



חסידי אומות העולם?  
**HOLOCAUST, HATE & HEROISM**  
**CAN JEWS STILL SEE GOOD IN THE WORLD?**

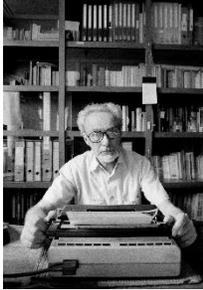
A Kinos Exploration with Rabbi Dovid Zirkind  
Sunday, August 7, 10-11:30 AM  
(following 9:00 AM Shacharit)

Concurrent Youth Program Available  
Join us in Person or via Zoom



Zoom Info  
Meeting ID:  
383 110 2427  
Passcode:  
115050

## *Yadvashem.org*



*I believe that it was really due to Lorenzo that I am alive today; and not so much for his material aid, as for his having constantly reminded me by his presence... that there still existed a just world outside our own, something and someone still pure and whole... for which it was worth surviving"*

- Primo Levi describes his rescuer, Lorenzo Perrone (*If This Is A Man*)

Attitudes towards the Jews during the Holocaust mostly ranged from indifference to hostility. The mainstream watched as their former neighbors were rounded up and killed; some collaborated with the perpetrators; many benefited from the expropriation of the Jews property.

In a world of total moral collapse there was a small minority who mustered extraordinary courage to uphold human values. These were the Righteous Among the Nations. They stand in stark contrast to the mainstream of indifference and hostility that prevailed during the Holocaust. Contrary to the general trend, these rescuers regarded the Jews as fellow human beings who came within the bounds of their universe of obligation.

Bystanders were the rule, rescuers were the exception. However difficult and frightening, the fact that some found the courage to become rescuers demonstrates that some freedom of choice existed, and that saving Jews was not beyond the capacity of ordinary people throughout occupied Europe. The Righteous Among the Nations teach us that every person can make a difference. There were different degrees of help: some people gave food to Jews, thrusting an apple into their pocket or leaving food where they would pass on their way to work. Others directed Jews to people who could help them; some sheltered Jews for one night and told them they would have to leave in the morning. Only few assumed the entire responsibility for the Jews' survival. It is mostly the last group that qualifies for the title of the Righteous Among the Nations.



**The Princess, the Nazi and the Prostitute:  
Unlikely Righteous Among the Nations Revealed  
Ofer Aderet. Haaretz 2018**

Poland is at the top of that list, with 6,863 documented righteous gentiles – more than in any other country. However, Steinfeldt rejects the Polish government’s attempt to use this figure in the discussion of the part played by the [Poles in the Holocaust](#). “This number is meaningless,” she says, “because there were significant differences among the various countries – in the numbers of Jews living in them, the Germans’ treatment of the local non-Jewish populations, the degree of danger faced by anyone who helped Jews and more.”

According to her, it is also possible to present a different set of statistics, one that would show the number of righteous gentiles relative to the number of Jews in each country. In that case France, where about 300,000 Jews were living and about 4,000 righteous gentiles have been recognized, comes out ahead of Poland, where there were some 3 million Jews and about 7,000 righteous gentiles. From another angle, she also notes that in Poland, in contrast to France, people who rescued Jews faced the risk of being sentenced to death. “It’s very problematic to try to draw sweeping conclusions about particular nations,” she says. “Since the Righteous Among the Nations are the exceptional individuals, they cannot be used as a criterion for measuring the quality of the collective.”

In this spirit, in contrast to many educators. Steinfeldt does not believe that the Righteous Among the Nations are the model according to which we should instruct our children. “It’s a bit self-righteous and simplistic,” she says, “because this moral model is very difficult to apply.” She gets angry when she hears teachers musing to their students about why there were so few righteous gentiles. And she thinks to herself – let’s just see what you yourself would have done. “I can’t say how I would have behaved in a similar situation. To this day I can’t understand from where the righteous gentiles drew the strength to do what they did.”

**[Kina #16: Zechor Et Asher Asa Tzar Bifnim: Koren 361, Rosenfeld 111]**

**משנה תורה, הלכות מלכים ומלחמות ה**

כל המקבל שבע מצות ונזהר לעשותן **הרי זה מחסידי אומות העולם** ויש לו חלק לעולם הבא והוא שיקבל אותן ויעשה אותן מפני שצוה בהן הקב"ה בתורה והודיענו על ידי משה רבינו שבני נח מקודם נצטוו בהן אבל אם עשאן מפני הכרע הדעת אין זה גר תושב ואינו מחסידי אומות העולם ולא מחכמיהם.

Anyone who accepts upon himself and carefully observes the Seven Commandments is of the Righteous of the Nations of the World and has a portion in the World to Come. This is as long as he accepts and performs them because (he truly believes that) it was the Holy One, Blessed Be He, Who commanded them in the Torah, and that is was through Moses our Teacher we were informed that the Sons of Noah

had already been commanded to observe them. But if he observes them because he convinced himself logically<sup>81</sup> *By his own intellect and conscience, but he does not agree that they were commanded by G-d.*, then he is not considered a Resident Convert and is not of the Righteous of the Nations of the World, but merely one of their wise.

**תלמוד בבלי מסכת סנהדרין דף קה עמוד א**

בלעם הוא דלא אתי לעלמא דאתי הא אחרוני אתו מתניתין מני רבי יהושע היא דתניא ר"א אומר (תהלים ט, יח) ישובו רשעים לשאולה כל גוים שכחי אלהים ישובו רשעים לשאולה אלו פושעי ישראל כל גוים שכחי אלהים אלו פושעי עובדי כוכבים דברי ר"א אמר לו ר' יהושע וכי נאמר בכל גוים והלא לא נאמר אלא כל גוים שכחי אלהים אלא ישובו רשעים לשאולה מאן נינהו כל גוים שכחי אלהים. ואף אותו רשע נתן סימן בעצמו אמר (במדבר כג, י) תמות נפשי מות ישרים אם תמות נפשי מות ישרים תהא אחריתי כמוהו ואם לאו הנני הולך לעמי...

**Balaam is the one who does not come into the World-to-Come; but other gentiles come into the World-to-Come. Whose opinion is expressed in the mishna?**

It is in accordance with the opinion of **Rabbi Yehoshua**, as it is taught in a *baraita* that **Rabbi Eliezer** says: It is written: “**The wicked shall be turned back to the netherworld, all that nations that forget God**” (Psalms 9:18). “**The wicked shall be turned back to the netherworld**”; these are the sinners of the Jewish people, as only the sinners are sentenced to the netherworld. “**All the gentiles that forget God**”; these are the sinners of the gentiles. From the fact that it is written: “All the gentiles,” it is apparent that none of the gentiles have a share in the World-to-Come. This is **the statement of Rabbi Eliezer. Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: But is it stated** in the verse that the sinners of the Jewish people will be **like all of the gentiles? It is stated only: “All the gentiles that forget God.” Rather, the wicked shall be turned back to the netherworld, and who are they? They are all the gentiles that forget God.** Gentiles who fear God do have a share in the World-to-Come.

**And that wicked person, Balaam, also provided a sign with regard to himself. He said: “Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my end be like his”** (Numbers 23:10). **If I die the death of the righteous**, by natural causes, **my end will be like his**, i.e., I will receive a share in the World-to-Come like the Jewish people. **And if I do not die by natural causes: “I will go to my people”** (Numbers 24:14), i.e., my fate will be that of the rest of the wicked people in my generation, who have no share in the World-to-Come.

**ב"י יקר**

(יח) לא תקום ולא תטור את בני עמך. לא אמר עמיתך לפי שהנקימה והנטירה תכונה רעה בגוף האדם ואין מן הראוי לבקש נקמה על שום אדם שהוא מבני עמך אם טוב ואם רע, לפי שמסתמא הנקמה היא על מה שעשה לך בגופך או בממונך והדברים ההם אינן ספונין וחשובים כל כך שיהיו ראויין לנקם עליהם. אמנם מותר לעשות נקמה בגוים כי המה מסתמא רוצים להעבירך מעל מצות ה' ולהדיחך מעל ה' אלהיך וזה דבר חשוב וספון וראוי לבקש נקמה ע"ז, כי היא נקראת נקמת ה', לכך נאמר כאן את בני עמך למעט הגוים שאינן מבני עמך שנאמר (תהלים קמט.ז) לעשות נקמה בגוים כי נקמת ה' היא. ועל זה ארז"ל (ברכות לג.) גדולה נקמה שנתנה בין ב' שמות שנאמר אל נקמות ה' (שם צד.א) הורו באצבע שתחילת הנקמה וסופה לא תהיה כי אם לשם ה' דהיינו בזמן שיבקש איזו אדם להדיחך מעל מצות ה' כי גדול המחטיא את האדם יותר מן ההורגו, כמו שפירש"י על פסוק לא תתעב מצרי (דברים כג.ח) ורז"ל אמרו שכל ת"ח שאינו נוקם ונוטד כנחש אינו ת"ח (יומא כב.) וזה לכבוד תורת ה' אשר בקרבו.

[Kina #20: Hatei Elohai Oznicha: Koren 407, Rosenfeld 124]  
 [Kina #28: Eich Tenachamuni Hevel: Koren 489, Rosenfeld 137]





**RABBI I. T. WEISS**  
**CHIEF RABBI**  
**OF JERUSALEM**  
 RECHOV GIVAT MOSHE 2  
 P.O.B. 50049 JERUSALEM, E. ISRAEL

**יצחק טובי' ווייס**

**רב ואב"ד**  
 לכל מקהלות האשכנזים  
 עיריפת ירושלים תשנ"א

נסד

Dear the Winton Family,

I was saddened to learn of the passing of Sir Nicholas Winton, the person who risked his own life, selflessly working and succeeding to save me and a large number of others. I want to share my condolences with you. May Sir Winton rest in peace, and may his noble, courageous, selfless memory stay with us forever and be of comfort to you.

At a time of darkness and bloodshed, very few had the strength to overcome the fear, threats and violence, to stand up for humanity. Your father is of that tiny league, of a handful of people who had the strong moral conviction and determination to save hundreds and thousands from being slaughtered. I'm in awe of his noble character. Not only did he risk everything to save lives, but he didn't even expect any credit for it. For decades, I didn't know who my rescuer was, due to his unbelievable humbleness, until the secret was revealed by others.

I - and my entire family of children, grandchildren and great- grandchildren, who are alive - would not be here, if not for your great father. While he's no longer physically with us, his memory lives on with all of those who are among the living thanks to him.

May the merit of his brave and selfless acts elevate the soul of Sir Nicholas Winton, and may it brighten the lives of his surviving family. His great deeds are not forgotten and will eternally remain inscribed with golden letters as one of the most heroic acts ever to happen. May his legacy be an example for others to emulate.

With condolences and blessings of Yerushalayim, from the depths of my heart,

The 19<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz, 5775.

Rabbi Yitzchok Tuvia Weiss,

Chief Rabbi, Edah Haredit Jerusalem



p.s. I regret that I didn't have a chance to personally express my gratitude to Sir Winton, as I desired. I was hoping to see him last winter, during a planned trip to England, which unfortunately had to be canceled. Should a family member ever visit Israel and would like to visit me, please don't hesitate to contact my secretary. It would be a privilege to at least express my gratitude to a scion of my rescuer.

**Matzav.com**

[Kina #45: Eli Tzion: Koren 611, Rosenfeld 176]