

## Judgment at Nuremburg: A Purim to Remember

By Ralph Buntyn

On October 16, 1946, ten of the highest-ranking Nazi officers of Hitler's Germany were put to death. Three more were given life sentences (Rudolf Hess, the last surviving relic of the trials, died in Spandau Prison in 1987 at the age of 93), four were imprisoned for up to twenty years, and three were acquitted.

After 216 court sessions the International Military Tribunal convened specially for this purpose, disbanded itself and later in that day the ashes of the men responsible for the Holocaust were scattered into a little brook in Munich-Solln, and thereupon vanished forever. The true horror of Nazism had been revealed to the world every day for almost a year, and now the grimmest chapter in the history of the civilized world was all but closed. While the ashes of Hitler's top politicians and officers have disappeared into oblivion, not many people are aware of a more divine significance of this historic event, one connected to an episode in Persia over 2,500 years ago. When King Ahasuerus, then the most powerful man on earth, offered to grant Queen Esther whatever she desired for having saved his life, she replied, "If it please the king, let it tomorrow also be granted to the Jews who are in Shushan to do according to the law of this day, and let the 10 sons of Haman be hanged on the gallows."

This is a remarkable request since Haman's 10 sons had already been killed by the sword in the citadel of Susa (Esther 9:6-14). Nevertheless, in accordance with Esther's wishes, their 10 dead bodies were hanged. In the Apocryphal Greek version of Esther, chapter 9 verses 13-14 reads: And Esther said to the king, "Let the Jews be allowed to do the same tomorrow. Also, hang up the bodies of Haman's 10 sons." So he permitted this to be done and handed over to the Jews of the city the bodies of Haman's sons to hang up.

When the Megilla Esther was written, the names of the 10 sons of Haman who were hanged are enumerated. In the Hebrew text, the letters of the names are several times larger than the regular text. Yet, in the first, seventh, and tenth entries in the list there are three letters: Shin and Zayin which

and tenth entry in the list, there are three letters; **l**av, **ש**נין and **ל**ayin which are only one-half the size of the regular text. This mysterious order has been followed ever since. The numerical value of the three diminished letters equals 707.

The Nuremberg Trials ended on October 1, 1946, which corresponded with the Jewish year of 5706. However, the due process of law meant the sentences of the convicted men could not be passed down until after appeals for clemency, of which there were many, had been heard. Finally, the sentences were pronounced. The Jewish New Year had arrived in the interim-it was 5707.

Twelve Nazis were meant to hang-although the method of execution might equally as well have been the firing squad-but Martin Bormann had escaped at the end of the war and was sentenced to death in absentia, and Herman Goering committed suicide two hours before his destined execution, leaving 10 condemned men.

In the early hours of October 16, 1946, during a 90 minute period, these 10 top Nazis went to their death on the gallows. The guards, with precise, ruthless efficiency brought them in one by one to deliver their last words and die. Only Julius Streicher went without dignity. His appearance happened at 2:11 a.m. He had to be pushed across the floor, wild-eyed and screaming, "Heil Hitler!" Mounting the steps, he cried out: "and now I go to God." He was pushed the last two steps to the mortal spot beneath the hangman's rope. Streicher swung around to face the witnesses and glared at them. Suddenly he screamed "Purim Fest 1946!" Then he was hanged.

The Megilla Esther had predicted that just as these 10 sons, descendants of Amalek and enemies of the Jews, were hanged, so again in the year 5707 (1946) would 10 other children of Haman be hanged.

The day of the early morning executions the front page headlines of the October 16, 1946, Late City Edition of The New York Times broke the story of what had just happened. In another strange twist, this was the day of Hoshana Raba.

"...On the seventh day of the Sukkot Holiday (Hoshana Raba), the judgment of the nations of the world is finalized. Sentences are issued from the residence of the King. Judgments are aroused and executed on that day." Zohar Vayikra 31b

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## The Joy of Purim!

by Elisheva Tavor aka Betty Tavor Givin

Here is another article in my series...hope you will read and enjoy! PURIM is right around the corner! We are at that time and season again, but this year is special...read on and find out why!

***All of the months are interrelated, each connecting to the next in the cycle of the seasons, the 'round' of the year...set up by The Creator from the beginning for our benefit to make up what we call time...like a beautiful string of pearls...each is significant to the whole...and each carries within it a special spark that lies hidden beneath the surface.***

The month of Adar is no exception. According to the sages when Adar comes we are to increase our joy, our simcha; but this year is special...it is a Hebrew leap year, a pregnant year called Shanah Me'Uberit, so we have two whole months to increase our joy!

It is in this month that we celebrate the wondrous Festival of Purim which is considered the most joyous of all the holidays! But how does one go about increasing the joy? Do we have a "joy button" we can press?

For starters the story of Purim recorded in the Book of Esther is one filled with miracles...hidden miracles...ones that are masked or concealed within the events of the story...miracles that when revealed burst forth like sparks that have been hidden beneath the surface...miracles that bring joy immeasurable!

To order to understand the fullness of this joy we must delve into the

in order to understand the ruiness of this joy, we must delve into the background of the story and the events leading up to it...the story behind the masks... the whole "megillah" as it is recorded in the Book of Esther.

## The Story

The Book of Esther takes place in Persia in approximately the year 357 BCE during the time of the Babylonian exile of the Jewish people from their homeland. It recounts the story of a very brave and courageous young Jewish woman named Hadassah whose name in Hebrew means myrtle. After having lost her parents she was raised by her cousin Mordechai. By a series of seemingly random events young Hadassah was taken to the palace of King Achashverosh where she was chosen to be his wife in place of Vashti whom he had ordered to be killed after she refused to obey his summons. Young Hadassah became Queen and became known as Ester in the Persian court.

Soon afterwards the king's adviser Haman persuaded King Achashverosh to hold a public execution for Mordechai the Jew because of his refusal to bow down to him (Haman). He also influenced the king to declare an edict that all the Jews in the realm be exterminated. Warned of this plot by Mordechai, this amazing young woman Ester, singlehandedly was able to save her people at the risk of her own life and turn the wicked plan of Haman on its head by having him along with his 10 sons hung on the same gallows that he had planned for Mordechai. Remember that little monkey introduced in Adar Part 1?

This wicked plan to exterminate the Jewish people is brought to mind every year on Shabbat Zachor (the Sabbath of Remembrance) which immediately precedes Purim. The theme is "remembering to forget" Amalek, the named arch enemy of the Jewish people from generation to generation, referred to in Exodus 17:16 as the "**hand against the throne**", the same one who once again reared his ugly head in the personage of Haman, the villain in the Purim story. In Deuteronomy 25:17 Moshe recounts the evil deeds of Amalek, and strongly urges the people to "**blot out the remembrance of Amalek** from under heaven," and adds "**thou shalt not forget.**"

When the evil Haman wished to destroy the Jewish people he held a lottery to determine the most opportune date to carry out his wicked scheme. The lot called a **pur** fell on the 12th month of Adar (hence the name of the festival, Purim, Ester 9:26). The Talmud tells us that he was delighted, for what a better month to annihilate the Jews than Adar, the month which according to Jewish tradition, Moshe passed away? Surely, he thought, no month could be lower for the Jewish people (Talmud. Megillah 13b)

But wait, there's more! What Haman did not know was that according to this same Jewish tradition, Moshe not only died on the 7th day of Adar, but was also born on that selfsame day! The Jewish sages relate that the day of Moshe's birth helped avert the evil decree and as a result instituted it as a



...and as a result, instituted it as a fast day in memory of Moshe. There is a special tikun for the 7th of Adar that is found in the "Seder for the 7th of Adar", the Jewish Prayer Book.

The Jews were triumphant over the Persians. The majority of the battles took place on 13 Adar. The Jews rested and celebrated on the following day, 14 Adar. In the capital city of Shushan, however, where there were a greater number of Jew-haters, the fighting continued for two days, 13 and 14 Adar. The victory celebrations in Shushan were thus held on the 15th.

***"The Jews took it upon themselves, and their descendants and all who joined themselves to them that they should unfailingly keep these two days according to their writing and according to their appointed times every year and that these days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province and every city..."***

Esther 10:27).

## **The Hidden Message of Purim**

Purim, ***Yom ha Purim*** is related to Yom Kippur. In fact Purim has been designated ***Yom Kippur Katan*** or a "little" Yom Kippur, as both have to do with ***covering*** on one hand and ***revealing*** on the other which calls for introspection leading one to shuv... to return to who they are and to connect to the Creator. Rabbi Isaac Luria of the 16th century asserts that the true name of Yom Kippur is ***Yom Ki Purim***. At first glance these two festivals ***appear*** like polarized opposites...one day we spend fasting and praying and communicating with our Creator on a spiritual level and the other day we dress up in costumes and celebrate by eating, drinking with our friends on a more physical level; yet both levels serve to deepen our connection to HaShem.

The Book of Esther and the festival of Purim are all about ***masks and hiddenness***, but also about revelation. As we take a closer look into the events of the story we find that in order to reveal the characters for who they really are, that it becomes necessary to peel off the masks.

The meaning of very name Ester, the heroine in our story, alludes to the ***mask*** she wears and the theme of ***hiddenness*** within the Biblical book named after her. The Hebrew root of Ester is ***satar*** which means to hide or conceal. That way the name Ester would have sounded like ***I Am Hidden***.

Surprisingly there is no reference to the name of HaShem within the text; for even He is ***masked...hidden***...yet we see from the events recorded in the story that He is definitely working behind the scenes, just as He is working behind the scenes in our lives today.

## **Megillat Ester- Hidden & Revealed**

The **scroll** containing the Book of Esther is referred to as the **Megillah**. The root of **Megillah is gillah** which means **rolled**. The Megillah, **a rolled scroll**, has the connotation of its contents and message being hidden; yet as it is unrolled, read and HEARD, it is **revealed!** Therefore, Megillat Esther sends a special message in its name alone, for it is a message of Revealing the Hidden!!!

## **Ester's Challenge and her Courage**

After having made her decision to risk her own life and go before the king without being summoned to plead in behalf of her people, she enlists their help by asking them to join her in a 3 day fast for her. There is a gripping story in the Talmud about her walking down a long corridor on her way to the throne room to see the King. It tells of the formidable tall wooden statues that reach to the ceiling on either side of her. Towering over her, these idols of the king whisper to her, "**you are going to die, you are going to die**"... over and over! What did she do? Fear can paralyze...hold that thought of Queen Ester in your mind....

Now imagine yourself going walking down a path...you are on an important mission that you have promised to undertake. All of a sudden, you stop dead in your tracks...frozen...because directly ahead of you is a giant black panther perched on a rock, appearing as though he is just seconds away from taking a giant leap right at you! What do you do? Do you turn your back and run which would mean sudden destruction or do you stand your ground and face that fearsome creature? You squeeze your eyes shut momentarily and breathe a prayer...and when you open your eyes, the panther has vanished along with your fear!

Now go back to Queen Ester as she walks down that long corridor with the tall wooden idols towering over her on either side of her telling her she is going to die...What do you think is going through her head? She knows that if she retreats, she and all the Jews in Shushan will perish under the wicked decree of Haman. Perhaps she is thinking of her Uncle Mordechai's words to her a few days earlier

***"Do not think in your heart that you shall escape in the king's house any more than all the other Jews. For if you remain silent at this time, then shall relief and deliverance arise to the Jews from elsewhere; but you and your father's house will perish; and who knows whether you have not come to royal estate for such a time as this"*** (Esther 4:14)

She knows that has no choice but to face her fears and continue on her mission. Perhaps she too squeezes her eyes shut momentarily, goes inside herself as her own words reverberate in her head, ***"I will go before the king even though it is against the law and if I perish, I perish."*** (Ester 4:16)

Perhaps she remembers the comforting words of King David in Psalm 3:4-5

***"Thou O G-d art a shield about me, You're my glory, You're the lifter of my head!"***

She is then able to draw on her **emunah** (faith) and fortitude, as she calls to mind the "**adeir**", the strength and power inherent in the very name of the month of Adar...the strength and power that her G-d has promised to give her. She walks forward armed with the knowledge that her G-d is with her... the king extends his golden scepter, she bravely reveals her hidden Jewish ancestry, exposes Haman and his evil plan and is able to reverse the edit of the King against the Jews and save her people from annihilation, thus fulfilling her purpose.

The unholy feast of King Achashverosh orchestrated by the evil Haman to celebrate the execution of Mordechai and annihilate the Jewish people then becomes **nahafochu**, turned around and inside out, transforming it into a holy feast of joy and celebration. Haman's **mask** had been ripped off, his evil plan exposed and **revealed** and turned on its head, because this "**hidden**" one Ester in obedience to the promptings within her heart, took courage, and came forth to be **revealed** and fulfill her purpose at just the right time.

This was a dark time in Jewish history and a personal dark time in the lives of Mordechai and Queen Ester. But as the scroll is **unrolled and revealed**, we see how each of these dark moments when viewed in isolation appear as though it is all over for the Jewish people, yet it is not; for what you see on the surface is not what you get. Each moment and each event, even the ones that may appear trivial and unrelated, when seen together, become part of a bigger story...a story behind a story...this is the **Whole Megillah** and reflects one of the most powerful themes of Purim

## **A King's Sleep is Disturbed**

One such example which on the surface seemed random and trivial occurred the night before Mordechai was to be hanged on the gallows. It is recorded in Ester 6:1 and reads, ***"On that night the king's sleep was disturbed, so he commanded the record of the book of chronicles to be brought; and they were read before the king."*** It 'just so happened' (or did it just so happen?) that the king had a sleepless night and the portion read to him that night related an event several years prior of Mordechai saving the king's life by exposing a plot to kill him. As a result Mordechai was saved from death and was honored by becoming second in command to the king in place of Haman who was soon to be exposed for who he was. How incredible is it that one man's sleepless night changed the course of history and led to the events that followed resulting in an entire nation being saved from destruction.

Rabbi Yaakov-Halevi (1360-1437) referred to as the Maharil notes the major significance of this twofold event when he points out that on Purim the



reader of the Megillah raises his voice when he begins to read the words, **"On that night the king's sleep was disturbed."** What if the king had slept peacefully?

Rabbi Jacobson in his writing for the Meaningful Life Center points out that the Purim story –and the story behind the story teaches us how to look at our lives in a completely new and revolutionary way. To illustrate he quotes the Talmud: **"One who reads the Megillah backwards has not fulfilled the mitzvah."** He then asks a question as to why anyone would want to read the story backwards? He continues by, giving the explanation of the Baal-Shem-Tov. **"Anyone who reads the Purim narrative as if it happened back when in the past (in effect, reading the story with the end being closer to us than the beginning), has not fulfilled the mitzvah, which demands of us to read and see the story as if it is unfolding and playing itself out today, from the beginning of the story till its conclusion."**

## Our Challenge

Rabbi Jacobson continues, "The story of Purim is the story of our lives. Our lives, just like the Purim narrative, are driven by a hidden script, which is hard to recognize at the time, but in retrospect patterns emerge as we discover the underlying narrative that leads to salvation. A bigger picture takes shape from the connecting dots of seemingly disconnected events, including the smallest details, that we may completely ignore and disregard due to their triviality. Imagine: A man can't fall asleep and the destiny of a people is changed forever! How many other quirky details in existence are affecting our very lives as we speak?"

This is definitely something to think about. The story of Purim where the name of HaShem is never mentioned illustrates the idea that we only see the Providence of G-d in our lives by looking backwards, but we must continue to live our lives forward. This takes courage for we must transcend the moment in order to get a bird's eye view, one that will enable us to see the connecting thread...the thread that binds all of the fragments of our individual journeys together...what is **hidden** is then gradually **revealed**, but all in HaShem's perfect timing!

The story of Purim is a lesson in emunah, in faith. In the Kabbalistic commentary on the Book of Eichah or Lamentations, Bochim and The Crying Voice, we find these incredibly encouraging words that we need to let sink deeply into our hearts, **"Everything, no matter how seemingly bad, has the ability to turn around."**

Like Queen Ester, we each have our "megillah" complete with our own set of fears and challenges, yet within those fears and challenges, we have a G-d given purpose, one that may at times appear hidden, but one that in time will be revealed and one that belongs solely to us. Our individual purposes may not appear on the surface to be as grandiose as that of Queen Ester, but nevertheless we can learn from her and the story presented here in the

nevertheless, we can learn from her and the story presented here in the Megillah because we are often not aware of the significance that our seemingly small part will play into His grand scheme of things.

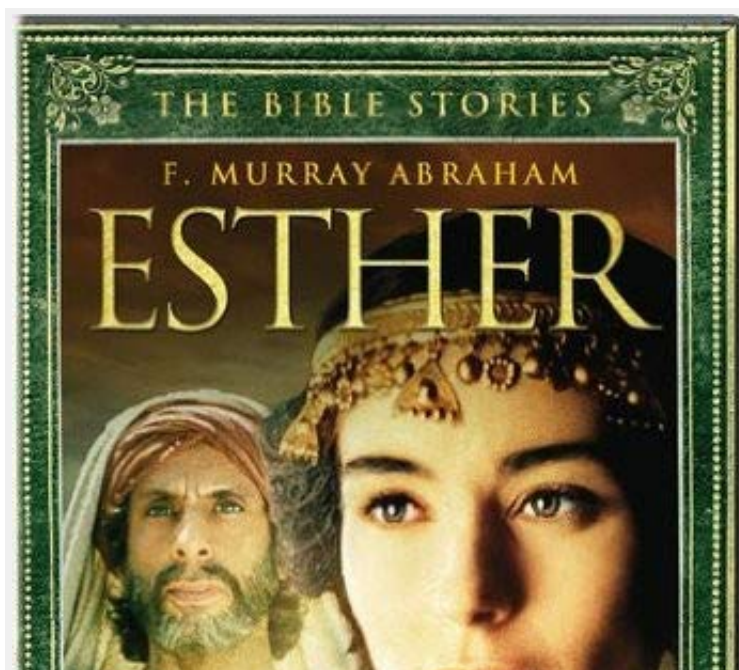
Purim, says Rabbi Jacobson is "the celebration of our inner child" It is a day of what he calls "joyous abandon," a day we are to celebrate "**ad de lo yado**" which means to be joyous until you reach a place beyond the doors of perception." Joy is contagious! On Purim we wear masks, dress up in costumes listen to the Megillah, dance and sing and participate in a Purim festivity meal, send food gifts to friends, and give charity to the needy. (Ester 9:26)

All these things are for the purpose of bringing forth joy from our own hearts and spreading it to others...and inherent in the joy we find strength (Nehemiah 8:10 )

May HaShem give you the strength to see your inner child, the strength to access that inner joy, and to celebrate knowing that His Presence is always with you! It is as if He is saying, "I am here now in your present circumstance as I have been all along, and I will always be here for you...not just when the sea splits, or when My presence overwhelms you, but when you choose to see me."

So open your eyes and choose to see Him every day! Go into the secret place, into the chambers of your heart, enter into the Torah, enter into the serenity and the joy of feasting and loving friends and family...enter into the **JOY of PURIM** and release those hidden sparks that lie just beneath the surface!

**"The Jews had light and gladness and joy and honor"** (Ester 8:16) So may it be for us!





# The Movie Esther

A Review by Jon Lanberg

**Publication Information/ Studio:** Culver City, Calif.: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, [2010]

**Summary:** Dramatization of the story of Esther, a Jewish woman loved by King Ahasuerus, who persuades him to show her people mercy, thus averting a planned genocide of the Jews by the King's right-hand man Haman.

**Abstract:** Originally produced as a motion picture in 1998. Director of photography, Giovanni Galasso; editing, Alessandro Lucidi; music, Carlo Siliotto. MPAA: Not rated. DVD.

**Story Line:** This drama stars Louise Lombard as Esther, a common Jewish woman who rose to wealth and power when she captured the heart of the King of Persia. Eventually, Esther opted to use her influence to win freedom and a better life for her people. Esther also stars F. Murray Abraham as Mordecai, Jürgen Prochnow as Haman, Ornella Muti as Queen Vashti, and Thomas Kretschmann as King Ahasuerus.

**Main Actors/ Actresses:** Louise Lombard, F. Murray Abraham, Jürgen Prochnow, Thomas Kretschmann, Frank Baker, John Hollis, Ornella Muti, Umberto Orsini, Phil Davies, Christopher Ettridge, Natasha Williams.

## Author's Review & Grade:

Esther is depicted in this movie as a graceful, reserved young woman who is at ease with the customs of her people and the process for selecting a husband. However, she is rounded up for potential selection by the King for a Queen. The position became vacant when the King banished the last Queen for not being obedient. Esther is made Queen of the empire. She prays to God for help to save her people from genocide and then uses her position to gain the King's favor. Total annihilation of the Jews is averted.

Even though a number of the actors/ actresses are unknown, the acting is quite good. The movie is well choreographed and stage scenery is also well done. The movie of Esther's life doesn't really give you the depth of her strength and resolve but is a generally entertaining movie.

On a 1 to 5 scale, I give this movie a 3.5. It is OK for older children. Because of the quality of this movie I do recommend it for "Movie Night" at the Learning Center.



# Veggie Tales - Esther, The Girl Who Became Queen

A Review by Jon Lanberg

## **Title**

VeggieTales. - Esther-- the girl who became queen - Veggie Tales.

## **Imprint**



Burbank, Calif.: Distributed by Warner Home Video, 2003.

### **Description**

1 videodisc (36 min.): sound, color.

Title from pre-release promotional materials. Animators, Andy Arnett ... [et al.]; editor, John Wahba. Voices: Jessica Kaplan (Esther speaking); Pamela Thomas (Esther singing); Phil Vischer, Mike Nawrocki, Eric Metaxas, Charlotte Jackson, Kristi Bramlet. Not rated DVD "A lesson in courage". Characters created by Phil Vischer and Mike Nawrocki; developed by Tim Hodge, Mike Nawrocki, David Pitts, Gail Schenbaum and Paul Vischer.

### **Summary**

The king needs a new queen, and Esther has been chosen! But she's about to find out that being queen is going to take more courage than she ever imagined!

### **Author's Review & Grade:**

Trust me I watched the whole thing. Yes I laughed. If I were 7 or 8 I'd think this movie was almost the best thing since pizza, maybe. Good stuff and I suppose for their age being banished to the island of perpetual tickling would be a terrible fate. Good message for the kids and very entertaining.

On a 1 to 5 scale, I give this Movie a 4. It is OK for everyone but I think the middle generation would get bored. Hey, I'm a grandpa. I'm not sure this is for "Movie Night" at the Learning Center but maybe in the back room for the kids while we watch ours.

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## **From the Torah**







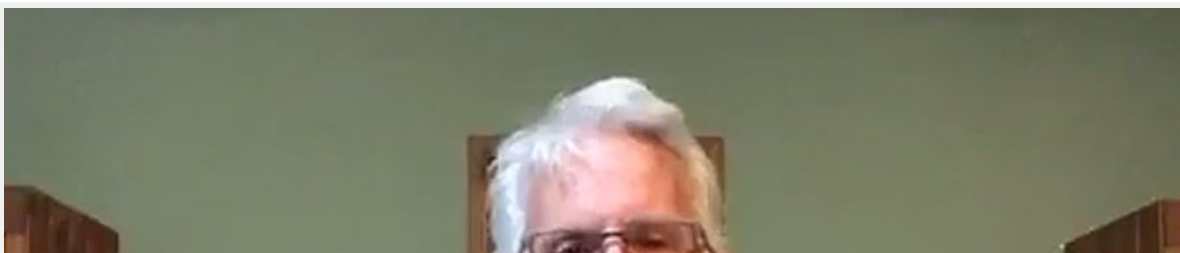
The Torah reading this week is Tzav (Leviticus 6:1-8:36). The prophetic reading associated with this Sabbath is found in Jeremiah 7:21-8:3, 9:22-23.

**"Remember the Torah of my servant Moses, the statutes and judgments that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel"**

***(Malachi 4:4 English / Malachi 3:22 Hebrew).***

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Hebrew Torah Reading Team**





## The New Covenant Oracle - A Teaching from the Aravah

In this, the third of a series on the subject of the New Covenant, Ross shares his understanding of Jeremiah's New Covenant Oracle. If you missed the class, you can view it on our United Israel Facebook Page at the link below.



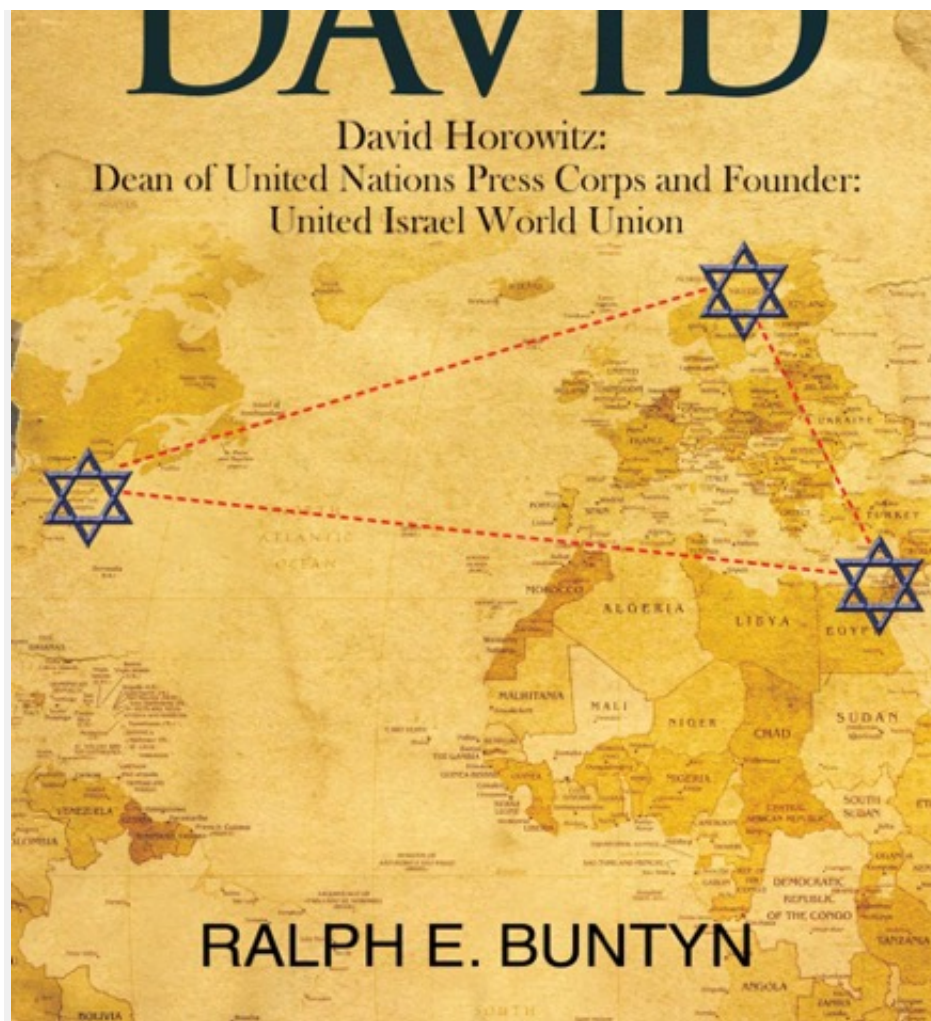
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## The Book of David

**David Horowitz: Dean of United Nations Press Corps and  
Founder: United Israel World Union**

by Ralph Buntyn





For 10 years, author Ralph Buntyn spent many hours with renowned United Nations correspondent and United Israel founder David Horowitz. They engaged in lengthy discussions about his foundational views drawn from his experience and unique vantage point in the two world bodies. ***The Book of David*** is based on his personal notes, extensive archival records and reflections from these conversations.

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Don't forget to register for our conference to be held in Charlotte, the last weekend of April. There is no registration fee, but registration is required.

Aside from a full program of interesting speakers, there will also be activities for young people. Shape the future! Bring your teen or young adult to the UIWU Conference. Encourage them in a Torah-based faith as they meet other young adults. No awkward introductions, just games, fellowship, Shabbat Bible studies, and fun! Hope to see you there!



The image shows a screenshot of the United Israel World Union (UIWU) website for the 2019 conference. At the top left is the UIWU logo with the tagline "SEARCHING FOR THE ANCIENT PATHS SINCE 1944". To the right are navigation links for "CONFERENCE 2019", "REGISTRATION", and "UIWU". The main banner features the text "UNITED ISRAEL WORLD UNION" in large blue letters, with a central circular emblem containing a Star of David and various symbols. Below the banner is the tagline "SEARCHING FOR THE ANCIENT PATHS SINCE 1944". At the bottom of the banner area are two buttons: "REGISTER" and "HOTEL RESERVATION".

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