awareness of all humanity and mobilise citizens against all forms of discrimination, whether in terms of racism, xenophobia, homophobia, antisemitism, among others that may also provoke hatred, given that hate speech against ethnic or religious minorities is still alive and well in our societies.

On this basis of providing a good service, the International Observatory of Human Rights - IOHR expresses its deepest recognition and gratitude to all the young Jews and Jewesses who selflessly, generously and kindly provided this invaluable contribution for joint efforts to defend the noblest moral and ethical values, anywhere in the world.

This thoughtful participation contributes to the construction of a society that is juster, more peaceful, more egalitarian, more prosperous, with

more solidarity, having parity of representation and being inclusive. It also guarantees the equality of all citizens without distinction of origin, sex, religion or any other.

As timeless and universal servants of humanity, the International Observatory of Human Rights, and B'nai B'rith International Portugal, hope that this legacy with this outline contribute to a juster, more egalitarian, more democratic, more plural, inclusive and balanced society of greater solidarity, serving as a guiding light and a beacon for future generations.

III – WRITINGS OF YOUNG JEWS FROM 40 COUNTRIES

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| England | Portugal |
| Belgium | Tunisia |
| Venezuela | Syria |
| Brazil | Norway |
| Morocco | Poland |
| USA | India |
| France | Italy |
| Mexico | New Zealand |
| Russia | Germany |
| Ukraine | Bulgaria |
| Spain | Guatemala |
| Canada | Iran |
| Israel | South Africa |
| Uruguay | Turkey |
| Netherlands | Singapore |
| Lithuania | Georgia |
| Curaçao | China |
| Thailand | Argentina |
| Australia | Algeria |
| Egypt | Switzerland |

1. ANTISEMITISM

By Shlomo Elijah, 24, UK, London,
Queen Mary College, University of London

The world knows that antisemitism has been practiced since ancient times in demonstrations of hostility against the Jews, the result of the sociocultural and political dynamics of each society. Antisemitism has always been used to express a prejudiced aversion to Jews, viewed as the root of all society's evils.

The Jews were persecuted because of their religion and culture, they were persecuted because of the assets they hoarded, they were persecuted for causing misery, the Black Death, drought and for poisoning water, they were persecuted for blood libel with non-Jewish children, they were persecuted for their alleged race (when in fact they are of every ethnicity since the epic in the desert 3000 years ago), and today they are persecuted for having their own State in Israel.

Never, in the history of humanity regarding any other minority except the Jewish minority, was a plan industrialised aiming to clean the world of a small people, and not only in Europe. The result of the Second World War saved the Jews from total annihilation on the planet.

In the 21st century, Jews were accused of creating the Coronavirus, of selling vaccines at exorbitant prices, of hoarding vaccines, altering the DNA of human beings and, as if that was not enough, they were accused of the genocide of the Palestinians before the International Criminal Court, a mere three months after the massacre perpetrated by Hamas on 7 October 2023.

Yesterday, like today, antisemitism is part of the day to day life of all societies, wherever they are. Everywhere, Jews are seen as unassimilable foreigners and traitors of their country. They are not seen as a minority to be protected, but rather as a group of elitist plutocrats who control world business and have their own state in Israel. In a world that protects minorities in extreme and passionate form, the Jews are forgotten. Again.

2. DISCRIMINATION

**By Yochanan Caldes, 26, Belgium,
Brussels, Emmanuel College in Boston**

The Holocaust happened 80 years ago. I always imagined that it would be centuries before there were further discriminations against human beings in general and the Jews in particular. But, today, I can testify the opposite in Brussels, at the heart of Europe.

I never thought that I would have to remove the mezuzah from the threshold of the door to my house, or to walk in fear in the street, or that we would have private security in the building where I work in Brussels because of the steep rise in antisemitism. We do not deserve to live with fear in our homeland.

We should be able to use our Magen Davids, our kippot and our flags of Israel with pride and confidence. However, this exercise in exposure is becoming suicidal. We cannot be ashamed of who we are, not even for a second, but violence is just around the corner.

Unfair or prejudiced distinctions between human beings, based on groups, classes or other categories to which they belong or appear to belong, is a question of human rights. People who suffer discrimination are limited in their potential for human development and the exercise of active citizenship. Their consequences lead to social exclusion, fear, suffering and often premature death.

I speak in the name of the oldest form of discrimination - antisemitism -, which has not deserved the attention paid to other types of discrimination. The Jews have progressively been abandoned, unlike Black people, gypsies, migrants, sexual minorities and others. Why? Throughout history, the Jewish people has suffered discrimination and persecution, but the Jews are still views as people who do not need protection.

History may repeat itself. States, governments, the press and universities do nothing to change this situation, quite the opposite. Decision-makers in Europe must understand that talking is not enough. Making speeches for the newspapers is not enough. They must act. One day, it will be too late.

3. XENOPHOBIA

**By Samantha Finckler Markus, 18, Venezuela,
Caracas, Universidad Metropolitana de Venezuela**

Xenophobia understood as the dislike for strange, unusual people or people who come from outside the country is now a trend. The history of humanity is marked by intolerance and hatred towards ethnic and religious groups, with Jews being the target of persistent xenophobia throughout the centuries.

From ancient times to the modern era, the Jewish community has faced persecutions, expulsions, and genocides due to deep-seated prejudices and conspiracy theories. This xenophobia is not static or isolated but rather a cycle that repeats over time, affecting each generation of Jews differently.

In the digital age, xenophobia towards Jews manifests insidiously on social media and extremist websites. These spaces provide fertile ground for the spread of hatred, normalizing and amplifying prejudices against the historically persecuted Jewish community by antisemitism.

Online platforms and extremist sites allow for the rapid and massive dissemination of anti-Semitic propaganda, fuelling a cycle of radicalization and extremism. Most concerning is how hatred towards Jews has become "trendy," with young people influenced by extremist rhetoric finding validation and reinforcement of their prejudices online. Disinformation intertwines with memes and tasteless jokes, normalizing intolerance and rendering it acceptable in certain virtual circles.

The anonymity afforded by the internet also facilitates the expression of extreme opinions without fear of real-world repercussions, creating a toxic environment where hate speech flourishes unchecked, further exacerbating xenophobia against Jews and other marginalized groups.

Despite the world's promises of "never again," xenophobia towards Jews persists, manifesting in attacks on Israel, synagogue vandalism, terrorism, and hate speech on social media, creating a climate of fear and insecurity for many Jews worldwide.

The fight against xenophobia towards Jews must be a continuous and global effort. This new generation of young people has the commitment to teach our history and strive to promote tolerance, education, and mutual respect in society. Because We Do Remember and we say Never Again.

4. RACISM

By Rina Menache, 24, Brazil, São Paulo,
Touro College, New York

Racism, a problem that has plagued societies for centuries, finds one of its most enduring and harrowing manifestations in anti-Semitism. At the heart of this insidious prejudice lies a deep-seated animosity rooted in baseless hatred—a concept that resonates profoundly within the Jewish world.

The Torah offers insight into the origins of this hatred through the story of Esav and Yaakov. According to Jewish teachings, Esav, the elder twin brother of Yaakov, harboured an inexplicable animosity towards him. Esav's resentment towards Yaakov was driven not by any tangible wrongdoing but by an irrational and unfounded sense of enmity. And that is the only tangible explanation for anti-Semitism. Simple as that, the Guemarah tells us that "Esav Soneh (hates) Yaakov". Simple and crude as baseless hatred. And, according to mystical teachings, this situation will persist between the descendants of Esav and the descendants of Yaakov until the coming of the Messiah. For now, we can try to minimize the effects of this situation, but we cannot ignore it or solve it completely.

Throughout History, Jews have faced a lot of hate and discrimination. From the past, like the Spanish Inquisition, to the terrible Holocaust, and from medieval blood libels to Hamas attacks, antisemitism has manifested in various forms. Discrimination against Jews continues vividly today. In recent years, incidents like desecration of Jewish cemeteries and denial of Holocaust have highlighted persistent antisemitism. Despite strides towards equality, combating antisemitism remains an ongoing challenge in our society.

Anti-Semitism often targets wrong points of view, transforming the abuser into a victim. Those specific facts ignore the big picture and erroneously open space to justify in every way possible this cruel movement. The media is an example of that. It's crucial to address the attacks on Jews in Israel. And often, when Israel defends itself against terrorism, it faces criticism and bias from the media and the world. Terrorists are portrayed as victims, distorting reality and ignoring Israel's right to self-defence.

This unfair treatment only perpetuates anti-Semitism and undermines efforts to achieve peace and understanding in the region.

Racism persists, targeting diverse communities, mainly minorities, including Jews. We must strive for balanced and informed perspectives to combat racism and promote justice for all. Combatting prejudice is vital for fostering a more equitable and compassionate society.

5. WAR

**By Moshe Buzaglo, 30, Morocco, Marrakesh,
American University of Leadership - PIIMT Rabat**

War is a defeat for humanity, a drama against children, a forced divider of friends and neighbours, a series of catastrophes. As a person living in Morocco, I will say a few words about our history of centuries. My father and grandfather lived a good and peaceful life along with our Muslim neighbours. Nothing prevented them from living together side by side. And this is how entire generations of good families were raised. Centuries and centuries.

The word peace has always been a word of honour and value in our common life. Until today. But unfortunately, the wars in the big world caused a fundamental separation in the good relationship that existed here with our Muslim neighbours. If I refer to the current war in Israel, without a doubt it affects the fabric of life here in Morocco.

World politics has caused a separation between the good connections that were part of our ancestors, and from there it has only deteriorated into negative and dark places. A few years ago, the Abraham Accords were signed which constituted peace both between the countries and between us and our neighbours. But following the current war the situation became more tense.

Most citizens understand that politics should not be mixed with real life. But as a non-Jewish friend told me, "we value the Jews very much and will always respect them, however in the end the war affects the fabric of our common life."

War is not a good thing. But we all understand that the Hamas organization wants to consume the best in the world from both the Jews and the Arabs. Such an organization has no place in our good world. Antisemitism is increasing on a daily basis. Undoubtedly peace is the most wanted thing we want now. We hope that the world will understand the move that will lead to its elimination and through this peace will come to the world. Amen.

6. TERRORISM

By Gershon Stein, 22, USA, Washington,
Georgetown University of Foreign Service Class

The age-old adage, “One person’s terrorist is another person’s freedom fighter,” captures a supposed ambiguity in terrorism. Indiscriminate violence in the advance of political motives, terrorism, has become ubiquitous in the modern world. It reshapes the societies, political landscapes, and individuals that it touches often with stark echoes of the past.

On 9/11, modern American society changed. From the Global War on Terrorism to the Patriot Act to security lines at the airport, 9/11 has shaped the experiences of America’s youngest generation. These hallmarks of the modern American security apparatus have come into being as a result of terror. The early memories of a country at war, discoveries of home-grown terrorists, and weapons check before travel are common experiences in the lives of those in Generation Z.

Throughout the decades, acts of terror and extremist violence have continued to shape the lives of young people in the United States. Between 1994 and 2021, the Centre for Strategic and International Studies reported over 1,000 terrorist actions and plots. Though these acts of terror occur on different scales, they have fractured the world: degrading conceptions of others, surging hate, and invasive new security measures are all impacts of this reality.

Similar to the acts of terror which came before it, 10/7 has changed the contemporary reality for Jews around the world. The resulting hostage crisis, Israel-Hamas war, and surge of antisemitism have shaped the contemporary experience for all. Many have friends and family who were kidnapped or killed, even more have complex emotions about the war, and all have seen a tsunami of anti-Semitic incidents. Not only has the carnage of 10/7 cleaved university campuses, it has deeply impacted young Jew’s relationship to Israel. Many of us don’t have a space to voice criticism of government actions during the war.

Even with famine looming in Gaza, many pro-Israel individuals position any criticism of Israel’s government as anti-Israel. However, those who love a country should hold it to a high standard—loving a country

means wanting it to be its best. But in a campus climate where many celebrate 10/7, and now 9/11, and overlook Hamas' antisemitism, terrorist sympathizers have stolen the voices of legitimate critics of Israel.

Let me be clear, there is no justification for terrorism. The murder of civilians is always reprehensible. Gender based violence is always reprehensible. And, terrorism is always reprehensible. While there is, and should be, space for disagreement about policy perspectives, the excuse of terrorism is inexcusable.

In wartime Israel, people are deeply scarred by brutal terrorism on 10/7 and before. Just as 9/11 is ever-lurking in the American mind, even for those who were not yet alive, 10/7 will leave its mark in the Israeli mind. And just as the United States responded to terrorism with a set of wars that directly killed over 400,000 civilians, Israel responded to terrorism with a war whose caustic toll has yet to be seen. Though violence begets violence, it is rarely the best policy. After all, just wars often have unjust endings.

7. REFUGEES

**By Jonathan Godel, 30, France,
Bordeaux, University of Bordeaux**

In the history of humanity, the story of migration and displacement is as old as civilisation. Tradition shows that from Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden to Noah's family's epic journey to escape the flood, taking in the wanderings of Abraham and Sarah, the history of humanity is marked by the experience of displacement and by the search for refuge. Might the concept of refugee be at the core of our human experience? Let us take Adam and Eve, archetypal figures, whose expulsion from the Garden of Eden launched them into the unknown world, forever marked by a nostalgia for a vanished home. Their story resonates deeply with the situation of today's refugees, forced to leave their homes because of conflicts, persecutions or environmental disasters, hungering for greater security. Noah also embodies the experience of the refugee while negotiating the chaos of a flood, seeking refuge inside an ark. His story underlines the universal search for survival and the human soul's resilience in the face of chaotic events. However, perhaps Abraham and Sarah's saga captures the essence of the refugees' narrative in more powerful form. Fleeing hunger and political upheaval, they embarked on an unknown journey, seeking a safe haven in the land of Abimelech. And here, in the midst of the trials of his displacement, Abraham discovered a profound truth – the transformative power of Chesed: generosity. Acknowledging that love and compassion are the pillars of human existence, he embraced the responsibility of caring for others, thus transcending his own status as a refugee. In the face of adversity, Jewish teachings emphasise the importance of welcoming the stranger, protecting the vulnerable and defending justice. The Torah orders us to "love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Deuteronomy 10:19), reminding us of our humanity and our obligation to extend goodness and empathy to those most in need. Taking in refugees is not only a moral imperative but also testimony to the values of compassion, empathy and justice that are at the heart of Judaism. By defending the rights of the refugees, we reaffirm our commitment to the principles of Tikkun Olam, or the repairing of the world, and strive to create a society that is juster and more compassionate towards others. To understand the situation of

the refugees promotes empathy and compassion, essential qualities incorporated in Abraham's acts of generosity (Hesed). Let us hope that, by following the example of the patriarch Abraham, today's refugees may overcome their precarious condition and become the hosts of tomorrow.

8. SUFFERING

By Yael Aspani Douek, 23, Mexico,
Mexico City, Instituto Mexicano de la Pareja

I would define suffering as the heart-breaking melody that resonates in the most intimate corners of the human being. That dark experience capable of overshadowing and eclipsing even the brightest glimmer of light, and plunging us into an abyss of anguish that seems to have no way out.

That adversarial state we want to avoid and escape from as soon as we have the slightest contact. And yet, suffering remains as a human experience, as an element in the path and journey of life, and primarily, it remains an essential and inherent part in the development of human growth and transformation.

We often struggle to perceive suffering for what it truly is, a great and challenging teacher, whose lessons are painful, raw, and dark. But primarily revealing and transformative, if we allow them to be.

While suffering itself, will always be necessarily uncomfortable and painful and its nature remains the same and constant, our response to it can change everything, if we don't allow the experience to be sterile or a suffering devoid of purpose, of meaning.

Just as Victor Frankl, the father of logotherapy, teaches us: "Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances—to choose one's own way."

The situations that cause us suffering are generally beyond our control. Irreparable losses, terminal illnesses, physical ailments, traumatic experiences, sudden deaths, to name just a few. And if we cannot "fix" adverse circumstances, perhaps, it is because those circumstances do not need to be "fixed", because they might have a purpose.

The purpose of transforming us. The purpose of suffering is what we build from it, not the suffering itself. The attitude is the secret element to transform suffering into an opportunity. That attitude must be linked to a meaning.

The meaning must be even greater than the pain itself, allowing us to perceive the pain as a learning experience that propels us forward and from which we can turn darkness into light.

9. HOLOCAUST

By Roman Zhigun, 27, Russia,
Moscow, Yahad Moscow School

The Holocaust is the policy of the Nazis, their allies and collaborators in the persecution and mass extermination of Jews from 1933 to 1945. The Holocaust did not begin with the murder of Jews. Initially it was discrimination and anti-Semitic propaganda. However, the Holocaust showed the world a universal picture of the evolution of evil. Within a few years, the Nazis went from using “hate speech” to death camps — real “industrial plants” built to kill people.

The history of mankind, unfortunately, knows different examples of genocides. However, never, neither before nor after the Holocaust, has anyone set themselves the goal of destroying not just a people, but the very “biological basis of a people.” The Nazis sought to exterminate every single Jew: religion, political views, and loyalty to the authorities did not matter. It did not matter whether the person himself knew about his Jewish roots. The Nazi regime killed even those Jews who considered themselves German, Pole or Russian.

The Nazis were not interested in the opportunity to raise a Jewish baby in their own way — after all, “biologically” he would still remain a Jew. A Jew who joined the Ghetto police could not save himself — he also was to be sentenced to death. Later, but still without alternative.

Never, either before or after the Holocaust, has any regime set itself the goal of extraterritorial genocide. The Nazis exterminated Jews not only in their own country, Germany, but also in every territory where the Wehrmacht and SS reached. The real boundaries of the Holocaust were determined only by the front line in Europe and North Africa.

Never in the history of civilization has there been such an irrational crime. German Jews did not pose any threat to Germany; their extermination cannot be explained even by cynical logic.

During World War II, the Third Reich spent enormous human, logistical and financial resources on creating in occupied lands a “death industry.” Even when the German army suffered defeats, the Nazis’

priority was killing Jews. The Nazis were willing to sacrifice the needs of the front in order to kill as many Jews as possible before the Allies liberated them.

The Holocaust is unique. But it's lessons are universal. To remember and prevent.

10. SLAVERY

By Igor Shatkhin, 30, Odesa,
Ukraine, Odesa University

If we start the topic of slavery, the topic that comes to mind is “modern slavery”. Modern slavery encompasses new dimensions, including social media slavery. This phenomenon involves the coercion, manipulation, and exploitation of individuals through online platforms for various purposes, such as forced labour, sexual exploitation, and financial gain. Social media platforms can be used to deceive, groom, and trap vulnerable individuals, particularly young people, into situations of exploitation and abuse. This form of modern slavery not only perpetuates harmful power dynamics but also amplifies the reach and scale of exploitation, posing significant challenges for law enforcement and regulatory agencies. Efforts to combat modern slavery must therefore include measures to address the digital landscape and protect individuals from exploitation in the virtual realm.

Ensuring our children don't become slaves to social media requires concerted efforts from parents, educators, and communities. It's imperative that we establish healthy boundaries and educate young minds on the value of real-world interactions over digital engagement. Encouraging activities that foster creativity, physical activity, and face-to-face communication can greatly reduce the risk of social media addiction. Furthermore, teaching children about the importance of privacy, the impact of their digital footprint, and the skills to critically assess online information are essential steps. By prioritizing digital wellness and mindfulness, we can guide our children to use social media as a tool for positive connection and learning, rather than a platform that consumes their identity and time.

11. TORTURE

By Ezequiel Brener, 26, Spain,
Barcelona, University of Barcelona

Torture, one of the most egregious violations of human rights, persists in various parts of the world despite efforts to eradicate it. This inhumane practice, which inflicts severe physical or psychological pain in order to obtain information, punish or intimidate, is an insult to human dignity and the fundamental principles of justice.

History records numerous cases of torture used as a tool of oppression and control by authoritarian regimes and dictatorships. However, even in established democracies, cases of abuse by state agents or paramilitary groups have been documented.

The effects of torture are devastating and long-lasting. Victims, often innocent, experience physical and psychological trauma that can last a lifetime. Survivors face difficulties in rebuilding their lives, facing social stigma and mental health problems.

Despite the universal prohibition of torture in international treaties and national laws, its complete eradication remains a challenge. Impunity, lack of accountability and the complicity of some sectors hinder efforts to combat this practice.

It is essential that States comply with their obligations to prevent and punish torture. This implies strengthening oversight and control mechanisms, guaranteeing access to justice and reparations for victims, and promoting a culture of respect for human rights.

In addition, international collaboration is crucial to address this problem in a comprehensive manner. Cooperation between countries in the investigation and prosecution of torture cases can contribute significantly to justice and future prevention.

Ultimately, the eradication of torture requires a strong and sustained commitment from all actors, both at the national and international levels where human rights are truly universal and respected.

12. ASYLUM

By Yahav Barnea, 30, Canada,
Toronto, World Zionist Organization

The concept of asylum can be seen as a place of refuge, a place to escape danger. Although the Jews have lived in the region uninterruptedly for more than three millennia, the state of Israel was established, in part, on the principle of creating a safe place for Jews after the Holocaust to provide them with asylum.

Asylum has also been linked to Jewish values of treating the stranger with kindness and care: "You shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the feelings of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in the land of Egypt (Exodus 23:9)". This idea of treating the stranger with care is mentioned 36 times in the Torah-the most repeated command to emphasize the importance of empathy and kindness. We tell the story of the exodus every year during Passover and repeat the saying "For you were strangers in the land of Egypt," but what does it mean to us in today's world? We commemorate Yom Hasho'a (Holocaust Memorial Day) every year and say "Never again", but how does that come into play when we look at other people less fortunate than us in today's world?

In the last two decades, the Israeli government and people have had to deal with the idea of 'treating the stranger' when hundreds of African asylum seekers entered Israel through the border with Egypt. Philosophical and political debates on the rights of those seeking asylum created divides between the left and the right.

The reason why the state of Israel was created- to provide asylum for Jews- was threatened by 'strangers' seeking that very same thing. As a Jewish state, built on Jewish values, the debate of providing care and a safe refuge for non-Jews becomes complicated and brings up contradicting ideas and values. Asylum, which on paper seems like a clear concept to follow and practice, is no longer an easy practice to hold.

In recent months, the concept of asylum has become relevant and timely again. In the wake of October 7th, 2023, hundreds of Israelis from the south and north of the country have become displaced and

sought asylum in their own country and in Jewish communities around the world. The idea of the state of Israel being a safe haven for all Jews is now questionable in light of the recent events. A new form of displaced people now the citizens of a Jewish state is a constant reminder of the reality of life as Jews and calls for coming together as a community and supporting one another.

Since the days of the Bible, Jews have been displaced and have sought asylum time and time again, from Abraham's "Lech Lecha" to the destructions of the Temples, to the Holocaust, and now to the horrific attack of October 2023.

Jews have experienced that feeling of being strangers in foreign lands, characterized by seeking the help and refuge of others and eventually growing into thriving communities. We now have the opportunity to reflect on how we operate as a global and local Jewish community, what brings us together, and what needs to be done to make us all feel safe again.

Time will tell how we grow and evolve from the latest tragic events of our people and how we find asylum in this new reality.

13. CORRUPTION

By Liron David Batito, 30, Israel,
Jerusalem, Bar Ilan University

Corruption, that is, dishonesty in handling business dealings or politically relevant realities, is a complex matter, because of its multidisciplinary nature. Sociology, economy, psychology, ethics, law and others study this complex word that is so fashionable in the 21st century, the century where all one talks about is money and the economy. It is a crime of money or, rather, an exchange of favours.

Corruption is present in most powers in society – executive, legislative, judicial, public prosecution, police and the media – and failed politicians can find no easier job than to live off “the fight against corruption”, which gives them a soapbox on which to stand and shout.

Powers that are often intermingled and exchange favours between them, fight against the corruption of the banker, the mayor, or John and Mary. They even find corruption in the business dealings of a simple family with no assets. Often the siege is deadly for the honourability of the people targeted, even if years later we discover that there was no corruption at all.

The police rush back and forth looking for the corrupt and the corruptors, who acquired money, a bagful of seabass or some sort of promise. The society in general does not understand the importance of this offence, because it is more worried about the violent crimes that jeopardize their physical safety or their property.

The fight against corruption questions the credibility of the system and relations between the major powers of society, in addition to the flow of relations between citizens and public administration, the development of economies and the normal functioning of the markets.

This fight must be carried out on a serious basis, never with spectacle and obscure interests that do everything to “punish” social conventions, normal relationships between people, even sympathy and generosity. The word justice must always come before the word money.

14. POVERTY

By Roberta Abramov, 23, Uruguay,
Montevideo, University of Buenos Aires

Those who live comfortably and are flooded with news from around the world do not have the psychological conditions or insight to know how extreme poverty is in today's world. It is true that poverty has always existed in the history of humanity, but I do not believe that on such a large scale, because the Earth's population has never been so large (today 7 billion people), nor has man ever lived so far from nature, which tends to produce the minimum essential for human survival.

On the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty a study was published detailing that half the poor people in the world still do not have access to electricity and cooking fuel. The same study also says that most of these poor live in sub-Saharan Africa and in southern Asia.

This comprehensive study reveals how people experience poverty in various aspects, from access to education and health to different standards of living, which include housing, clean drinking water, sewage and electricity. It also identifies many other aspects that affect those who live in multidimensional poverty all over the world.

End poverty in all its forms is the first of the 17 Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The main reference to combat poverty is to ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, particularly least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions. It is decisive to create sound policy frameworks at the national and regional levels, based on pro-poor strategies.

All men, women and children have equal rights and access to basic services, property, natural resources, new technologies and financial services, such as microfinance. If no measures are taken to improve health and education by 2030, about 167 million children will be living in extreme poverty.

15. HOPE

By Yair Chizi, 20, Netherlands,
Delft, Universiteit Delft

Few are as universal and human as the experience of hope: the aspiration for security and safe haven, for times of peace and prosperity, for family and the unborn, for success and betterment. In application, hope contrasts the present conditions and circumstances with idealized ones, envisaging a world ought to be in place of the currently realized.

As such, never is hope more sorely needed than when it is most feeble and assailable. Amidst the bleakness and evil of the day, hope provides counsel to us with a reminder of the goodness available in the world. Amidst uncontrollable uncertainty, hope deters us from abandonment by instilling us with the promise of better days. Amidst untold loss and grief, hope encourages us to look beyond.

Hope may also be shared across a people, reinforced by a collective to transcend circumstance and time. The durability and resilience of hope are highly eminent in Judaism, which paints a history of a two-thousand-year-old hope. From where we once wept on the banks of the Euphrates and Tigris, through persecution, expulsion, massacre, and annihilation, the Jewish people have carried the dream of security, religious freedom, and recognition. Following two millennia in the diaspora, the Jewish people have finally carved themselves a piece of the world amongst other nations as hope manifest.

Wading through the inclement world of today, we must clench onto our mantles of hope, steadfast, despite uncertainty, fear, and loss. Veiled with hope, we may find relief in the shaken promise of a redeemable future. As we are reminded in Pesach, in every generation they rise up to destroy us, but the Holy One, Blessed be He, delivers us from their hands. And should we trust in our faith and history, we must stubbornly insist on the possibility of a brighter tomorrow.

16. CITIZENSHIP

By Dara Dahan, 24, Lithuania,
Vilnius, University of Toulouse

Citizenship represents the set of rights and duties of citizens. It can be defined as the condition of the person who lives according to a set of statutes belonging to a politically and socially articulated society. The full exercise of citizenship promotes people's participation in the various sectors of society, leading to the construction of an inclusive society. With the Universal Declaration of Human Rights certain topics on citizenship have now been considered universal for almost all human beings, although the Hebrew Bible had already done the same millennia ago.

Human Rights are a human being's basic rights, whether civil or political. These include: the right to life, freedom of thought, private property, maternal language, freedom of expression, belief, equality of all before the law, nationality rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights, in addition to many others entailing diffuse and collective rights such as the right to peace, the right to progress, the right to the self-determination of peoples and the right to a healthy environment. These rights are listed in the Torah in the form of human duties.

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and in rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act toward one another in a spirit of brotherhood. Human values are the characteristics that distinguish us from other living beings. These values are basically linked to dignity and ethics. We can consider the following examples: honesty, responsibility, tolerance, respect and humility.

To live in harmony in a peaceful and positive manner, it is very important to bear in mind these values. Society must be aware that despite the existence of cultural differences, the values of justice, peace, solidarity and compassion are universal.

17. HUMAN DUTIES

**By Stephan Capriles, 30, Curaçao, Willemstad,
Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland**

I've spent a lot of time trying to figure out what "duty" means, especially as it relates to Judaism. I keep coming back to my grandfather as the answer. We called him Apa in my family because, as a child, I couldn't properly articulate the Dutch word "opa" for grandpa. The name stuck, and he became Apa to my sisters and my cousins too.

Apa loomed large in my childhood and remains one of the most important connections to my faith. The island we grew up on was small and our family was—and remains—close in proximity and familiarity. We had dinner and lunch together most Shabbatot and saw each other at least three times a week.

Curaçao is miniscule. The entire population could fit in an American university's football stadium. Whenever we left his home, my grandfather would make it a point to be polite to everyone who came his way. He shared that every person had a story, a voice, and a connection to someone else. I remember once a man approached him on the street and seemed upset. My grandfather listened and nodded. I didn't hear or understand most of the conversation, but as the man walked away, they were markedly less angry.

Later, my grandfather explained that this person had been provoked by circumstances outside anyone's control. They were mad that nobody had taken the time to listen to them—they had been ignored. My grandfather may not have been able to change this man's situation, but he could pay attention, empathize, and console him. There were many other instances where people would come up to my grandfather while we were out together. I asked him once why he spoke to all these people, effectively strangers, who, even on our small island, we might never see again. He shared something that stuck with me. We may not always agree with other people's choices, ideas, or beliefs, but they are as human as we are, and respecting that basic fact makes all the difference.

Apa also recognized that our lives were privileged. We had good homes, loving parents, and attended good schools. He insisted that we never

take any of these blessings for granted. Our family has called this rock in the southern Caribbean our home for more than ten generations. In his eyes, we had a responsibility to make sure that it remained a home for future generations too. This involved organizing a circus for children in other neighbourhoods, spending time with folks who had intellectual disabilities, cleaning up beaches, and various other projects that he orchestrated. This work with my grandfather always centred on finding ways to positively impact our home, strengthening that sense of community, and giving back often.

My grandfather was obsessed with education. He expected us to do well and soak up every moment in the classroom. He wanted us to ask questions, calculate difficult sums, memorize speeches and dates. He treated our grades like jobs and would take massive pride at report cards that had strong showings. At first, the focus was always on mathematics, “essential to understand.” But as we grew older, he would care more and more about our grasp of the humanities, economics, and philosophy.

Apa took me to synagogue most weekends and we spent a lot of time together leading up to my bar mitzvah. I enjoyed those moments alone because he would talk to me like I was an adult. My opinions mattered to him, even if they weren’t fully formed. He would interrogate and ask me about my understanding of the world, the relationship we had with the people around us, and my convictions.

As I grew older, I spent a lot of time speaking one-on-one with him. At the time, most of these conversations felt simple—we would talk about what had happened in the news, what I had learned in school, or what had been discussed at his dining room table. After watching any movie, he would ask questions about its message or morals. Even if there wasn’t anything discernibly insightful from the cartoon that had played out on the big screen. These interrogations were critical—he would ask questions to clarify, to philosophize—a Socratic dialogue with teenagers and pre-teens in the back seat of his car.

With the benefit of hindsight, I now see a pattern. My grandfather valued learning, not simply in the classroom. The world had many lessons to teach us, but I needed to be open to receiving them, discussing them, and finding ways to incorporate them into my life.

I realize—either unintentionally or intentionally—that I think about him when trying to conceptualize duty because of what he left behind. His

legacy is these duties, these values that guide me: Every person should be treated with decency and respect; you should leave your home better than you found it; and learn and ask questions always.

My grandfather was a pillar in our family and our community. I miss him every day. There are still questions about duty that he would want me to examine if he was reading this essay. Where does this obligation to other humans come from? How do we continue making our homes a better place for the people we leave behind? Are these duties innately Jewish? Or are they simply human? Where do duties end and rights begin?

I don't know if Apa would have an answer to all of these questions, but he'd be very happy that they had been asked.

18. RESPONSIBILITY

By Paul Keen, 24, Thailand, Bangkok,
MSc at Imperial College London

Responsibility is a theme deeply embedded in Judaism, spanning the Torah's teachings to modern narratives. I'd like to explore by bifurcating this concept into what I will call selfish and selfless responsibility. Navigating between these paths questions not only what our responsibilities are, but also why they are so important.

Selfish responsibility, while seemingly negative, can be understood through the lens of self-preservation and personal growth. The Torah emphasises the significance of self-care. "Love your neighbour as yourself" works both ways. This directive implies a prerequisite: one must first love and take care of oneself to genuinely love and care for others. Yet, when this self-care turns into self-centeredness, overshadowing our duties towards others, it then deviates from the Jewish values of communal welfare and *Tikkun Olam*—repairing the world. Meanwhile, selfless responsibility embodies the essence of Jewish ethical teachings. It is vividly demonstrated in the story of Abraham, who, despite his personal covenant with God, continuously sought to intercede on behalf of others, even strangers, as seen in his plea for Sodom and Gomorrah. His actions underscore the Jewish imperative to look beyond our personal needs and cater to the greater good of others. Modern Jewish narratives further illustrate this struggle. One significant example is the story of Sir Nicholas Winton, who organised the Czech Kinder transport and saved 669 children from Nazi persecution during the Holocaust. His selfless actions, undertaken at great personal risk, exemplify the profound impact of putting others' needs before one's own.

However, discerning when to prioritise selfless responsibility over personal desires is a complex dilemma. The balance requires profound wisdom. It challenges us to ask difficult questions: When does taking responsibility for oneself hinder our ability to serve others? And when does selflessness demand too great a personal sacrifice?

In navigating the fine line between selfish and selfless responsibility, Jewish teachings offer a compass. They encourage us to strive not only for balance, but to seek greater understanding of what common responsibilities foster service to oneself, to others and to the wider community.

19. DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

By Eliya Adler, 20, Australia,
Sydney, University of Sydney

“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him.” - Genesis 1:27. These words heralded a new age of human understanding, an age of personal value, civil liberty and individual worth. They set forth the ground-breaking value of human dignity.

The concept of human dignity is one all those living in the Western world understand, it is to us entirely self-evident. Upheld and implicit in our judicial systems, governments and civil rights, it is the foundation of our free societies, personal liberties and cultural legacy. It underpins the very precedent upon which Western thought has been based for the last millennia; the fundamental value of all individuals.

However, if it was a currency, the concept has not been in circulation long. In fact, when it was first introduced it was utterly unprecedented, permanently transforming the civil foundations of the ancient tribal landscape of the Near East for good. The cataclysmic revelation to the Jewish populace at Sinai established the importance of human dignity in the Ten Commandments. This had a trickle-down effect through the ages, first through the Tanach, then the New Testament, which was introduced into European thought through the wider evangelising spread of Christianity, continued into the Enlightenment, and eventually gained permanence in the Western world of today.

Here are the 5th-9th Commandments, tenets of our faith. Note how they all enthrone and protect the profound centrality of human dignity as a salient point of Judaism itself.

Honour your father and mother - establishes the importance of acquired wisdom and the dignity of respect within a family.

You shall not murder - establishes the value of any human life.

You shall not commit adultery - enshrines the dignity of personal commitment.

You shall not steal - enshrines the dignity of rightful ownership.

You shall not bear false witness - establishes the dignity of unsullied human truth.

The appointment of “magistrates and officials... in all the settlements ... (to) govern the people with due justice” is commanded in the Torah, as equality in the eyes of the law belies the fundamental dignity of all individuals.

Going even further back to a verdant garden at the beginning of time, Man was ‘made in the image of God’. We are told, from the outset, that we were made in resemblance of God. In demonstrating the dignity of Adam, the very first human with neshamah, it follows that if we were all made in reflection and expression of the image of God Himself, then we must all have the same spark of divinity within us.

In the 17th century, with the Enlightenment on the brink of sweeping through Europe, philosopher John Locke pronounced “slavery... so vile and miserable” that it should be banned. As Western thought awoke to the notion that all are equal in the image of God, it left no room for legal ownership of another divinely created human. The idea of the dignity of the individual opened up a new moral universe - that of universal equality in the eyes of God. It also opened up the possibility of equality in the eyes of the law. An individual, regardless of race or religion, was equally as valuable as any other. As the late Rabbi Jonathan Sacks eloquently stated; “The test of faith is whether I can make space for difference. Can I recognise God’s image in someone who is not in my image, whose language, faith, ideal, are different from mine?”

The Torah set a precedent for the rest of human history, its value of human dignity allows for a pure, transcendent concept of individual worth that was unlike anything that came before it, and indelibly shaped the cultural history that came after it. This is the bright, powerful, world-altering gift the Torah has granted the world; that all are worthy of basic dignity.

20. THE RIGHT TO LIFE

By Isaac Toledano, 27, Egypt, Alexandria,
University of Toronto

The Jewish Constitution (the Torah), instead of reading us our rights, tells us to be respectful to others. "You shall love your fellow as yourself". This major principle is comparable to the US Declaration of Independence opening with "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men were created to treat others with love and dignity."

It's not surprising that John Adams, the second president of the United States, wrote: "I will insist that the Hebrews have done more to civilize men than any other nation." The principles of the Enlightenment—liberty, equality and individualism—were based upon Judaic principles. In the writings of European Enlightened thinkers, the Hebrew Bible is cited more than all other writings combined.

Even if the American Revolution was based on the Hebrew Bible, this book doesn't talk about human rights. There is no verse in Torah that says, "Every human being is endowed with the right to life and liberty." On the other hand, God does say, "Thou shalt not murder", i.e., your neighbour has the right to live. From this particular way, the Torah talks about the sanctity of human life, describing the first man and woman as being "created in the image of God."

According to Judaism, the right to life extends to animals, plants, water, the environment in general, and the planet. The Talmud says that relieving the suffering of an animal is a biblical law and that a person can't purchase an animal unless he has the means to feed it, and that a person must feed his animals before he feeds himself.

From a political and secular perspective of the modern world, the language used is based on rights and not duties. This technique, more to the liking of those who listen than those who wish to lead with good results, has the disadvantage of not defining exactly what the obligations of those who have the rights are. Many problems arise from this fact and it is no coincidence that today there are so many legal codes and standards that are difficult to understand.

Secularly speaking, the right to life must be seen as the principal right that is guaranteed to all human beings, without distinction and it is the

most important of all. It is the duty of the State to guarantee the right to life, providing a standard of living that is suitable for the human condition, always respecting the fundamental principles of the dignity of the human person, social and citizenship values, in order to establish a free and just society of solidarity.

Comparing the Torah language and modern language, the small shift from rights to service can make a dramatic difference in our relationships. When the emphasis is on personal contribution, there is greater humility. When the focus is largely about our rights, the door is open to exaggerations and disappointments.

21. JUSTICE

**By Mara Garrett, 17, Portugal,
Oporto, Oporto British School**

The Jewish people created the national and international law, the "Dinim" law, which can be translated as meaning "setting up honest courts". This law, which was already contained within the seven laws of Noah, imposes on humanity a system of justice with honest laws and honest judges operating in a context of truth and good faith.

Of its nature, justice is moral and should be viewed and understood as such by all men and women. When the laws are no longer understood by the majority of the people, societies plunge into disturbance, filled with defaulters, jurists, police and analysts who attempt to explain the laws that foresee the punishments.

The hyper-juridification of the actions of people, police and states and the lack of good feelings expressed in the laws are starting to identify justice not with the sentiment of the world population but rather with the thinking of the analysts who speak on television in scenarios heightened by images and captions. The chaos of the verbiage does not match the idea of justice, that which is just and adequate, visible to all, and felt by all, which is depicted by a statue whose eyes are blindfolded and by sayings such as "all are equal before the law", "all have equal legal guarantees", "all have equal rights".

Everyone has heard about a small people who were victims of genocide in all eras and latitudes, from Lisbon to Moscow (5000 kilometres away), old people and babies dismembered and men and women burned alive before immense laughter from those watching. However, exactly three months after Hamas subjected Israel to the worst massacre of Jews since the Holocaust, Israel was tried for genocide at the International Court of Justice.

Nowhere else, but in the institutions, that deal with the justice of men are good faith and truth so precious. Justice should be rethought to serve the world.

22. THE VALUE OF SAFETY

By Motti Cohen, 30, Tunisie, Djerba,
University Medical School in Paris

Among the most important values for living with dignity is safety. No matter how much we talk about freedoms, these can only be exercised in a climate of security, without which no one can sleep peacefully for a single night, as our families, our homes and our lives will always be in great danger.

Coming from Tunis and Djerba, I would like to share with the readers the history of my beloved community and why I am living on London today. Tunisian Judaism is characterized by heterogeneous roots, including parts whose origins are very ancient, even before the Roman Empire, about 2,300 years ago. At its peak, the community numbered about 100,000 Jews.

I came from a family of kohanim attributed to Ali HaCohen. My ancestors were always treated like kings, both in the community and outside the community. But today the Jews are persecuted by the Arabs in an implicitly two-faced way and without justice. We remember the bloodshed that was our lot in Tunis.

Most of the community immigrated to Israel and a minority immigrated to France, and today there are about 1,500 Jews in Tunisia, most of them on the island of Djerba. Many of the Jews of Djerba and Tunisia who immigrated to Israel settled in Jerusalem, Netivot and the settlements of the south, including Be'er Sheva, Ofakim, Talim, Eitan, Zimat, Gilat, Chain, Beit HaGadi and Barchia.

We will not forget that two years ago our Jewish brothers included myself came to visit jerba from all over the world on the day of Lag B'Omer as is our tradition. And we were brutally attacked by bad and merciless people just because we are Jews. Even Arabs who guarded us fell victim.

Unfortunately, today world politics is celebrating our blood. The wars in the world have not brought any benefit to humanity, but the stubborn war against groups of merciless terrorists is a good and just war. There will be no security while they exist.

All the countries that support Israel will always be remembered on the good side of history. All the countries and organizations that call for boycotts against Israel and the Jews in the world, one day will come and they will realize how wrong they were.

23. FAMILY

By Charles Chakkalo, 30, Syria, Damascus,
Halabi Community of Brooklyn, NY

In America, many Jews are abandoning their Judaism. We are the Syrian exception. When my family escaped Aleppo, they emigrated to a land with no family through blood, but family through values. Family is more than just the people you were born to and grew up with. Family are those who you share experiences with, beliefs with and find solace with. Family are the people who don't just share your blood but would shed it for you. Family are the people who share in your pains, pleasures and sympathies. Family are the ones who don't see actions as sacrifices for one another, but an opportunity to help a sibling of their own.

In Brooklyn, we embrace the American dream we are blessed to be a part of, while looking inwards to our neshama for guidance. When we embrace the dream, we work, engage and build with our American family. But, as the sun sets we look inwards, fill our minyanim chanting our millennia old liturgy then hug our families.

Our power is not just family, but how we practice it. Family is the glue that holds the Halabi community together. Balanced family is what brought abundant success and blessing to the world of Brooklyn, NY, a sequel to the vibrance once planted in Halab.

In today's polarized world the loudest voices are on the extremes. Rarely are the extreme points of view accurate, true, or productive. A mischaracterization that frequents in the Jewish Diaspora is a false dichotomy between keeping religion while isolating from the secular nation against integrating with the secular nation while losing Jewish tradition and theology.

My Jiddo (grandfather) canvassed communities in Mexico, Panama, and Israel, but none offered the caliber of family Brooklyn did.

At times, outsiders insult my community by labelling it "insular." Twenty-eight years later I take it as a compliment. Raised in the Brooklyn community of Syrian refugees, my generation is the first to be spoiled in only knowing a world of American freedom, equality, and opportunity.

Throughout Jewish history Jews migrated and assimilated to other nation-states, aiming to become one of “them.” Sometimes by decree, others by the sword, we were reminded that we can never forgo our Judaism.

Why are we different? Why are the Syrians able to retain their rich culture, tradition and identity? Our difference is our striking balance. We found what Aristotle coined “the golden mean.” We struck the middle of the road balance between living as Americans and not abandoning our roots.

When given opportunity in the Land of Opportunity, we took it. When given the freedom of religion, we practiced it. When restored our unalienable rights, we remember they are endowed to us by our creator.

For over 100 years our community stayed within a walking radius of one another, making a “t’fadal” (welcome) more than an invitation but a heartfelt wish. We persevered in disseminating and preserving our religious tunes, values and institutions. We sacrifice to protect against any threat to our identity. We are a family of families.

24. FREEDOM

By Abraham Katz, 25, Norway,
Oslo, Malmö University

To speak of the value of freedoms involves understanding what are positive and negative freedoms. Our wise men teach that harmful freedoms cannot really be considered freedoms. When Gedaliah was killed by discontented Jews, they were exercising their freedom but using it to practice evil. History, Jewish and non-Jewish, gives us endless examples of the wrong use of freedom, together with the surfeit of its use that can lead only to the suffering of the perpetrator and of third parties.

Reading the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is an exercise that is balm for the soul. The freedoms listed there – religion, expression, association and many others – are not only positive but also consensual freedoms. No one in their right mind can question the relevance of such freedoms. Those who do have always enjoyed them, have never been deprived of them, and so do not know how they would feel in such a sad situation.

To be able to travel to any country, enjoy contact with other peoples, work far from home, express one's thoughts in speech and in words, set up cultural associations with friends and family, allows human beings to have a full life. It is not enough to be guaranteed the right to life. One must guarantee the right conditions for that life to be full.

People tend to assess what happens in the world by assessing their own circumstance or what they have learnt from social media which is not always well informed or else is at the service of political powers and ideology. There is one undeniable fact, however. Human beings cannot be fully realised in every place in the world. Many hide their belief. Many are prevented from studying. Many cannot work. Many live in fear of speaking, however pure their words might be.

It is the duty of States and supranational institutions to guarantee the positive freedoms of human beings. That is the only way that humanity can truly perfect itself. Everyone participates in the process of Creation. Everyone deserves to be happy. Everyone deserves to feel of use to the world. Jews. Non-Jews. Everyone.

25. BASIC LIBERTIES

**By Bianka Sieredzinska, 30, Poland,
Kracow, University of Groningen**

Living the life, you want, in the way you want it, has been a dream for many generations. In Poland, after the end of World War II, individual freedom was scarce, if not non-existent. With the transition from socialism to democracy, the trend was reversed, and now we are enjoying a society that my parents and grandparents could not have imagined.

Freedom of speech did not exist in communist Poland, and older generations still fear for their loved ones attending demonstrations. I remember my mother telling me, "Bianka, someone might take a photo, and you could get in trouble." I always found it irrational, but back in my mother's youth, this was the harsh reality. Nobody could openly express their thoughts, especially if they concerned the government. Political topics were taboo and rarely discussed. Freedom

of speech, democracy, and freedom of choice all seemed to be progressing positively, until we realized that nothing is guaranteed forever. Although Poland and human rights were progressing well for some time, and everything seemed to be moving in a positive direction, in recent years, the situation appears to be deteriorating.

As a member of the Jewish community, I know that life isn't easy for us either. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, numerous conspiracy theories about Jews have resurfaced, and I worry that this may jeopardize our safety in Poland. However, after October 7th, it appears that not much has happened to the Jewish community in Poland, and individual freedoms have been preserved. This gives me hope and optimism for the future, although I recognize that much work is needed to safeguard our individual freedoms in society.

26. EQUALITY

**By Aarishaa Mudaliar, 25, India,
Mumbai, BITS Pilani Law School**

'Equality' is by far one the most complicated terms to define yet one of the most important terms people need to understand and implement especially in the world today, with the uproar of discriminative practices, growing media influence and other factors making people unknowingly vulnerable to inequality.

Equality stands as a cornerstone principle in concepts of morality and shaping societal norms, institutions, and the distribution of resources among the masses. It is fundamental to the peace and happiness of all people across borders irrespective of race, religions, cultures, socio economic status etc. At its core, equality involves the idea of treating individuals with equal consideration and respect, regardless of differences.

Coming from India, a country renowned for its cultural richness and diversity yet, amidst this lurks the shadow of discrimination, affecting the lives of countless individuals based on factors as arbitrary as religious beliefs or social status. As one who has traversed the labyrinth of Indian society, I am struck by the perplexing persistence of prejudice and its profound impact on human lives.

If I were to look at us, Jews have faced discrimination and persecution throughout history, often being denied equal rights and opportunities in various societies. From the Roman Empire to medieval Europe to the modern era, Jews have been subjected to systemic oppression, pogroms, and expulsions yet I can say with a lot of pride remain propagators of equality even today.

From involvement in the Civil Rights Movement where Leaders such as Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel marched alongside Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., advocating for racial equality and the end of segregation. It is important to recognize the importance of equality and inclusivity within both religious and secular contexts. This reflects the commitment to the principles of justice and equality enshrined in Jewish tradition.

Equality is about sense and sensibility and sensitivity to the world around you which starts from bring about change in ourselves and then the people around you. Those who understand equality in its base real form, will never even think of walking a path that takes him/him away from the basic truth.

27. WELLBEING

By Hanna Rosenberg, 24, Italy,
Turin, University of Turin

Although the three main human rights are the right to life, to freedom and to personal security, it is obvious that the right to wellbeing is linked to said rights. Everyone has the right to a standard of living that is sufficient to ensure health and wellbeing for them and their families.

Broadly speaking, the right to the enjoyment of health through suitable nutrition and medical care; the right to suitable professions and employment, the right to have one's own network of human relations, the right to achieve a good economic and financial situation, all such rights are necessary for wellbeing, given the stability of the family unit, the guarantee of personal sustainability, the appreciation of professional performance. Once fully realised, the targets outlined by a person, that is, the result of his objectives in life, are the greatest contribution to wellbeing.

For all these reasons, the modern welfare state was born over a century ago, in Germany, with Bismarck, as an alternative to economic liberalism and socialism. The state is the regulatory agent of the social, political and economic life and health of a country, in partnership with private enterprise and unions, on different levels in accordance with each particular country. It is the responsibility of the welfare state to guarantee public services and protection for the population, providing dignity for citizens, for each individual is entitled from birth to death to a number of goods and services whose provision should be guaranteed either directly by the state or indirectly through the regulatory power over civil society.

In one way or another, it is the responsibility of states to guarantee the proper conditions so that the search for wellbeing is possible and achievable.

28. PROPERTY

By Leah Rabinovich, 23, New Zealand,
Wellington, University of Antwerp

Every person is entitled to his possessions, his assets. That is laid down in the Declaration of Human Rights, but that is not why this right exists. The obligation “thou shalt not steal”, proclaimed in the Torah and in most millenary ethical codes, rightly translates the protection of the right to property. Every natural or legal person is entitled to have his assets respected.

The world was created for human beings, but not everything belongs to everyone, the Earth cannot be divided anarchically and by force. Despite being divided into parts, countries, regions, cities, villages, farms, private homes, the Earth nevertheless must be useful to all. Human labour and earthly institutions should ensure its fair partition.

No one can be deprived of his possessions except due to public usefulness and with adequate compensation. Every person is entitled to his possessions and to use them responsibly, without forgetting the world around him. The heir is entitled to his legacy with that same obligation.

When man elects to share his wealth, he is giving what is his—God has relinquished to him the right of ownership and choice. This is why Rabbi Elazar does not say, “Give Him what is His, for everything is His.” Were this to be the case, the act of charity would be devoid of any moral worth. Instead, he says: “Give Him what is His, for you, and whatever is yours, are His.” Indeed, there is a “you” and your money is “yours,” for God has granted you selfhood and property. And you will not forget to always act for the benefit of others.

29. THE VALUE OF WORK

By Jakov Kellermann, 22, Germany,
Hamburg, Bucerius Law School

From a Jewish perspective, work has an inherent value. The Talmud in Nedarim 49b writes in the name of Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Shimon "great is labour, for it honours the labourer". It teaches an intrinsic value of work by providing meaning to the labourer. Furthermore, work can be connected to the concept of "Tikkun Olam". The human being has the task to participate in the repair of the world by also engaging with the material world. The value of work is to help others to improve the world. Work in this sense not only includes employment but a superior mission.

Besides providing financial stability, work gives a profound sense of purpose and fulfilment. Whether individuals engage in a traditional job or volunteer, it empowers them to make meaningful connections with their co-workers, communities, nations, and the entire world.

Ideally, work is a process of continually acquiring new skills. It offers an opportunity for personal growth. Beyond teaching specific skills unique to each job, work may refine the character traits. Engaging in work often fosters efficiency and discipline, especially when faced with challenges.

In most jobs, we need to collaborate with colleagues, clients, or business partners. Teamwork is important. In essence, work empowers individuals to reach their full potential and drives innovation and progress within organizations.

Work may also lead to increased engagement between different groups and backgrounds in society. Especially in a world where people with different opinions and experiences seldom meet outside of social media, work offers the opportunity for dialogue. To engage in work which challenges and exposes individuals to different perspectives leads to a better understanding of various perspectives and thought patterns.

By solving diverse tasks and working together with individuals from different backgrounds, we broaden our view of the world. Moreover, we

gain a more nuanced understanding of different ways of life. Work can therefore be a tool to challenge societal problems. Through engaging with others, we may learn to value our differences instead of letting them divide us.

30. EDUCATION

By Sarah Tennembaum, 29, Bulgaria,
Sofia, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

Einstein's famous saying that "education is what's left after you forget all the facts they taught you in school" is very revealing of the role of education in our days and in all past and future eras. The technical knowledge learned by children in schools is mostly useless for their lives as students and educators. Ask an adult what they remember from many years of school, and they will say, "Very little actually."

The basic teachings of history, philosophy, mathematics, geography, environment, economics and all the many subjects that school teachers are important. However, teaching schedules and long years of learning are often overwhelming and take away from children any time to breathe, think, play, have fun and live. It saddens me that this is becoming mandatory across the world.

Parents usually tell their children "as my grandfather said..." and not "as my Biology teacher said". If their children ask, "What did your teacher say?", their parents won't know how to answer. They will perhaps remember the cover of the Biology book, its thickness, the grade they got at the end of the year, but nothing else will have been kept in their memory.

The biggest school is the family home. The other school is complementary. There are many areas on planet Earth where there are even no schools, no teachers, no Internet, but only potential students. Learning to survive in a forest or in the middle of frozen territories depends on parents and grandparents, older siblings and cousins, neighbours and religious leaders. In any case, the family home is the great school, if the parents fulfil their natural duties.

It is at least doubtful whether it should be mandatory to require everyone to attend school for many years in order to forcibly impose technical knowledge on them even to those who do not want it. Not all human beings have to be doctors, just as it is impossible for everyone to be thinkers. The world is not like that. There are different vocations from person to person, just as environmental conditions must be considered.

The generous heart of someone with a vocation to help others, to live with little and who humbly tries to learn throughout their entire life, is sometimes all it takes to be happy, while ten years of school can torture a child and cause a lost childhood. The concept of freedom must be inseparable from the concept of education.

31. A PRODUCTIVE EXISTENCE

By Hannah Sabbagh Permuth, 21, Guatemala, Guatemala City,
Guatemala BA in Psychology at Reichman University

“What do you want to be when you grow up?” A simple and frequently asked question with infinite answers. The answer to this question ought to be shaped by a broad range of factors that encompass the identity of whom the question is directed to. An individual’s sense of self is defined by a unique set of physical, psychological, and interpersonal characteristics. Furthermore, the way in which we develop our true sense of self is strongly related to the affiliations, organizations, and groups we are members of.

One of the biggest debates in the field of psychology is in regards to how much a person’s personality and characteristics are formed by either their “nature,” - biological factors, and their “nurture” - environmental factors. Although early literature and theories for both stances favour one over the other, I believe that they highly complement each other. Personally, my genetic heritage and environmental factors are what have shaped me into the person I am today, further paving the road into who I want to become.

Similar to any other kid, growing up I potentially saw myself in a variety of different professions which would often change as the years went by. Anyhow, an indispensable core value that was and will always be present at the heart of my aspirations is “Tikkun Olam” the Jewish precept of “repairing the world.” As described in Genesis, the concept implies that although the world is fundamentally “good, or very good,” there has been room purposefully left for each human being to improve and work upon it.

I was born and raised in a Jewish home in Guatemala City. Amongst the beautiful landscapes and heartwarming smiles of the Guatemalan people, also lies a harsh lifestyle due to poverty, violence, natural disaster propensity, among many other risk factors. Being this the tough reality of my home country, the importance of transforming indifference into action and serving my community was always essential. Simultaneously, growing up as a diaspora Jew, the eminence of continuity, tradition and pride in my Jewish identity, remained as important.

Consequently, during my teenage years, I became a volunteer for the organization CADENA, the humanitarian branch of Jewish Communities in Latin America. In case of a humanitarian crisis and/or a natural disaster emergency, CADENA acts as a first responder by delivering hand to hand aid towards the populations in need. The volunteers' work adheres to the organization's vision of building bridges between vulnerable communities and people committed to repairing the world, promoting the values of autonomy and resilience when facing adversity.

Delivering aid personally, hand to hand, is not only about providing support, rather creating meeting points with other human beings in diverse contexts and situations. Working in this manner enhances the indescribable feeling of devoting one's time to a meaningful cause; constantly encoding many different faces, stories and endless memories. Moreover, it is proof that the more we give, the more we receive.

Exchanging smiles, hugs and gazes of appreciation amidst evident suffering demonstrates the importance of the work one decides to take on. The universal language of a smile goes far beyond what words can express. It was within this context, organization and experiences that I understood what it means to find a sense of purpose. These first encounters within the humanitarian world have helped me define the answer to the question, "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

I will pursue to be an agent for change. A person who possesses a strong commitment to their work meanwhile actively seeking opportunities to initiate positive transformations within their surroundings. Someone whose work ethic is directed by a set of highly regarded personal values, such as integrity, passion, devotion and resilience.

The humanitarian field has also taught me that it is not just a question for kids or teenagers, no matter how young or old we are, we should always aspire to continue dreaming, exploring, and growing. Nevertheless, of the profession one decides to pursue, one can always be an agent for change. If the world would have been created to perfection, there would be no causes to act upon.

Evidently, the possibilities to contribute are endless, and so are the approaches to do so. Therefore, each individual should be in a constant search of meaning and self-fulfilment, arising from the duty to contribute to their respective societies. As uncertain as the future might be, it is certain that with great power and privilege, comes great responsibility. Humanity as a whole shares the responsibility of leaving behind a better world than the one we were born into.

32. FRIENDSHIP

By Moshe Haim, 30, Iran,
Tehran, Tel Aviv University

There is no greater desert than the life of a man without friends. Crossing a river becomes easy if there are at least two people rowing. Friendship is a feeling that never dies and that doubles our strength, our joy, our feeling and our suffering. It is the comfort of being able to speak without fearing what is said. To our friends we talk about all our defects and all our qualities. And we all want to have good friends, as they enrich us every day.

As a traveller made his way along a lonely road, he noticed a dry, shrivelled leaf in his path. Picking it up, he was amazed at the delightful fragrance it exuded. "Oh, you poor withered leaf," he exclaimed, "Where did you get this exquisite perfume?" "For a long time I have lain in the company of a rose," was the reply.

Friendship is a productive feeling that, when reproduced, can be linked to human rights. Solidarity between friends extends to other friends and so on to infinity. It means a mutual support between people or groups that share interests, goals or common needs, and may be understood as an ethical and social value that encourages cooperation, compassion, empathy and shared responsibility among members of a community.

Only collective action can overcome global problems and achieve world development goals. The effects of the multiplication of friendships are the human response to injustice, poverty, social exclusion, and other forms of suffering and need. A more fair and equal society helps promote equal opportunities and reduce social inequality. It all starts with a friendship, then two, then three and so on. From friendship results solidarity, which results in brotherhood.

33. HUMAN SOLIDARITY

By Aharon Landau, 23, South Africa,
Johannesburg, University of London

In an era marked by unprecedented global challenges, the concept of human solidarity emerges as a beacon of resilience and hope. Solidarity, grounded in shared values, has the power to transcend differences and unite people in their pursuit of a common purpose. "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a miraculous text," said Volker Türk, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. "At a time when the world emerged from cataclysmic events, the Declaration set out universal rights and recognized the equal worth of every person." "The Declaration – which was drafted by representatives from all over the world – embodies a common language of our shared humanity, a unifying force at the heart of which lies human dignity and the duty of care we owe each other as human beings," Türk said.

Human rights are a key part of that toolbox. They can help solve the most pressing challenges before us, including ensuring no one is left behind. To achieve this, we must reach all those we have failed. All people, communities, peoples, and nations failed by policies and actions that serve the few at the expense of the many, that prioritize profits over people, that force countries to pay back loans rather than feed, educate and empower their people.

Unprecedented levels of inequality pose a historic challenge to human rights, development, and stability. But inequality is not inevitable. It is man-made, and we can eliminate it.

The right to development is clear – every person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural, and political development, in which all human rights can be fully realized. Education plays a pivotal role in instilling and promoting shared values. Schools, institutions, and communities can prioritize the development of ethical and moral frameworks that emphasize empathy, tolerance, and cooperation. By nurturing a generation that values compassion and social responsibility, we lay the groundwork for a more harmonious and interconnected society. Human rights should not be used only in the intellectual vision. Rather, it is a construct of a better world with cultural, educational, political, mental health, and environmental values.

34. TOLERANCE

By Esther Saporta, 25, Turkey,
Istanbul, Istanbul Aydın University

Behind intolerance hides the most primal sense of ego. He is egocentric, the dictator, the envious, the person who needs recognition and wants to be more than others. One who is full of himself leaves no room for anyone else. He despises another person. He wants to destroy the space that other people consume. It is senseless hatred without reason.

The matter is complex. Defenders of tolerance are often rightly accused of intolerance. Have you ever been in the ironic position where someone accused you of lacking tolerance and in the process, became intolerant toward you? This often happens because the word tolerance is far from being rightly understood.

That word does not mean that we must agree with divergent points of view, it doesn't even mean that we must consider all points of view as potentially correct. It is okay to think and tell others that they are wrong. But it must be communicated with respect, because you are disagreeing with an idea, not with a person.

Tolerance means that while we might reject an idea, we don't reject the person; although you see his faults in all their ugliness naked before you, that doesn't decrease by one iota your respect for him as a fellow human being, and for all the good he has within him. Maybe you can advise him. If you see someone going the wrong way and you care about him, you'll do everything you can to set him straight. But your actions must be polite, light and humane. And if you really can't agree with this person on this one subject, look for another subject on which you can agree. There will be so many!

Even in the latter case, the other person may not want to change the subject. Turn your back politely, without needing to compromise your views. Only if you are cornered, will the case become definitively complicated. God indeed does want us to be accepting, to be tolerant, and to be loving, but also gives us the moral and emotional intelligence to know when it's time to put a lid on that tolerance.

Most of us understand the virtue of tolerance—and the dangers of too much tolerance at the same time. When “peace and love” are completely

unfettered, when you're too nice, you become tolerant of things you really shouldn't be tolerating. Kindness is great, but left completely free, it's dangerous and even harmful to human coexistence.

35. ENVIRONMENT

By Jacob Kanevsky, 26, Singapore,
Singapore city, Brooklyn Law School

The Torah is called a “tree of life,” showing how trees connect to the highest Jewish values. Trees also symbolize a healthy and sustainable environment. The commandment of bal tashchit—do not destroy or waste—has long been considered central to a Jewish environmental ethic. This law is a warning to human beings not to misuse the position which God has given them as masters of the world and its matter through capricious, passionate, or merely thoughtless wasteful destruction of anything on earth.

Bringing this wisdom about trees into our daily lives can help us become more cognizant of the precious resources we have been given, and more careful about how we use them. Nature must be respected and preserved. The religious leaders of the Jewish people have always been against the destruction of a bush or a simple leaf of a tree, if it was not necessary.

The world’s concerns over the problems of the environment are becoming greater. Perhaps there is an overestimation of the “destructive power” of the human population which really has no impact compared to a single super-volcano on Earth. There has always been climate change and there always will be. However, there is no doubt that at a local level there is much to be done.

Every year, around the world, campaigns are carried out to mobilise not only the common citizen but also leaders and corporations. If nothing is done, the constant loss of local biodiversity may substantially alter the way human beings live. Each one must play his part, for often it is the minor steps we take that can be vital in preventing us damaging the space where we live and our relationship with the fauna and flora.

Judaism teaches that the largest living being in existence is planet Earth itself. He breathes, sweats, produces and suffers. It is a complete set of ecological units that function as a natural system; natural resources and universal physical phenomena that have no clear limit, such as air, water, climate, as well as energy, radiation, electrical discharge and magnetism. World Environment Day is celebrated on 5 June and its aim is to encourage a positive and active attitude towards environmental problems on the planet.

36. FAITH

**By David Melamed, 16, Georgia,
Tbilissi, British International School of Tbilisi**

It is not possible to live without belief or deny the rationality that surrounds the universe. Nothing is possible to do without believing that it is really possible. Faith is like a superhero power for me. It's like a magic light that shows me the way from Haifa to Tel Aviv and then to Bat Yam, where I grew myself up, and then to Tbilisi, a new city full of adventures and my grandparents.

Even when I'm far from Israel, I remember the sea, the sandy beaches, I can hear Hebrew in my head and I didn't miss any movie in Hebrew even being away, and it makes me happy and a bit sad too. I love Israel and movies a lot. They help me dream and feel free.

Watching a movie is like going on a big adventure or visiting home, without even moving. It's really special. Once, I did something really brave because I believed in myself. I climbed over two school walls in Bat Yam school to go to Tel Aviv Dizengoff and then to Rishon LeTsyon Cinema City. It felt like a big adventure, showing me that I can make my own choices and find my own freedom.

My dream is to go back to Jerusalem with my mom, where I became myself. I have a great plan there, there is also a night cinema there. Then we can see dolphins in Eilat.

Faith tells me that no matter how far I am, my heart is still connected to Israel and the places I love. It's about feeling free, making my own choices, and knowing that Israel is the part of who I am, always lighting up my way back home.

Next Purim which is a birthday of my mom, I will wear a superhero suit and I will invent the time machine one day to be able to change the things.

37. PEACE

By Tali Meoded, 17, China,
Hong Kong, Carmel School

Embedded in songs, echoed in prayers and exchanged as a greeting, “Shalom”, translates to peace. Connoting wholeness and contentment, the Hebrew translation expands its meaning beyond “the absence of war and conflict” to a state of tranquillity.

In a tumultuous world filled with conflicts, injustices and inequalities, the clouds of hatred and pessimism seem to overshadow the vision of peace. We get lost, questioning when, how or if we will ever reach this tranquil shore.

The truth is we live in an imperfect world. A world where greed and poverty, freedom and oppression, peace and war coexist. Problems and challenges are an inevitable part of life, and while they may not always be within our control, our response to them always is. In the face of adversity, we can succumb to fear and hostility, perpetuating cycles of conflicts, or we can strive to be resilient and understanding, transcending societal divisions to progress as one.

Chasing a picture-perfect idea of peace in an imperfect world will only drive us further from it. The reality is the winds will never cease, the waves will never stop — problems will always arise. The true essence of peace lies in acceptance — acceptance of our own mistakes, failures and flaws, and acceptance of others despite differing beliefs, values and opinions. Only then, can we liberate our minds, work together and persevere against the relentless tides of life’s challenges.

By reminding ourselves that peace does not solely depend on policymakers drafting diplomatic agreements, but rather starts with ordinary people embracing the concept of Tikkun Olam – repairing the world through acts of kindness — our journey towards a brighter tomorrow becomes clearer and the tranquil shore seems much closer.

38. INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

By Estefanía Wolk, 30, Argentina, Buenos Aires,
Universidad del Museo Social Argentino

Security has acquired new contours, for peacekeeping has become a key element everywhere. Its growing importance as a peaceful intervention strategy within the United Nations framework increases its potential to contribute to a more cohesive and flexible culture of international security. However, any international treaties and conventions must first understand national and local realities, and know them fully, so that legislation and measures can be produced correctly and effectively. Any generic legal texts that are unaware of local realities are destined to fail.

Let's look at the case of Argentina. My country has a great debt to Judaism and has never effectively managed to mitigate the consequences of antisemitism. While it is true that there are laws against discrimination of any kind, and that many government agencies have adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism for use in combating Jew-hatred, this is not enough to eradicate acts of hate and violence.

Despite legislative advancements and inclusion policies, manifestations of hostility towards the Jewish community still persist. It is crucial that the Argentine legislative power not only creates laws to protect Jewish citizens but effectively implements them. Unfortunately, throughout history, my country has witnessed acts of hatred and violence directed towards the Jewish community, leaving deep scars on our society. Two of the most tragic events that have marked the Argentine Jewish community were the terrorist attacks against the Israeli Embassy in 1992 and the AMIA (Argentine Israelite Mutual Association) in 1994. These attacks claimed the lives of hundreds of people and injured many more, leaving a devastating impact on our lives and the nation's collective memory.

What is even more concerning is that, despite the years that have passed since these attacks, justice has not been able to fully identify or hold the perpetrators accountable. The lack of significant progress in the investigations of these crimes reflects systemic deficiencies and the impunity that prevails in the Argentine judicial system. It is particularly

outrageous and worrisome to note that there were instances in which high-ranking government officials were involved in covering up these attacks.

This level of corruption and lack of transparency undermines confidence in democratic institutions and perpetuates a sense of powerlessness and injustice within the Jewish community and society at large.

Another significant event was the massacre on October 7th in Israel, carried out by the terrorist organization Hamas, which involved the kidnapping of several individuals, including several Argentine nationals. Despite this, the state did not involve itself in negotiating the recovery of the hostages, whose fate remains unknown to this day. The Argentine Jewish community is strong and united and is constantly fighting for its rights and freedoms to be guaranteed, ensuring that both the aforementioned acts of terrorism and those that occurred during the Holocaust are not forgotten.

Antisemitism is not just a historical problem in Argentina; it is a global issue. It is something that has never ended, persists over time, and if different countries around the world do not act to stop it, both hate speech and acts of physical violence will continue. The lack of a strong response from the State to address these manifestations of hatred and protect the rights and security of the Jewish community is deeply troubling and reflects the urgent need for a more robust commitment to combating antisemitism.

As a lawyer committed to justice and human rights, I advocate for greater attention and action from Argentine authorities to ensure that justice is served for the attacks on the Israeli Embassy and the AMIA, and to prevent future acts of antisemitism. It is essential for the State to take responsibility for protecting all its communities and promoting an inclusive society free from hatred and discrimination.

39. TRADITION

**By Moshe Azoulay, 26, Algeria, Algiers,
Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne**

While being insulated geographically may be part of life in a small community, when connecting to our common values, the Torah and its teachings, we are truly part of a vibrant global community. With a beautiful past, and a promising future. By upholding traditions, observing rituals, and engaging in communal activities rooted in Torah teachings, young Jews can connect with their heritage, uphold their shared values, love all human beings, and pass down the legacy of their ancestors to future generations.

Being a young Jew in 2024 entails embracing the rich history of Torah values as a guiding light in a rapidly changing world. In today's dynamic society, the importance of upholding the principles outlined in the Torah has never been more crucial for young Jews seeking to navigate the complexities of modern life. Especially one as myself living in a very small Jewish community.

One fundamental aspect is the unwavering commitment to Torah values as the cornerstone of one's identity and actions. Embracing concepts such as kindness, compassion, justice, and ethical conduct laid out in the Torah provides a solid foundation for young Jews to navigate the moral challenges and dilemmas they encounter in their daily lives.

By grounding themselves in these timeless principles, young Jews can cultivate a sense of purpose, integrity, and spiritual connectedness that transcends societal norms and trends. Adhering to Torah values also serves as a powerful source of strength and resilience in the face of adversity.

In a world where antisemitism, prejudice, and social injustices continue to exist, young Jews who uphold Torah values are better equipped to stand firm in their convictions, advocate for positive change, and combat hatred with love and understanding.

The Torah's teachings on unity, community, and responsibility inspire young Jews to engage in acts of solidarity, repairing the world through acts of kindness, charity. Even when the world seems confused, those connected to an ancient truth can remain clear in their convictions.

Furthermore, promoting adherence to Torah values as the primary ethos for young Jews in 2024 fosters a sense of belonging and continuity within the global Jewish community.

40. HISTORY IS LIFE'S TEACHER

By Josef Eskenazi, 26, Switzerland,
Geneva, University of Geneva

The exact content of human rights must be interpreted in the light of history. Any excess leads to a poor result. History is the only witness to the past. From it derives an impartial perspective of the world. Dispassionate. The men who lived it have since died. What they left behind serves to teach us. The nature of history is not falsifiable. It is something that inexorably asserts itself. Despite the many people who try to falsify what happened in the past, the passage of time and the perspective of centuries puts everything in its place.

The Jewish perspective of history is very interesting because Judaism is a terrestrial religion. The first book of the history of humanity is Genesis and the second is Exodus. In them we learn that there are rights and rules that are vital to regulate the life of all people, without distinguishing eras, cultures, beliefs and places. Human rights and duties arise from an immaterial, transcendent and rational reality. The very laws of nature were not invented but discovered through research. From an etymological standpoint, the words history and research are linked.

The third, fourth and fifth books of human history are Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. They show the life in the desert of a people without a homeland. In addition to the Levite priests there were twelve tribes. With aspirations. With hope. With courage. But also in constant arguments and fights, up to and after the conquest of Canaan.

This was followed by a millennium of history. This magnificent time was filled with challenges. Saul tried to kill David. David was betrayed by a son. Solomon's kingdom was partitioned by his descendants. And then came the war. The Assyrians caused ten tribes to disappear. The Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem. As the Romans did, later. And the Jewish people wandered into exile, although many remained continuously in the lands of Judah.

The Diaspora offered another perspective. The Jews crossed paths with people from all over the world and today present features that are typical of peoples of all nations. But they were never welcome

anywhere. They always suffered persecutions and miseries. Save for relatively short periods of time, everywhere the Jews had less rights than native inhabitants and were always the scapegoats for social ills.

Those who were surprised by the events of October 2023 do not know their history. It repeats itself with the same fierceness, when the hatred is the same, when the state of mind is the same. This time, the cause was not religion as in the past. Neither was it race, as in the last century. The cause was the Jewish State. The cause will be something else altogether in the future.

The outline presented above shows how history is life's best teacher. My perspective of it is Jewish. No doubt all civilizations can produce similar exercises, with their own memories, for history has an absolute didactic nature. It shows the deeds, the conquests, the errors and disasters of the past, as well as the circumstances in which they all occurred. Those who do not know history will remain childlike forever.

IV – UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Preamble

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, therefore,

The General Assembly,

Proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11

Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13

Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14

Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15

Everyone has the right to a nationality.

No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16

Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17

Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.

No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to

seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20

Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association. No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21

Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country. The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23

Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity,

and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26

Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27

Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29

Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.