



CLAL

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8 Adar 5758

Inside...

Yadda...

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Yadda!

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Sh'ma A JOURNAL OF JEWISH RESPONSIBILITY

Smash

A JOURNAL OF ICONOCLASTS & ALMONDS

Cloning and the Jewish question ■ Lawrence Bush, *Accord NY*

Netanyahu to Be Cloned

JERUSALEM (JTA) — In a move that sent a shock wave through the tempestuous Israeli political scene, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu today announced his intention to be cloned. Over 100 living cells are to be removed from Mr. Netanyahu's inner cheek lining and cultivated in petri dishes, in a location not publicly divulged.

"Many, many, many Bibi's will be created," Mr. Netanyahu declared at a press conference held here this morning. He declined to explain how the cheek-lining procedure will result in living babies, but he advised reporters that "each and every one of them will ultimately be raised in Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria." Apparently, the plan is part of the Likud-led government's controversial policy of expanding Israeli settlements on the West Bank while the peace talks with the Palestinian Authority are stalled.

Experts say the cloning process will presumably require a corps of women willing to donate eggs that would have their nuclei replaced with the prime minister's genetic material. The same women would likely carry the embryos through gestation, give birth—and perhaps surrender the babies to the government.

Mr. Netanyahu, however, scoffed at reporters' speculation that participation in the cloning plan may become a requirement for Jewish women serving in the Israel Defense Force.

The prime minister also rejected suggestions that the plan might further fray the unraveling peace process with the Palestinian Authority. "Under the terms of Oslo, Israel is limited in the number of troops, not babies, that we can deploy," Mr. Netanyahu said. "The Palestinians have criticized Israel, constantly, for supposedly 'overreacting' to their terrorism. Now I'm literally 'turning the other cheek'—and I would hope that the Palestinians will keep their mouths shut."

"We expect Mr. Netanyahu's courageous act to inspire Jews in *eretz Yisrael* and beyond to be cloned," said Cabinet Minister Ariel Sharon, who stood at Mr. Netanyahu's side during the press conference and was deferred to by the prime minister in response to several questions. "It is the only way for us to counteract the booming Arab birthrate and assure the Jewish character of the State of Israel."

Rabbis Sanction Cloning

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel's Chief Rabbis today gave sanction to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's plan to be cloned, but warned that future cloning procedures should be under the strict supervision of the Orthodox Rabbinate.

"Jewish genealogy derives from the mother," said Chief Sephardic Rabbi Eliahu Bakshi-Doron. "In the case of a clone, since no new genetic material is introduced in the cloning process, we can

consider it to have the same mother as Mr. Netanyahu. The clones are Jewish."

In a separate statement, Chief Ashkenazic Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau made a similar ruling. Rabbi Lau deferred more subtle points about the clones' status to "future deliberations, study and prayer," but urged that the petri dishes in which Mr. Netanyahu's clones will be cultivated be kept very kosher.

Israeli Labor Party In Doubt Over Cloning

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel's Labor Party registered a protest with the government today over plans to clone Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"We're not opposed to cloning *per se*," MK Haim Ben-Ami assured reporters at a press conference at the opposition party headquarters. "We do not, however, wish to see so important a matter dominated exclusively by the Likud government and its marginal allies."

Mr. Ben-Ami argued that in all cloning programs, including the Netanyahu pilot project, an equal number of clones should be developed from Labor and Likud ranks. A second alternative that his party would accept, he said, is proportional cloning based upon Knesset representation. He would not, however, name an appropriate candidate to undergo cloning with Mr. Netanyahu.

A Labor Knesset member who wished to remain anonymous commented: "I think the Labor party's got all the clones it needs."

Israeli Women Question Cloning

TEL AVIV (JTA) — Israel's plan to clone Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, its details shrouded in secrecy, has brought together an unlikely coalition of Israeli feminists and Orthodox women in opposition. At a protest here attended by 200,000 Israelis, according to police estimates, Meretz party MK Tanya Rosenhaus voiced the feminist opposition, aimed at the fact that the Netanyahu program will "exploit women's bodies while producing only male babies." Ms. Rosenhaus further warned that the rumored plan to use women serving in the Israel Defense Forces as egg donors and "incubators" will "seriously threaten morale within our armed forces and unravel the security of Israel."

Serbian Link Feared

WASHINGTON (JTA) — The U.S. State Department will investigate rumors of Israeli assistance to Bosnian Serb forces in the form of cloning technology, according to a highly placed source in the U.S. intelligence community.

"We have good reason to believe that the Bosnian Serbs would welcome a radical, non-violent solution to the ethnic tensions in Bosnia," the source reported. "And

there is strong, if circumstantial, evidence that Israel is sharing some of its remarkable cloning technology with the Serbian government. Our inference, obviously, is that the Serb minority in Bosnia hopes to become a majority—fast.

Israeli Cloning Attempt Fails

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel was "resting comfortably, eating Hagen Daaz ice cream," according to a government spokesman, after an attempt to produce 100 clones from his inner cheek lining failed yesterday.

The clones, said the spokesman, Shimon Gluck, were destroyed when Cabinet Minister Ariel Sharon came to the Israeli Technion Institute to inspect the petri dishes and sneezed.

"Mr. Netanyahu will be discharged from the hospital

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tomorrow," said Mr. Gluck. "He is, of course, mournful at the death of even a single clone, but he recognizes that many, many others have sacrificed their lives to establish and safeguard our nation." Mr. Netanyahu's cheek lining, Mr. Gluck added, "feels as though he just ate a hot slice of pizza." †

Purim haiku for my mother

■ Peter B. Krupp, *Needham MA*

when the pressure to be productive
is weighing you down, sharing
a hamantashen with someone
who would not have had
one otherwise makes
the day seem a
whole lot
better
†

A Liturgical List (with apologies to Gilbert & Sullivan)

■ Richard Hirsh, *Evanston, IL*

As the liberal movements struggle to revise liturgy, this musical meditation on the difficulties of being "liturgically correct" may provide guidance:

If someday it should happen that the prayerbook got put
right
We've got a little list, we've got a little list
Of ideas and words and pronouns that offend and irk and
slight
And they never would be missed, they never would be
missed.

There's the pronoun "He" which some think is paternal
and quite odd;
With equal offense given to the women and to God;
And miracles are something that we'd rather do without
No matter if we can't think what we thought they were
about;
And "chosenness" and words like that that only can
offend—
The people who at services occasionally attend.

We've got them on the list, we've got them on the list,
And although they may be missed, we don't think they'll
be missed.

And God as King or Potentate we barely recognize
Feminists have taught us that we must all realize
To worship God as Ruler means we must accept the role
Of a subject or a servant who must sacrifice one's soul;
So please dispense with "Adonai", and this we must now
learn:

To direct all our prayers "To Whom It May Concern"

We've got them on the list, we've got them on the list
And although they may be missed we've got them on the
list.

For the purposes of prayer we know it may seem rather
odd

To sing praises to the Deity who once was known as
God.

For if worshipping means bowing low and scraping on
the floor

We know that all our congregants will soon head for the
door.

But if we try hard to pacify the interests that abound
By changing every word and term that has a gendered
sound

We hope that everyone will see and finally agree
That the prayers we say can all be said with faith and
honesty

And if we've done our work real well and quieted our
fears

We'll have a *siddur* we can use—at least for a few years.
†

On rabbis

■ Stan Levy, *Los Angeles CA*

A fax received before Rosh Hashanah from somewhere in
West Virginia:

The results of a computerized survey indicate the perfect
rabbi preaches exactly fifteen minutes. He condemns sin,
but never upsets anyone. He works from 8:00 AM until
midnight and is also a janitor. He makes \$50 a week,
wears good clothes, buys good books, drives a good car,
and gives about \$50 weekly to the poor. He is 28 years
old and has preached 30 years. He has a burning desire
to work with teenagers and spends all his time with senior
citizens. The perfect rabbi smiles all the time with a

straight face because he has a sense of humor that keeps him seriously dedicated to his work. He makes 15 calls daily on congregational families, shut-ins, and the hospitalized and is always in his office when needed.

If your rabbi does not measure up, simply send this letter to six other synagogues that are tired of their rabbi too. Then bundle up your rabbi and send him to the synagogue at the top of the list. In one week you will receive 1,543 rabbis and one of them will be perfect. Have faith in this letter. One congregation broke the chain and got its old rabbi back in less than three months.

✦

Tart translations

■ Shirley Grossman, *McLean VA*

Hear O Israel, The Lord is God, the Lord is One.

TRANSLATION: You da Man. ✦

Purim voice mail

■ Richard Hirsh, *Evanston, IL*

1 Hello, you have reached the advertising department of the *New York Times*. Please select your language of preference from the following menu: English, press 1; Yiddish, press 2; Hebrew (Sefardic) press 3; Hebrew (Ashkenazic) press 4. For any other languages please stay on the line.

Thank you. If you are calling to place an advertisement regarding Israel, press 1. If you are calling to place an advertisement regarding the unity of the Jewish people, press 2. If you are calling to place an advertisement regarding the immutability of *halakhah* with regard to conversion, please press 3. If you are calling to place an advertisement with regard to the pluralism of the Jewish people, press 4. If you are calling to place an advertisement disparaging another Jewish organization, press 5. If you are calling to place an advertisement appealing to Christian fundamentalists on behalf of Israel, press 6. If you are calling to place an advertisement appealing to liberal Christians on behalf of Israel, press 7. If you would like to place an advertisement congratulating Prime Minister Netanyahu for standing up to the President, press 8. If you would like to place an advertisement thanking the President for standing up to Prime Minister Netanyahu, press 9.

If you are calling to place an advertisement that has nothing to do with Jews, Judaism, or Israel, we're sorry, all of our allotted space for advertising is sold out. Please call back when there is no crisis in Jewish life.

2 Hello, you have reached heaven. All of our angels are currently busy. If you know your party's extension, please enter it now. Please press 0 for an employee directory.

Thank you for pressing 0 for the employee directory. If you know the first three letters of the deity you are calling, please enter them now...(click, click, click). We're sorry, you have entered a non-working name. Please try again (click, click, click). We're sorry; our system cannot accept G-O-D; please try G-D. (cl-ck, cl-ck, cl-ck).

Hello, this is G-D, I am either away from my desk or temporarily out of heaven. Your call is important to Me, so at the sound of the harp please leave your message; I already know your name and number.

3 Hello, you have reached the offices of the Jewish Community Relations Council. If you are offended by our position on Israel, please press 1; if you are offended by our position on church-state separation, please press 2; if you are offended by our position on black-Jewish relations, please press 3; if you are calling to propose a boycott of the media because of anti-Israel bias, please press 4; if you are calling to protest the suppression of dissent in the Jewish community, please press 5; if you are calling to criticize dissent in the Jewish community, please press 6; if you are calling to ask who authorized us to speak for the Jewish community, please hang up and organize your own Jewish agency. Have a consensual day. ✦

Hello, this is dr. ruth

■ Gershon Schwartz, *Baldwin, NY*

Good evening, and welcome to *Religiously Speaking*. My name is Dr. Ruth Easthymer, and we will be taking your calls on the air in just a minute. Many of you have written me letters, and I'd like to share one of them with you now:

Dear Dr. Ruth,

I used to be afraid to talk about religion. It was a taboo topic, but you changed that. Thanks for convincing a major radio station to have a call-in show about religious

problems. Until now, all the information we girls could get on religion was from friends on the street, and some of this was wrong, or from books we had to buy in secret and hide from our parents.

My problem is my parents. They're rather old-fashioned. I mean that they told me I'm not allowed to go to *shul* with a boy on the first date. I think that's ridiculous. My parents MET in *shul*! They went to *shul* together a lot of times before they were married. They say times were different then, that it's much more dangerous now, and that they're just trying to protect me, but I think they're being hypocritical. Don't you think that a 15-year-old who is asked out by a guy should be allowed to go to *shul* with him?

*Signed, Amy R.
New Jersey*

Dear Amy In New Jersey

Well, Amy, the first thing I have to tell you is what I say to every young woman who writes in or calls. I hope that if you do go to *shul* with a boy, with or without your parents' permission, you use your phylacteries. It's something you have to take responsibility for yourself. In the olden days, it was assumed that this was the male's responsibility, but no more. You should be protected from the very starrrrt, and you shouldn't leave things to chance.

As far as your problem is concerned: I think you should be open and honest with your parents. Say to them: "Look, I'm 15 years old. I'm a responsible young adult. I appreciate your concern, but nowadays 15-year-olds are religiously active. I'm not going to some outlandish group like Jews for Jesus, but I'm in one of the safe sects like the Conservatives or the Reform." Don't paint your parents into the corner either, but give them the opportunity to show that they respect your maturity. Be in touch with me again soon and let me know how things are going.

AND NOW, let's go to the phone lines.

Our toll-free number is 1-800-FRUMIES. Tee-hee. We thought that was a cute number to have. If you have a religious problem to discuss with me, you can call in now. Remember, we want only your first name and a short description of your religious problem.

And here's our first caller. HELLO, THIS IS DR. RRRRRRRRRRRRUTH, AND YOU'RE ON THE AIR!!

Dr. Ruth, my name is Ari from Long Island. My parents think that keeping kosher is crazy, but I'd like to try it. I'm 16 years old. I do a lot of things on my own, and I

think that if my friends and I want to keep kosher, we should be allowed to. What do you advise?

First of all, are you using your phylacteries regularly?
Yes I am. Every time I pray.

Brrrrrravo! Good for you!! Verrrrry good!!! Because some people think that you can do without phylacteries the first time, or at certain times of the month, and there won't be consequences.

As far as your parents are concerned, if you're still under your parents' roof, you're under their rules. That's the right of parents. When you go to college, and move away from home, you can get your own apartment and keep kosher as you please. But I wouldn't flaunt my religious practices in the faces of people who love you, like your parents.

Getting Serious

Dr. Ruth, this is Joyce from Detroit. I just want you to know that I love your show.

Joyce from Detroit, welcome. Glad you like my show. First let me ask you: Are you religiously active?

No, and we don't use phylacteries because we haven't gone that far yet. And that's my problem. My boyfriend and I have known each other for about two months. He wants to get real serious, you know, real fast. I mean, he wants me to start observing *Shabbos* right away. I told him I think we should let our relationship warm up a little, like maybe not going to the movies on Friday night any more, but, like, he wants to go much farther and much faster than me. I don't want to lose him, but I can't take the pressure of going so far with him.

Look, Joyce, the first word a religiously active person has to learn is "NO!" Tell your boyfriend that you care for him, that you want to keep up the relationship but you can't feel pressured.

Meeting Your Needs

Hello, Dr. Ruth, my name is Gary and I'm from Queens. I really like this girl, but she doesn't get turned on by some of my religious practices.

Go on, Gary, please explain. Without getting too specific, what doesn't she like about what you do?

Well, you see, I'm really big into *Kabbalah*. I mean, when we're together, I love reading sections from the Zohar to her, discussing the Ten Sefirot. Last year, for the Omer, I counted each day until Shavuot when Malkhut was in Malkhut, and God's kingship was united. She broke up with me about two weeks into Sefirah, but

we got back together again in the summer for Tisha B'Av.

Tell me, Gary, what types of experiences does she like?

She gets turned on by more traditional religion—Shabbat, Kashrut, *davvening*. I used to be into those, but I get bored with them and need something more exotic. Got any suggestions?

Gary, I've often said that whatever two people find religiously exciting between them is OK, as long as it doesn't hurt one of them. Your needs must be met, but your girlfriend also has needs and desires which she wants met. Have you ever been to a therapist for counseling?

No.

It seems to me, Garrrrrrrry, that you might look up a good therapist in your area. You said you're from Queens?

Yes.

There is a fine religious counseling center at Yeshivas Shabsai Tsvi on Queens Blvd. Try going together. Don't expect miracles, because religious counseling often takes times and commitment. And give me a call back in a few weeks, OK?

This is Dr. Rrrrrrrrrrruth. Our time is just about up. Keep those calls and letters coming in, and remember—Use your phylacteries!!! And tune in next week for another edition of *Religiously Speaking*. †

Eternal believers

■ Sam Arbesman, *Williamsville NY*

Q: What do you call a theologian who does not want to grow up?

A: Peter Pantheist

A solution to the problem of intermarriages conducted by rabbis

■ Jonathan H. Gerard, *Easton PA*

Until now the problem of intermarriage has seemed unsolvable. On the one hand, the high rate of exogamy is seen as a threat to the future viability of the Jewish

people. At the same time, no one has devised a foolproof way to reduce the alarming rate at which Jews intermarry. On the other hand, there has always been a cadre of rabbis willing to participate in the solemnizing of these relationships. While all argue that it is for the sake of the Jewish future that they do it, many precipitate upon themselves reasonable questions about motive when they charge fees for performing such marriages that far exceed the fees they charge for marriages between two Jews. Many pious and honest rabbis are cut off from such profits because of their principled stance. The scoundrels get richer; the purists remain poor; and the public gets taken for a bath.

A solution is at hand. Here is how I propose to solve all three problems at once. Let us consider, for the sake of argument, that the Jewish community can sustain a 10% rate of intermarriage without threat to its future security and demography. Let us also assume that the average rabbi officiates at approximately 200 weddings over the course of his or her career. Now I submit that, at ordination, each new rabbi be given 20 chits granting permission to perform an interfaith marriage. This would represent about 10% of the marriages he or she is likely, on average, to perform. Each rabbi is now free to do as he or she wishes with these chits. If a rabbi's conscience prohibits the performance of an intermarriage, he or she can sell the chits to a colleague. They should bring at least \$1,000 on the open market. If a rabbi believes in performing such marriages, there will be plenty of chits available for sale.

With this system in place, the overall rate of intermarriage will be kept at 10%. But at the same time, the lucrative profits for performing such marriages will be spread fairly across the rabbinate. Will our congregants also benefit? Well actually they'll continue to take a bath. But even with the expected rise in fees, they're still likely to pay less for a rabbi than they'll pay for the flowers. What more could they want? †

Guess again

■ Alan Yuter, *Springfield NJ*

Why does Jewish tradition oppose cremation?

Because people should not make ashes of themselves.

What would they call the administration of the Bet Ha-Mikdash if it were built in Hawaii?

The Big Kahuna.

Surprising end to seinfeld saga

■ Daniel S. Brenner, *New York NY*

In order to prepare viewer's for this season's series-ending episode, NBC has released the stunning details of the plot that will mark Seinfeld's last laugh. Here's the story—Newman, while rifling through some unclaimed mail at work, finds a round trip ticket to Israel. He ends up losing the ticket to Kramer in a spitting context. Kramer, in a *kibbutz* hat he found under he couch, leaves for Tel Aviv.

Meanwhile, George has been fired from his job and in desperation finds work as a folkdancer at a Greek restaurant. George tries to keep this a secret from Jerry. But Jerry has a date with an Israeli dancer who asked him to the restaurant. Jerry is stunned to see George, and spills tzatziki sauce on his pants. The Israeli dancer, however, is mesmerized by George's moves. For her it is love at first sight.

Jerry goes home to change pants and finds Elaine at his door, eating string cheese. Elaine explains that her life has changed. She has begun studying *kabbalah* with a woman rabbi in the Village. Jerry dismisses her, but is willing to go to one class.

George, meanwhile, is head over heels for the Israeli dancer. George begins a Hebrew *ulpan* at the Westside JCC. Elaine and Jerry go to *kabbalah* class in the next classroom over. Both classes are interrupted by a political crisis which sends all the students to the fitness room to watch CNN. It is a report from Israel.

In an astonishing move, one man has brokered a stable peace between the Palestinians and Israelis. It is, of course, Kramer, who waves to the camera riding atop a donkey. George proposes to the dancer and decides to make *aliyah*. Elaine proposes to Jerry and they decide to get married by the *kabbalah* teacher. Everyone present weeps and pledges nearly \$3 million to the JCC's Building Fund. †

In honor of purim

■ Samuel M. Silver, *Boca Raton FL*

Soporifics

After the sermon, a woman said, "Rabbi, I loved your talk. I woke up from it—refreshed."

Another woman exclaimed, "Rabbi, your talk was a dream."

A Reform rabbi ruminates: Said a rabbi to the priest, "You have better quarters. We have better halves."

Rabbi Sam Silver calls his wife knob because she's something "to adore." †

I'm getting married, netanyahu

■ Mark Zimmerman, *Melville NY*

(to the tune of "I'm Getting Married In The Morning")

I'm getting married, Netanyahu
Ding dong the bells are gonna peal
I've got my white dress
But I'm in distress
'Cause my conversion isn't real.

I studied Torah and Gemara
I even studied Rashi too
I learned *Hatikvah*
Went to the *mikvah*
But now you say I'm not a Jew.

I had a rabbi, he was Reform
I didn't know that that would cause a storm.

Oh I'm getting married, Netanyahu
But something makes me quite annoyed
I made my choice sir
To not be a *goy* sir
Why's my conversion null and void?

If I ate bacon I'd understand
But sir I know that pig is contraband.

Oh I'm getting married, Netanyahu
This quandary leaves me in a lurch
Since I converted
I've been alerted
That I cannot go back to church.

You shouldn't let your Chief Rabbinate
Hold back the *hecksher* I need to consummate.

So I'm getting married, Netanyahu.
Ding dong I want the bells to chime.
For *Klal Yisrael*
Don't let Ne'eman fail
Please listen to the plight
Of this one proselyte.
Please get me to my wedding rite on time. †

Excerpts from a teshuva on sacred clowning, from reb kugel

■ Judith B. Kerman, *Saginaw MI*

An anthropologist came seeking wisdom in the little *shtetl* called Rubadubdub. He appealed to Reb Kugel the Rubadubdubber Rebbe, descendant of the great Rabbi Baruch Shem Tov (the Borscht) and holder of a 9th degree borscht belt.

What, asked the anthropologist, is the role of sacred clowning in Judaism? After giving due consideration and study to this question, Reb Kugel responded:

Obviously with butter for dairy meals and with *schmaltz* for meat meals. And speaking of chicken fat, in passing we should also consider the great question that has occupied scholars for many centuries. The Holy One, *Barukh Hu*, created roads and made them with two sides, teaching us to distinguish between one side of the road and the other. On the Fifth Day, the Holy One created chickens. So we must ask: Why did the chicken cross the road?...

Most cultures have various forms of ritual humor in which the most sacred tenets of the group's faith may be burlesqued and significant aspects of social control are allowed to lapse for a period of festival. A party! A party! Cross-dressing and other types of contrary behavior, scatology and sexual outrageousness, uproarious parodies of sacred texts and performances, and mocking of religious authority are common aspects of the religious humor of many cultures. Sounds like fun, doesn't it?

My teacher, Reb Clif Trolin the Troll, who works a lot with Jewish materials and communities, says the clown is 'the fool that makes us see how foolish we are.' And Reb Samuel Miller says, 'the human fool, so ridiculous and even contemptible to human eyes, was just the way any man, Everyman, looked when inspected by the Creator' (p. 97).

As for the chicken, Reb Einstein says whether the chicken crossed the road or the road crossed the chicken depends upon your frame of reference.

If I was looking for sacred clowns, wouldn't it be logical to look in Judaism? Why not, *bubbie*? That's what I thought! Judaism is so serious about both God and the world, and Jewish ritual life is so structured. Concentrated. Even pressurized. Such a spirituality would make clowning a valuable and logical development. Like a steam valve! PSSSSSHT! Also, Judaism worries a lot about boundary issues as such, inside/outside issues, what it means to be a stranger, the distinction between sacred and profane. In such a culture, the liminality of the clown should have particular power. I started to understand personally the importance of boundaries in Judaism because I was thinking about Jewish clowning, both what it has been and what it could be. And why not?

In fact, hasn't sacred clowning had a crucial place in Judaism for a long time? It has. Although much watered down in many modern communities, Purim, the holiday that led me into clowning, probably has always been a festival in which the whole community clowns.

Rabbi Michael Strassfeld points out, 'the time when all our rules and inhibitions are swept away' is also when we are able 'to see how easy it is to change from Mordecai into Haman, from a crusader for justice into simply a crusader' (pp. 197-98). That is why the Talmud says that we fully accept the Torah only on Purim, for only when we can mock the tradition can we fully accept it. Only then are we safe to do so; otherwise we make the tradition into an idolatry rather than a smasher of idols. ...*Adde-lo-yada* [drinking until we cannot distinguish between Mordecai and Haman]...is not an animalistic state of stupor, but rather a...messianic/mystical moment when there is no difference between Haman and Mordecai, good and evil, for both are found in the Holy One 'who created light and darkness, made peace and created evil' (Isaiah 45.7).

Omeyn! †

Portions of this article appeared in the Purim 1996 issue of *New Menorah* (the ALEPH journal). The full article of *Sacred Clowning* was printed in *The Monstrous and the Unspeakable: The Bible as Fantastic Literature* edited by George Alchele and Tina Pippin, Sheffield Press (England), 1997.