

**SUKKOT REMINDS US THAT “IMPERMANENCE CAN BE GOOD
AND NECESSARY”**

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Isranet Daily Briefing, September 21, 2018

<https://www.isranet.org/daily-briefing/sukkot-reminds-us-that-impermanence-can-be-good-and-necessary/>

[The Blood of Slain Israelis Stains Many Hands](#): Melanie Phillips, *JNS*, Sept. 20, 2018— It’s often claimed by Western enemies of Israel that the military actions of the Israel Defense Forces against Hamas in Gaza are disproportionate because such actions kill Arabs while Hamas attacks don’t kill Israelis.

[Sukkot and Impermanence](#): Jeremy Rosen, *Algemeiner*, Sept. 21, 2018— In discussing the festival of Sukkot, the Talmud gives all the various possible explanations for the origin and purpose of a Sukkah.

[The NY Times: All the Fallacies it Considers Fit to Print](#): Dr. Manfred Gerstenfeld, *Arutz Sheva*, Sept. 16, 2018— More than two thousand years before the ancestors of any New York Times (NYT) editor — other than indigenous individuals — lived in America, the Jewish people already existed with their own sophisticated language, culture and religion.

[New Eichmann Film Puts the Lie to Hannah Arendt’s ‘Banality of Evil’](#): Alan Dershowitz, *Algemeiner*, Sept. 20, 2018 — One of the most notorious lines — and lies — that grew out of the trial of Adolph Eichmann for his important role in the Holocaust was what Hannah Arendt called the “Banality of Evil.”

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SUKKOT AND IMPERMANENCE

Jeremy Rosen

[Algemeiner](#), Sept. 21, 2018

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In discussing the festival of Sukkot, the Talmud gives all the various possible explanations for the origin and purpose of a Sukkah. Its final idea is that of impermanence. “Leave your permanent home, and live in a temporary home.” In many ways, impermanence is in our genes: Our wandering forebears. Our movable Tabernacle. Exile. Return. Impermanence really resonates with us.

We humans are indeed transient. We live our lives in constant tension between permanence and impermanence. We can be snuffed out in a flash. We are specks on the timeline of life. We are driven by a desire for life and the struggle to avoid death. There are wars, persecution, political change and upheaval, as well as illness, plagues, and natural disasters. Life is a struggle. We struggle to work, to live, to love. As a result, many of us feel insecure, depressed, and stressed.

We need certainties — to know where we stand, where we live and where we work, what country we are citizens of, what party, what religion, what sect within a religion. We yearn for permanence. Resolution. To know how the world works and the reason for everything. We need to feel we belong. We need to feel comfortable, secure, loved, wanted, admired, and respected. We pay fortunes to psychiatrists, therapists, gurus, coaches, and rabbis to give us the easy answers. And we take drugs, alcohol, and pills. Anything to help us cope and ease the pain. But there are very few certainties in life “except death and taxes” as Benjamin Franklin is supposed to have said.

Once upon a time, we knew what our positions were in hierarchies — in states, classes, in religions, in nations. We lived in a world where these defined most of us. A few people in each generation were able to move up and rise. Most stayed put. In a world of constant conquest and change, we have always been at the mercy of forces beyond our control. But now, we seem to want to control everything, everyone, every space, and every argument. We want to have everything: money, power, freedom to do as we please. Not to be challenged or offended.

We have indeed advanced dramatically, combating poverty and disease. The latest figure just published in *The Wall Street Journal* is that extreme poverty is now down to 10% (but that’s still too much). In Western countries, we have so much more than we used to. But that does not seem to bring much happiness or contentment. Look how angry and hypersensitive so many people have become, despite all the social welfare, safety nets, and preferences that never existed 70 years ago. Look how fractious identity politics has become, how aggressive the

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pressure groups. We have become neurotic when things don't happen just the way we want them to. Yet, for all that, I'd rather live in a world of uncertainty and choice than have dictators or ideological fanatics tell me what to do.

No system is perfect or permanent. Each has aspects that are positive. The one common feature of our present world is CapiSolism (my invented word) — the need for capital expansion and growth to fund the basic social needs of the poorest and the weakest. But that in itself is a variable. China has a command economy. It can do things better and faster, precisely because it can trample on individual wishes. America, on the other hand, values individual liberties and freedoms. But such liberties cause conflict, fragmentation, delays, and compromises. Both suffer from corruption.

To adapt Orwell, all states cause harm. Some states cause much more harm than others. Despite Fukuyama's unfortunate title *The End of History*, there is no end. It cannot end, because humans are constantly changing. There is no final, no perfect state. Only constant fluidity and cycles. Rises and falls. Situations that seem desperate one moment become successful and peaceful the next. War turns to peace and peace to war. My liberalism is predicated on hearing other views, examining other ideas, and listening respectfully to other views.

I embrace impermanence because that has been my life. I know many who have had it far worse — far more tragic and unstable than I. But I have never had a permanent home, a permanent country, or a permanent job. I have always been wandering in the desert and finding my shade where I can. I have always been aware of people who hate me for who I am and what I am. Even personal life has had its impermanence, its ups and downs, good moments and bad ones. I do not expect perfection or resolution. I only know I have to try cope. I am fortunate to be a very happy fellow.

This impermanence, I suggest, is why the Torah gives us no ideal political or even social system, or a perfect example of how to run societies. Because there is no perfect solution. Different circumstances call for different responses. We cannot control the world or societies. All we can do is our best. The Torah constantly reminds us of the need to behave, to think, to bring spiritual ideas to mind, to enrich our lives, while at the same time reminding us that we have the freedom and choice to make crucial decisions. (Even if, as Moses predicted, many of us will get it wrong, and disappear from our people and merge with others.)

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Sukkot is the festival of impermanence — throughout history, and now. How many will come and sit with us? How many will simply not be there? Sukkot reminds us that impermanence can be good. Perhaps not all the time. No one wants an impermanent marriage or impermanent children. But impermanence can be good and necessary too, if it helps us appreciate what we have and determine to preserve it...

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THE BLOOD OF SLAIN ISRAELIS STAINS MANY HANDS

Melanie Phillips

[JNS](#), Sept. 20, 2018

It's often claimed by Western enemies of Israel that the military actions of the Israel Defense Forces against Hamas in Gaza are disproportionate because such actions kill Arabs while Hamas attacks don't kill Israelis. That's apparently why the Western media ignore the thousands of rockets and aerial firebombs launched from Gaza to kill the residents of southern Israel, reporting instead IDF military action to stop such attacks as the wanton killing of civilians.

When an Israeli actually is murdered by an Arab in cold blood, however, this isn't reported as wanton killing of the innocent, if he happens to be the wrong sort of Israeli. Then it's suggested his murder is his own fault. The killing of American-born Israeli Ari Fuld on Sept. 16 has caused an outpouring of grief in Israel. The impassioned eulogies to him poured out not just because his wife, four children, parents and the rest of his family have been so cruelly bereaved.

It's because he was a brave and outstanding fighter for Israel and the Jewish people, and admired even by his political opponents on account of his warm nature. He devoted his existence to fighting a great evil to which he has now lost his own life. The Western media, however, don't count Ari Fuld as a victim at all because, as a resident of the Judean town of Efrat, he was a “settler.”

The murder of other Israeli residents of the disputed territories is similarly

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shrugged off or unreported by the Western media. For them, “settlers” are dehumanized and their lives reckoned as of no account. Thus their murder is, in effect, justified and condoned. This revolting attitude is all of a piece with the moral depravity of much of the West over the Arab war against Israel. Parroting the misleading mantra of a “two-state solution,” they deny the truths of history and law and ignore the real Arab agenda of colonial conquest and the extermination of Jewish nationhood.

For the supposed “settlers” are not in these lands illegally. They are entitled to be there. In the British Mandate for Palestine in 1922, the international community gave the Jews alone the right to settle what is now Israel, the “West Bank” and Gaza in recognition of the unique right of the Jews to recreate their ancient national homeland. The real occupiers are the Arabs. Over the centuries, they were among the waves of conquerors of the land of Israel, including Romans, Greeks, Selucids, Fatimids, Crusaders, Mongol tribes, Tartars, Mamelukes and the Ottoman Turks.

Those who today have invented for themselves a fictional “Palestinian” identity may not even have descended from the original Arab imperialists. Some may be the heirs of those who flooded into Palestine, many illegally, from neighboring Arab states on the back of the returning Jews in the early years of the last century. The historian William Ziff noted that the serial occupiers of Israel themselves brought in many other cultures. Ziff described the people of the land as a “human patch-work of Jews, Arabs, Armenians, Kalmucks, Persians, Crusaders, Tartars, Indians, Ethiopians, Egyptians, Sudanese, Turks, Mongols, Romans, Kharmazians, Greeks, pilgrims, wanderers, ne’er-do-wells and adventurers, invaders, slaves.”

To add to their historical and legal illiteracy, those shrugging aside the murder of Israeli “settlers” also turn a blind eye to the complicity in these crimes by the people they champion: the Palestinian Authority headed by Mahmoud Abbas. Through its educational materials and other media, the P.A. routinely incites hatred of Jews and the murder of Israelis, teaching its children that “all Israelis deserve to be killed and that dying while committing a terror attack is ‘the path to excellence and greatness ... the great victory.’ ”

The Arab writer Bassam Tawil has specifically blamed the murder of Ari Fuld by 17-year-old Khalil Jabarin on incitement by Abbas. According to Palestinian terrorist groups, Jabarin decided to murder a Jew in response to Israeli “crimes” against the Al-Aqsa mosque and other Islamic holy sites. Two days earlier, in a speech to the

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PLO Executive Committee in Ramallah widely reported in Arab media, Abbas had repeated the lie that Israel was planning to establish special Jewish prayer zones inside the Al-Aqsa mosque.

No mention of any of this in Western media. Nor the fact that the P.A. immediately said it would pay the Jabarin family 1,400 shekels per month (nearly \$400) for the next three years as a reward for Ari Fuld’s murder. According to the P.A.’s finance ministry, its total “pay-for-slay” budget amounts to 1.2 billion shekels (\$335 million) this year and last. Until now, the West as a bloc has been complicit in Arab violence against Israelis. Over the years, it has thrown money at the “Palestinians” in the pious hope that it would help build their society and thus promote peace. In fact, it has been used to help promulgate hatred and incite mass murder.

Now, U.S. President Donald Trump has called time on this appalling charade. The United States has cut its funding to the “West Bank” and Gaza, closed the PLO office in Washington, and set in train moves to abolish the United Nations Relief and Works Agency’s definition of Palestinian refugees. By defining that status as uniquely inheritable, UNRWA has ludicrously multiplied the number of “Palestinian refugees” down through the decades...

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THE NY TIMES: ALL THE FALLACIES IT CONSIDERS FIT TO PRINT

Dr. Manfred Gerstenfeld

[Arutz Sheva](#), Sept. 16, 2018

More than two thousand years before the ancestors of any *New York Times* (NYT) editor — other than indigenous individuals — lived in America, the Jewish people already existed with their own sophisticated language, culture and religion. This is still true today. Jewish peoplehood runs deep. The NYT understanding of this is, however, superficial to non-existent. Far worse, it denies self-determination to Jews to call themselves a people.

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On this Jewish New Year’s Holiday (Rosh Hashanah), the NYT published a front page article entitled “Education Department Reopens Case Charging Discrimination against Jewish Students.” This article attacked a decision by Kenneth Marcus, Assistant Secretary of Education for Civil Rights, to reopen an anti-Semitism case at Rutgers University. The NYT claimed that the US Education Department embraced Judaism as an ethnicity and adopted what it called a “hotly contested definition of anti-Semitism” that included “denying the Jewish people the right to self-determination” by, for example, “claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor” and “applying double standards by requiring of Israel a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.”

It is clear from this article that the NYT does not consider the existence of a Palestinian people contestable. Yet there was no such nationality even sixty years ago. The Arabs, in the British mandate of Palestine and after 1948 under Jordanian and Egyptian rule on the ‘West Bank’ and in Gaza respectively, saw themselves belonging either to tribes or to an international Arab nation or both.

Self-definition according to the NYT - a so-called “progressive” daily — seems okay for the Palestinians, but not for Jews. Such double standards are a typical hallmark of anti-Semitism. What the NYT calls a “hotly contested definition of anti-Semitism” is the widely accepted International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of this hate mongering. Its approval required the agreement of the thirty one Western democratic nations represented on its board. It was also specifically adapted for internal use by a number of nations and many institutions in the Western world. Furthermore, this definition can be found on the website of the US State Department.

Ira Stoll, a former Forward editor, discovered that on two other occasions the NYT had described the same definition as “internationally accepted.” The US media watch organization, CAMERA, has been exposing the NYT’s anti-Israeli bias for a long time. In 2014, I interviewed two senior analysts from CAMERA, Ricky Hollander and Gilead Ini for INN. They co-authored a major study on the unfair NYT coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Hollander and Ini said: “*The New York Times* is guilty of advocacy journalism. Both its editorial pages and news reporting lean heavily toward an anti-Israel perspective. This is in blunt contravention of its directive to journalists in the Ethical Journalism handbook, ‘to cover the news as impartially as possible’ and ‘tell our readers the complete, unvarnished truth as best we can learn it.’”

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Reacting to the article on the Rutgers case, Hollander and Ini exposed several expressions used by the NYT journalist that are largely identical to those used by virulently anti-Israeli pro-Palestinian organizations.

It would be a mistake to view the opposition of the NYT and several other media including the Los Angeles Times to the reopening of the Rutgers case as a stand-alone issue. Marcus, a lawyer, has a long record and profound knowledge concerning antisemitic discrimination. He is the founder and former president of The Louis Brandeis Center for Human Rights and the Law in Washington. This organization litigated against classic anti-Semitism and anti-Israelism on US campuses. When Marcus was confirmed in his post by the Senate in June 2018, not a single Democrat voted for him...

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NEW EICHMANN FILM PUTS THE LIE TO HANNAH

ARENDT’S ‘BANALITY OF EVIL’

Alan Dershowitz

[Algemeiner](#), Sept. 20, 2018

One of the most notorious lines — and lies — that grew out of the trial of Adolph Eichmann for his important role in the Holocaust was what Hannah Arendt called the “Banality of Evil.” Arendt was assigned to report on the 1961 trial of Eichmann in Jerusalem, but according to contemporaries, she rarely attended the trial itself. She came to Jerusalem having made up her mind in advance that Eichmann in particular and others involved in the evils of the Holocaust were ordinary banal functionaries. She reported on the trial with an agenda. It was not necessary for her to actually observe and listen to Eichmann because to do so would undercut her thesis. So instead she wrote a mendacious screed in which she constructed a stick-figure caricature of one of the most significant perpetrators of the Holocaust.

I use the word mendacious deliberately, because Arendt knew better. One of Hitler’s key supporters was Professor Martin Heidegger, perhaps the most influential philosopher of his day. Arendt was his student and lover. After the war she tried desperately to rehabilitate him. He was anything but banal. Nor were

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Göring, Goebbels, Himmler, Hitler, and the numerous doctors and lawyers who were tried at Nuremberg. Neither were the university students who began by burning Jewish books and ended by burning Jewish children. The perpetrators of the Holocaust — from those who organized it in Berlin to those who carried it out in the death camps and killing fields — included some of the most brilliant young men and women in the country. Many left university to participate in the “final solution” and then returned to highly prestigious jobs in post-war Germany.

Adolph Eichmann was anything but banal, as a perusal of the trial transcript reveals. In the film “Operation Finale,” he is played by Ben Kingsley. Although the film takes Hollywood liberties — a romance between a beautiful doctor who in reality was a man and the film’s Israeli hero — Kingsley’s fictional portrayal of Eichmann is far more realistic than the allegedly non-fiction account by Arendt.

The late Professor Telford Taylor — who was my teacher, mentor, colleague, and friend — had been the chief prosecutor at the Second Nuremberg Trials. He was invited to report on the Eichmann trial as well. He invited me along as his assistant and translator, but I had just been elected editor in chief at the Yale Law Journal and could not accept his offer — a decision I have long regretted. When he returned, he gave me his account of the trial, which varied enormously from that of Hannah Arendt. Where she saw banality, he saw calculation, manipulation, and shrewdness. These characteristics come through far more clearly in the film than in Arendt’s deeply flawed account. In the film we see a highly manipulative, shrewd judge of character who seeks to use his psychological insights to his advantage.

Nor was Arendt’s book *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*, the only effort by Germans to attribute banality and ignorance to the perpetrators of the Holocaust. In Bernhard Schlink’s award winning book *The Reader*, turned into a critically acclaimed film starring Kate Winslet, a woman who actively participated in the mass murder of Jews is presented as embarrassed by her illiteracy. Readers and viewers come away believing that she may have been more typical of hands-on perpetrators than the SS and Einsatzgruppen.

Deliberately distorting the history of the Holocaust — whether by denial, minimization, unfair comparisons, or false characterizations of the perpetrators — is a moral and literary sin. Arendt is a sinner who placed her ideological agenda above the truth. To be sure, there are untruths as well in “Operation Finale,” but they are different in kind rather than degree. Some of the drama and chase scenes

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are contrived, but what else can be expected of Hollywood. What is important is that Eichmann is presented in his multifaceted complexity, in the manner in which Shakespeare presented Iago, Lady Macbeth, and many of his other evil villains — not as banal, but as brilliantly evil.

It is essential to the memory of the victims of the Shoah, as well as to future efforts to prevent recurrences of genocide, that we not engage in ideologically driven and historically false oversimplifications such as “the banality of evil.” That mendacious and dangerous phrase should be struck from the historical vocabulary of the Holocaust and the trial of Eichmann, lest we look in the future for banality and miss the brilliance of those who would repeat Eichmann’s crimes.

CIJR Wishes All Our Friends & Supporters: Shabbat Shalom!

No Daily Briefing Will Be Published Monday or Tuesday Because of the Sukkot Holiday

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[Sukkot \(Feast of Tabernacles\) Guide for the Perplexed, 2017: Yoram Ettinger, Ettinger Report, Oct. 4, 2017](#)—The holiday of Sukkot (the Feast of Tabernacles) is dedicated to the study of the Book of Ecclesiastes, which was often quoted by the late Senator Robert Byrd, the longest serving Senator and Member of Congress in US history, who was known to quote Biblical verses.

[Mahmoud Abbas: Fresh American Blood on His Hands: Bassam Tawil, Gatestone Institute, Sept. 17, 2018](#)—In a speech before the PLO Executive Committee in Ramallah on September 15, Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas repeated the old libel that Israel was planning to establish special Jewish prayer zones inside the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Abbas claimed that Israel was seeking to copy the example of the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron, where Jews and Muslims pray in different sections.

[New York Times Stumbles in a Strange Front-Page Antisemitism Story: Ira Stoll, Algemeiner, Sept. 12, 2018](#)—A front-page New York Times news article appears

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under the headline “U.S. Revives Rutgers Bias Case In New Tack on Anti-Semitism.”

[UK Jews: Unity at any Price: Isi Leibler, *Israel Hayom*, Sept. 17, 2018](#)—The list of 50 Most Influential Jews published by The Jerusalem Post included Marie van der Zyl, the recently elected president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews. Van der Zyl is a feisty, committed Zionist and has followed in the path of her predecessor, Jonathan Arkush, in publicly confronting and condemning the anti-Semitism and vile behavior of Labour party leader Jeremy Corbyn.