

illuminating the stories of three biblical women



Pictured above is an illuminated painting by Debra Band, a detail from the cover of her new book, *Arise! Arise! Deborah, Ruth and Hannah* (Honeybee in the Garden, LLC). Band interprets the tales of these three biblical women through imagery drawn from Jewish lore, academic Bible studies, archeology and science. Accompanying commentary by Band explains the symbolism and meaning of each painting. The volume also includes literary commentary by Arnold J. Band, a scholar of Hebrew literature, and a foreword by Adele Berlin. The resulting book is a beautiful collection of rich text and lovely artwork. For information, visit: [www.deborahruthandhannah.com](http://www.deborahruthandhannah.com). — E.E.B.

## INSIDE THE AJW:

Twin Cities Living / Pages 9-12

Wise Investing / Pages 13-15

The American

# Jewish World

VOICES OF MINNESOTA'S JEWISH COMMUNITY • FOUNDED JUNE 12, 1912

VOLUME 101 • NO. 9 • JANUARY 4, 2013 • 22 TEVET, 5773 • [www.ajwnews.com](http://www.ajwnews.com)

\$1.50

## Reform, AIPAC at odds

*Following the Palestinians' enhanced U.N. status, AIPAC moves to shutter PLO office in Washington while the Reform movement urges President Obama not to retaliate*

By RON KAMPEAS

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Two major Jewish groups have staked out opposing positions over the prospect of penalties for the Palestinians in the wake of their enhanced U.N. status.

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee in recent weeks has backed two congressional bids to at least shut down the Palestine Liberation Organization office in Washington in the wake of the Nov. 29 United Nations General Assembly's overwhelming vote that granted Palestinians nonmember observer state status.

Conversely, the Reform movement has emphatically urged President Obama not to retaliate against the Palestinians, JTA has learned. The Reform movement also has resolved to oppose the shuttering of the PLO office.

The lines dividing the two organizations are not necessarily set in stone. The Reform movement has suggested it might back penalties should the Palestinians use their new status to charge Israel in international courts. An AIPAC official suggested to JTA that the organization would wait and see whether the Palestinians go to international courts before it decides its next legislative moves.

Still, the markedly different tone in

AIPAC's call to its activists to back the proposed congressional penalties and the Reform movement's plea to the president to ignore such calls could portend a split within the pro-Israel community's center.

An AIPAC official, speaking on condition of anonymity, would not directly address differences with the Reform movement. But the



Robert A. Cumins / JFNA  
Reform leader Rabbi Rick Jacobs, shown speaking at the Jewish Federations of North America General Assembly in Jerusalem in November 2012, co-authored a letter to President Obama on eschewing action against the Palestinians that would damage efforts to renew peace talks.

official noted that the congressional letter to Obama that AIPAC backed this month urges a resumption of peace talks in addition to calling for the closing of the PLO office and a suspension of funding to U.N. affiliates that similarly enhance the Palestinians' status.

"Everyone in the pro-Israel community should be pleased that a solid bipartisan majority signed a pro-peace talks letter in support of direct talks and opposed to attempts to delegitimize Israel," said the official.

Israel has made clear that the Palestinians' U.N. moves should have consequences. It has announced a flurry of new building projects in eastern Jerusalem and the West Bank, and diverted millions of dollars in taxes earmarked for the Palestinian Authority to Israeli utilities providers that have been dunning the Palestinians for payment.

Michael Oren, the Israeli ambassador to Washington, was asked in an interview with Jewish media during the Hanuka holiday his view on congressional proposals to penalize the Palestinians. His answer suggested pique not just at the Palestinians' enhanced U.N. status but also at the speech by P.A. President Mahmoud Abbas that preceded the vote.

"We think that the Palestinians when they violate agreements, when they declare that Israel is a war criminal or when they describe Israel as a war criminal for defending itself against thousands of terrorist rockets without ever condemning

• PENALTY / see page 8

## Nechama comes to aid of Hurricane Sandy victims

*Minnesota-based Nechama steps in like 'angels from heaven'*

By SETH BERKMAN  
The Forward

More than a month after Hurricane Sandy swept ashore, Charlie Messler had all but lost hope of getting government help to rebuild the home that was originally built by his grandfather nearly six decades ago.

Desperate to restore the ruined ground floor, Messler considered selling part of his vintage car collection, which includes a pair of 1928 Chevys, to pay for the work.

But Messler, who is Catholic, first asked a local church and synagogue to put him in touch with private groups that might help.

Within days, a team from Nechama: Jewish Response to Disaster, a little-known Minnesota-based volunteer group, showed up at Messler's door. Along with volunteers from AmeriCorps, the team gutted the wrecked floor in two days.

"I think they're doing great," said Messler, 39, a school custodian who lives in the bungalow with his disabled

wife and their two children. "I saw immediately they were capable. They've helped out tremendously."

Nechama volunteers did the same at the South Baldwin Jewish Center, the United Synagogue of Hoboken, and more than 50 other houses and buildings in the New York area.



Photos by Ross Topol  
Volunteers working at the Boys and Girls Club in Hoboken, N.J.

Messler had never heard of Nechama. But even beneficiaries with a stronger connection to the Jewish community were mystified by the arrival of the largely unknown group that worked with pinpoint precision.

"I had never heard of them," said Stacey Eager-Leavitt, president of the South Baldwin Jewish Center, on Long Island. "I actually had to look into it after they came. They were like

knights in shining armor."

And, in an interview with WINS radio, Rev. Alexander M. Santora described the group, in helping to restore Our Lady of Grace Roman Catholic Church in Hoboken, N.J., "like angels descended from heaven."

• NECHAMA / see page 20

## Standing up, speaking out

*Moynihan's Moment: America's Fight against Zionism as Racism*, by Gil Troy, Oxford, 368 pages, \$29.95

Reviewed by NEAL GENDLER

Daniel Patrick Moynihan is one of my heroes, so I'm glad he's held in esteem by historian Gil Troy.

*Moynihan's Moment* refers to the late professor and senator's seven months as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, and particularly his ringing denunciation of U.N. Resolution 3379, declaring Zionism to be racism, on Nov. 10, 1975.

After its passage, Moynihan rose to call it a "terrible lie" and declare — twice — that the United States "does not acknowledge, it will not abide by, it will never acquiesce in this infamous act."

His passionate eloquence endeared him to Jews, but not to the State Department or its secretary, Henry Kissinger.

Troy, a McGill University history professor, is familiar to readers of the *Jerusalem Post* opinion pages. His generally laudatory book doesn't overlook Moynihan's faults and occasional missteps as a government official and presidential adviser, nor sharply negative statements by Moynihan critics. He was sworn in on June 30, 1975, by

President Gerald Ford, who backed his assertiveness despite Kissinger's complaints.

Moynihan blamed the Soviet Union as the real source of the resolution, Troy says. For the USSR, propagandizing Zionism as racism served several purposes: discrediting the United States, Israel's supporter; currying favor and influence with Arab and African countries; indulging historic Russian anti-Semitism, and supporting Soviet boasts as world bastion of anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism — despite its control of nations within its borders and in Eastern Europe.

The racism resolution "fused long-standing anti-Semitism with anti-Americanism," Troy says. "Criminalizing Zionism turned David into Goliath, deeming Israel the Middle East's perpetual villain with the Palestinians the perennial victims."

Equating Zionism with racism led to equating Israel with apartheid South Africa. Although U.S. pressure led in 1991 to revoking 3379's determination that Zionism is racism, both lies remain popular.

Troy says Moynihan believed that 3379 was wrong in asserting a racism that didn't exist and wrong-headed in condemning Israel with a vile label negating its legitimacy. The U.S. public — already fed up with America as world punching

• MOYNIHAN / see page 19

