



Leonard Cohen Love Letters Up for Auction

Several years ago, Susan Jacoby, the half-Jewish (her term) writer, lecturer, and intellectual addressed an audience at San Francisco bookstore, the Booksmith. She was on the road promoting her new book, *The Age of American Unreason*, which was designed to be an unofficial follow-up to *Anti-intellectualism in American life* (1970) written by her mentor, Richard Hofstadter. During the subsequent question answer session, the conversation segued from the topic of her book to the lost art of letter writing. She expressed her concern for the future of the American biography because people rarely write personal letters anymore; that the glorious art of letter writing had been supplanted by the telephone, email and most recently, text messaging. An accomplished researcher, Jacoby pointed out public information



will continue to abound and even grow; but the inner workings and most intimate thoughts of the potential subject, has been found historically within their personal letters, to friends, associates and loved ones. As a reader, particularly interested in the biographies of successful persons, her words resonated with me. Some of the most wonderfully poetic words I've ever read were not found in a published book of poetry; but in the love letters Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett- Browning shared. For inspiring words of love, dedication and support;



Leonard Cohen and Marianne Ihlen

look no further than John and Abigail Adams, who combined wrote more than 1,200 letters to each other. If you are in an intellectually nimble state of mind; dive right into the correspondence between Simone De Beauvoir and Jean –Paul Sartre. For those in the pursuit of learning the ABC's of social justice and developing a deep understanding of how one can stay strong, stern, and focused on a goal, without the necessity of yelling, read the letters of Jackie Robinson. The baseball Hall of Famer, wrote countless moving letters to leaders throughout the country; including Dwight Eisenhower, Richard Nixon, John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and Barry Goldwater, imploring all to work together to bring an end to racism in America. When embracing the goal of reaching across the table and not simply preaching to the choir; consider the hundreds of letters then President Obama, who wrote letters to everyday Americans addressing their hopes, fears, anger and concerns. Few realize that every evening President Obama was given ten handpicked letters, that he would read and respond to; fewer still, know he did it for the entire eight years of his presidency.

Another collection of letters has recently been unearthed, the letters of Leonard Cohen. Cohen, the poet and musical Icon who died in 2016, wrote Approximately 50 letters to Marianne Ihlen, his one-time lover and early muse. Ihlen inspired such songs as “So Long, Marianne”, Hey, That’s No Way to Say Goodbye,”

Cohen and Ihlen met in 1960, shortly after Ihlen was abandoned by her husband Axel Jensen, a Norwegian poet and novelist. Ihlen became Cohen’s lover and muse. The couple lived together through most of the 60’s. Though they separated in 1968, they remained friends and Cohen continued to write her, from all over the world until her death from leukemia in 2016, a death that occurred less than a week after the diseases initial diagnoses.

50 of Cohen’s letters to Ihlen will be going up for auction at Christie’s auction house next month. The letters chronicle their love affair, the struggles he faced on the road to stardom, and their enduring friendship. The collection of letters is being put up for auction by, Marianne Ihlen’s family. Shortly before her death, Cohen sent her a letter that simply read, ““Endless love, see you down the road.”

Marianne Ihlen passed on July 28, 2016, Cohen passed a mere four months later, November 7, 2016, of the same affliction.



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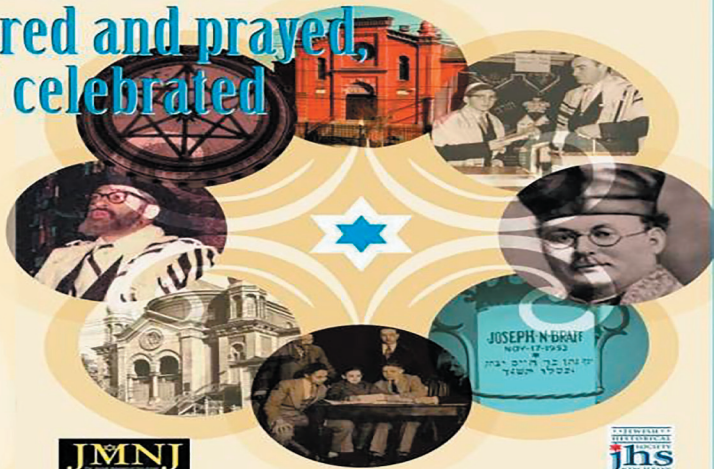
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Simon Says

Weekly insights from Rabbi Simon Rosebach



Rabbi Simon Rosenbach

This week's Torah portion, B'hukatai, contains the first recitation of the Tochachah, the list of curses that will befall the Israelites if they don't follow God's mitzvot. In Israel this week, perhaps some people think the curses have come true.

In Israel, voters do not vote for a person, they vote for a party. The acknowledged leader of the party that receives the most votes is charged with the responsibility to assemble a coalition, assuming that the party that receives the most votes doesn't have enough votes to muster 61 seats in the Knesset (which has never happened). (A couple of years ago, Israel experimented with a direct vote for the Prime Minister, but that experiment was discontinued.) In April, Israel held elections, and the Likud Party received the most votes, so Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was

charged with the responsibility of assembling coalition.


In Israel, politics is incredibly complicated. Netanyahu's coalition was assembled with right-wing parties, Ultra-Orthodox religious parties, and somebody named Avigdor Lieberman, who is the chairman of a party called Yisrael Beiteinu (meaning Israel is our house; Lieberman would happy to deport all Arab Israelis). Lieberman and Netanyahu have long had a contentious relationship, but Likud needed Yisrael Beiteinu in the coalition, along with smaller right-wing parties and the Ultra-Orthodox parties.

The deadline to form a coalition was this past Wednesday (May 22, 2019, yesterday as I write this), and Netanyahu failed to build a government. So, new elections are scheduled for September.

What was the problem? According to "Ha'aretz," the problem was that Lieberman offered a bill in the Knesset requiring yeshivah students to serve in the military (some yeshivah students do serve in the IDF, but yeshivah students are not subject to the draft). One faction of the Ultra-Orthodox party, United Torah Judaism, opposed the bill. Lieberman wanted the bill to be submitted as offered, the United Torah Judaism faction wanted the bill amended (I don't know how). Lieberman blames Netanyahu for failing to effect a compromise.

A Likud member of the Knesset, Miki Zohar, spearheaded a bill to dissolve the Knesset.

Otherwise, President Rivlin could have designated another person (i.e., a head of different party; the logical choice would be Benny Gantz, head of the Kahol Lavan party, which earned the same number of seats as Likud in April).

The Tochachah ends with a promise of redemption: God says, if you return to my ways, life will be good. I don't know what constitutes a good life to the majority of Israelis, but maybe this forthcoming election will be opportunity to change course to not cater to the religious right, and to rekindle the peace process (I know, it takes two parties to make peace). We say weekly a prayer for Israel, let it mean something in the coming months. 



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Whitefish in Garlic Sauce



Ingredients

4- (6-ounce) white fish filets (such as tilapia or Alaskan cod)

¼ - teaspoon salt

¼ - teaspoon black pepper

5 - tablespoons flour, divided

2 - tablespoons unsalted butter, divided

1 - tablespoon grapeseed oil

4 - garlic cloves, minced

1/3 - cup dry white wine

1/3 - cup chicken broth

2 - tablespoons fresh flat leaf parsley, finely chopped

1 - tablespoon lemon juice

Instructions

1 - Season fish filets with salt and pepper and sprinkle with 3 tablespoons flour on all sides.

2 - Heat a large pan over medium heat. Add 1 tablespoon butter and oil to pan. Stir to coat.

3 - Add fish to pan and cook for 2 minutes on each side or until cooked through and fish flakes when tested with fork. Transfer to a large plate and cover with aluminum foil to keep warm.

4 - Add remaining flour and garlic to pan. Cook for 2 minutes or until browned. Add wine and broth, stirring constantly bring to a boil. Cook for 3 minutes or until slightly thickened. Remove from heat and add remaining butter, parsley and lemon.

5 - Serve fish with a green salad or rice and top with garlic sauce.

Kiddush Sponsorship

Shabbat Services

Our congregant Herb Oppenheimer is still feeling under the weather. Please visit or give him a call. His phone number is 973-634-1902 . It is a mitzvah to visit the sick, even by telephone. Simon

Join us this Saturday for Shabbat services. Strangers, visitors, friends, old and new; our doors are open to you. Looking for a new home? New members are always welcome at Congregation Ahavas Sholom services starts at 9:00AM. Our congregation is open and welcoming, so feel free to pay us a visit.

Kiddush Sponsorship

Kiddush is \$150, which barely covers the cost of the lunch. Our goal is to have every Kiddush sponsored. To sponsor a Kiddush, email Rabbi Rosenbach or contact Alla Eicheldinger at Alla7815@yahoo.com. You can also help us by shopping, which doesn't cost any money, just a little time. We'll give you a list of items, you shop and we'll reimburse you.



Help Us Remodel Our Kitchen

It's been estimated it will take \$60,000 to properly renovate our kitchen.

April Modlinger, who has always been a pillar at Congregation Ahavas Sholom, has generously pledged \$10,000 to making this happen.

We have recently received another pledge for \$2,200, bringing the total to \$12,200.

With your help Congregation Ahavas Sholom will soon have a kitchen we all deserve.

Make your pledge today!