

THE CHARLOTTE JEWISH NEWS

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Charlotte Jewish Federation..... Michael L. Minkin, Director
 Foundation of Charlotte Jewish Community &
 Jewish Community Center..... Barry Hantman, Director
 Lubavitch of N.C..... Rabbi Yossi Groner, Director
 Editor..... Rita Mond
 Advertising..... Blanche Yarus

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Editorial**Let's Remember Kristallnacht Together!**

Judaism is a religion that stresses remembrance — zakhor. We are admonished in the Bible to "remember Amalek," and along with Amalek goes Haman, Titus, and all the others who have persecuted and murdered Jews over the centuries. The Holocaust was an inhumanity towards man; 6 million Jews were slaughtered along with 5 million others. We can not forget this atrocity; we must not forget this terrible blot in history; we must see to it that it does not occur again.

The Holocaust is something that did happen...it happened in our lifetime and in the lifetime of our children...there are still parents and grandparents who can talk about it. However, they will not be around us much longer. Because of that, it is imperative that we teach our children and their children about this catastrophic event that has no parallel. We must expose them to the history, culture and psychology of the event; we must let the world not forget what happened in Europe during the '30s and '40s!

On November 9 at 7:45 p.m. there will be a commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Kristallnacht, the "night of broken glasses," the opening salvo of the greatest Jewish tragedy of all time. I urge each and every one, adult and child, in our entire Charlotte community to attend this service. This is a small way that we can show our empathy for the survivors and victims...a way in which we can show our concern for other human beings.

— Rita Mond

Excavation Reveals Philistine Palace

JERUSALEM (JTA) — A building of monumental stature, possibly a Philistine palace, is currently being excavated in one of the largest biblical-period archaeological sites uncovered in Israel.

The site, known as Tel Miqne, is located on the site of the former city of Ekron, one of the five city-kingdoms of the Philistines.

The Philistines controlled the south-central coastal area of Israel from about the 12th century BCE until their cities were destroyed some 600 years later by the Babylonians.

Archaeologists from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research located Tel Miqne while working in the fields of Kibbutz Revadim, which is near Ashdod.

The Philistine building, with some 300 square yards in size uncovered so far, lies in what is believed to have been the city-center, spanning some 25 acres. It has been dated back to the 11th century BCE.

Inside the building, diggers found an intact iron knife with

bronze rivets and an ivory handle. Archaeologists believe the knife, not an ordinary utensil, may have been in the possession of an important person or perhaps was used in cult practices.

During this year's excavations, the 103rd olive oil production building was uncovered in the former city of Ekron, making it, according to archaeologists the largest food industrial processing operation in the ancient world.

This number of installations would have been able to produce over 1,000 tons of olive oil per year, it is estimated.

The excavations were headed, as they have for the past five years, by Professor Trude Dothan of the Hebrew University Institute of Archaeology, and Professor Seymour Gitin of the Albright Institute.

Funding for the project at Tel Miqne for the 1988 season came from the two universities involved in the digs, as well as Boston College, Brown University, the Lehigh Valley Center for Jewish Studies, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and the University of Lethbridge.

In the Aftermath....

By Rabbi Marc Wilson

Our recent dialogue with Mayor Myrick on the role of religion in public life was an interesting and memorable forum, but not exactly a high point in the annals of community relations. There is little to be gained by assessing fault or laying blame. Let it suffice to say that we were all participants in an extraordinary breakdown of communications. In the aftermath, there are a few things that I would like to say, or reiterate, to the Mayor, the Jewish community and the community at large. I speak from no "official" position, but only as a constituency of one.

First, I do not in any way question the Mayor's good intentions in trying to unite all people of goodwill in what Dr. King called a "beloved com-

Jewish theocracy upon Israel as they are of the imposition of a Christian theocracy upon the United States.

Second, with regard to the specific nature of the Mayor's Prayer Breakfasts: Non-Christians will never feel entirely "included" in any public gathering at which prayers of a distinctly Christian nature are the center of the agenda. The fact that Christian prayers are offered at the Mayor's Breakfast, however, does not bother me anywhere nearly as much as do two unspoken assumptions that the Breakfasts make about the role of religion in public life:

1. The premise of the Mayor's Prayer Breakfasts is that the primary contribution of religion to social wellbeing is prayer, and that prayer necessarily means an appeal



munity." To the contrary, the Mayor's credentials in the struggle for understanding and social justice are impeccable. I have never heard anyone in the Jewish community second-guess the Mayor's sincerity or motivations in interjecting her strong religious convictions into the fabric of public life. Unfortunately, motives and good intentions are not the end, but merely the beginning, of the processes that make for a beloved community. The best of motives and intentions must be carefully scrutinized for their ultimate results, because, bluntly, sometimes ideas that seem good do not turn out to be good. Our tradition teaches that the truly wise person is not necessarily the one of pure motives, but the one who is able to see the lasting consequences of his or her actions.

When Jews (and, I would like to believe, all people of goodwill) behold attempts to impose a religious context on secular issues of public governance, we instinctively react with uneasy wariness. That wariness is not born of paranoia or hypersensitivity. It is born of a long history of pain and oppression that stems from the ease with which religion has been co-opted to do the sinister bidding of demagogues, tyrants and despots. Most Jews that I know, by the way, are just as wary of the imposition of a

for direct Divine intervention in the course of human events. Many responsible members of our religious community would certainly disagree with that premise. Many of us, including many devout Christians, are steeped in a tradition that believes that the primary contributions of religion to the commonweal are wisdom, transcendent perspective and moral guidance. We believe that prayer is not an end in itself, but a rehearsal while "waiting in the wings" for the real role that God has for us to play on the stage of life. Many of us embrace a theology in which prayer for direct Divine intercession subverts the idea of God and His children working together in covenantal partnership. We pray not for God to miraculously re-order our lives, but for determination, willpower and guidance to do those things that God expects us to take on as our human responsibility.

Particularly troublesome about the Mayor's Prayer Breakfasts is the idea of a public official reading a list of concerns that more than vaguely resembles her communal platform — regardless of how noble it may be — and asking that those gathered pray for Godly intervention to hasten its ratification. The broad implication is that we will tell God how we have decided His world should be

run, and He will obediently answer "Amen." To many of us, this is a shameful abuse of prayer, if not downright heresy. We should be praying to God for the insight necessary for establishing a fair and decent civic agenda, not to rubberstamp approval on an agenda we have already determined was right.

2. Prayer Breakfasts, and the entire impetus to mingle religion with political processes, take off from the premise that the religious community and political leadership should work together in cohesive, harmonious partnership. That has a nice ring to it, and it certainly holds more than a modicum of truth. But, it denies the even more crucial "prophetic" role that religion and religious leadership must play in social advancement. The Judeo-Christian tradition warns those of religious inclination to keep a healthy distance from those in positions of political power. Drawing too close might compromise the position of moral autonomy that religious leaders need to be gadflies and critics of corruption, abuse and social injustice, in the great prophetic tradition of Nathan, Elijah, Amos, Jeremiah and Jesus of Nazareth.

The integrity of both religion and political processes is seriously threatened when religious leaders become yes-men for the politically powerful, or when political leaders are patsies of the religiously influential. Back in the days of Nixon's "Imperial Presidency," Gary Wills commented about a national religious celebrity who will remain unnamed, "It is well to remember that real prophets are ridden out of countries on a rail, not invited to preside at their National Prayer Breakfasts." As appealing as it sounds for religion and politics to work together hand-in-glove, it is even more important that there be a little healthy skepticism and distance so that each may challenge the other in its inevitable desire to become overly powerful and manipulative.

All told, I have great admiration for Mayor Myrick, her motives, intentions, idealism and even (most of) her agenda. Her religious fervor should be admired, not scorned. But, her religious fervor must be tempered by a deeper sensitivity for the justifiable concerns of all members of her constituency. It must be modulated by a sharper awareness of the diversity of opinions that is operative even within our religious community.

And, above all, it must be tempered by a desire to draw upon the wisdom of our respective religious heritages in ways more substantial than convening a conglomerate of well-meaning people for scrambled eggs and sectarian prayers for Divine intervention in the human give-and-take of building a healthy community. Otherwise, despite the best of intentions, the people of our community are likely to become even further divided and polarized, rather than united in a transcendent agenda for the common good.

— Special Deadlines —

For December
Nov. 7

For January
Dec. 5