

# NEWS & VIEWS



## Raising Miriam's Cup to Honor A Feminist Scholar

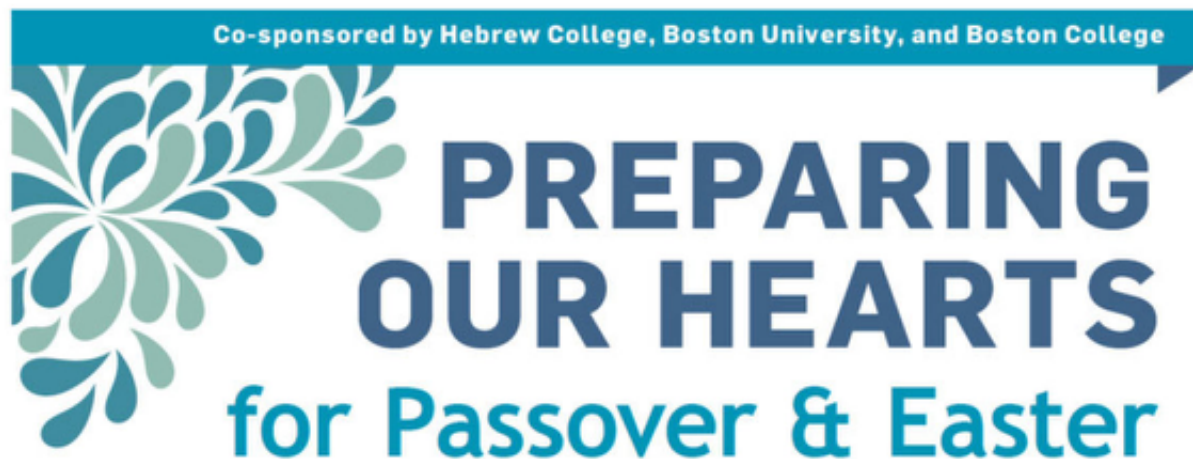
Judith Kates, retired Professor of Jewish Women's Studies at Hebrew College, begins her family seder with kos miryam—Miriam's Cup—to commemorate the role of Moses' older sister in the story of Exodus. And on her family's seder plate, she places a mirror in honor of the righteous Jewish women who brought mirrors to inspire their enslaved husbands in the Egyptian fields.

Now Kates' colleagues are honoring her role as a feminist Torah studies pioneer, through a [\*Hebrew College Passover Companion\*](#), a type of a "festschrift," or collection of writings published in honor of a scholar.

"Judith has been such a feminist pioneer in so many area of her life, and we really wanted to honor her in print," said Hebrew College Associate Dean for Academic Development and Advising and Professor of Rabbinics Jane Kanarek, one of the co-editors of the Passover Companion. "Passover is such a central ritual at Judith's home, and feminism is so central to her seder, that we

decided to create a Passover Companion in her honor. We wanted to do something that actually fit who Judith is as a teacher and as a scholar. Judith is a teacher of Torah and Torah is meant to be shared."

Read more & order your Passover Companion



Tomorrow Morning: Friday, March 27, 2020

Join us online for an exploration of theological, ritual, and vocational commonalities, and differences. Prepare personally for the upcoming holy days and make meaningful connections with your theological colleagues in this challenging time. Co-sponsored by [Miller Center for Interreligious Leadership & Learning at Hebrew College](#), [Boston College School of Theology & Ministry \(BC STM\)](#), and [Boston University School of Theology \(BU STH\)](#). Please contact Miller Center Associate Director [Tom Reid](#) with questions.

## SCHEDULE

9:00 am *Shacharit*

Hebrew College staff and students

9:30 am Welcome & Musical Meditations

Dr. Andrew Davis, BC STM & students

9:45 am Plenary Session

"Can We Celebrate? Passover & Easter in the Age of the Coronavirus."

Moderated by Associate Dean Theodore Hickman Maynard (BU STH); Dean Mary Elizabeth Moore (BU STH); Dean Thomas Stegman (BC STM); and Dean Dan Judson, Hebrew College

10:30 am Small Group Discussion

Moderated by students from BC STM, BU STH & Hebrew College

11:15 am Closing Ritual

Dr. Judith Oleson (BU STH), Miller Center Director Rabbi Or Rose and students

Register



*Posts from this [Hebrew College-hosted blog](#) are also published weekly in [Patheos](#).*

## In These Days Ahead

### *Parashat Vayikra* (Leviticus 1:1-5:26)

*By Lydia Kukoff, Hebrew College Board of Trustees member*

Between the months since I was assigned *Parashat Vayikra* and last week when I actually began to think about what I was going to say, so much has changed. COVID-19 has entered our world and seems to permeate our every thought and action. Routines are gone, contexts changed. No one, nothing seems safe. We are physically distant from one another. Normalcy is stripped away, leaving only vulnerability and dread.

It is in that frame of mind that I approach *Vayikra* this year. When I originally learned that I would be writing on this parasha, I groaned inwardly a bit. After all, each of the other four books of the Torah contain actual stories. And what stories they are! Creation, redemption, backsliding, covenant, journeys, complex personalities.... Genesis and Exodus bring us from the creation of the world to the end of the wilderness years.

Leviticus, *Vayikra*, with its litany of sacrifices and matters of the cult speaks of a system that can feel archaic, remote, and irrelevant to modern sensibilities.

It has usually felt that way to me. But the seemingly abrupt change of tone and contents of Leviticus, as well as its placement in the center of the five books, seemed to speak to me of something else this year. This week's parasha tells me that establishing the sanctuary and participating in the sacrifices that took place within it represents the way that our ancestors ordered and sustained their world. Amidst the chaos of their world, our ancestors built a sanctuary, a place of order and of physical and spiritual beauty. And *Vayikra* is the manual that they created. "Korban", "sacrifice" in English, comes from the Hebrew root which means "to come close". If we look beyond the graphic details of the slaughtering of animals, we can get a sense of the larger purpose of sacrifice: how to come closer to what is higher.

[Read more](#)



Reminder: Hebrew College Offers Virtual



# Community Courses For This Moment

Hebrew College is collaborating with CJP to provide [free, one-hour online adult learning experiences](#) on a range of dynamic Jewish topics. [Join us on Zoom](#) to learn from outstanding Hebrew College faculty members and rabbinical students from the Greater Boston community. If you missed one of last week's classes, you can [watch it online here](#). (Pictured above: Rabbinical student Michaela Brown teaching "Sharing Our Stories in a Time of Social Distance").

Classes continue this week and will be offered during the day and evening, via the [CJP website](#). We hope you will take advantage of these adult learning opportunities to build community and connection during these uncertain times.

Register Now

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