



The Exodus Project: A Jewish Answer to the University Crisis

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ADVANCING
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About the author

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The rival images emerging from universities across our land reveal a great struggle for the American soul. It is a tale of two cultures, with Jews and Israel at the center of the story. At Columbia, a mob of students, faculty, and professional activists camp out for days calling for the annihilation of Israel; they violently take over university buildings and intimidate Jewish students and teachers, all while the university's leaders coddle and "negotiate" with the masked vandals for days. At the University of Florida, meanwhile, Jews gather together in strength, filling an entire university arena for a Passover Seder, where President Ben Sasse proudly joins this transcendent celebration of Israelite freedom and actively works to expand the university's academic program in Jewish civilization. At Rutgers and Northwestern, university leaders appease extremist demands for more pro-Hamas programming and professorships, while the entire campus lawn at Southern Methodist University is lined with hundreds of Israeli flags. At Yale, one of Tikvah's student leaders is stabbed in the eye, while at Hillsdale College (where I was recently invited to speak about the Jewish meaning of the West) Christian students celebrate the Jewish people as their "elder brothers in faith" and see Israel as a heroic defender of good against evil.

For many decades, Jewish ambition and Jewish resources flowed into the most elite American universities. Jewish parents and Jewish educators devoted great energy to helping their kids get into the top-ranked colleges, and discussions of how to succeed in the admissions sweepstakes dominated many Jewish dinner table conversations. Jewish parents aimed to give their sons and daughters access to the finest professors, smartest peers, and best credentials; and they wanted their children to live the American dream of earned success on every playing field of American life. For much of American Jewry, the universities were our temples, and we affixed college stickers on the back of our cars like mezuzahs on our doorposts: outward symbols that we had fully made it in America.

After October 7th, the Jewish conversation suddenly changed. We felt betrayed by the very institutions that we helped build and long revered. Jewish parents began wondering whether their children would even be safe on campuses—walking among building named for generous Jewish donors—that were now being overrun by Jew-hating activists. They watched Jewish kids hiding from riotous protestors calling for blood, kids barricaded in libraries (as they famously were at Cooper Union), kids taking classes in undisclosed locations because campus security could not ensure their safety. In response to these video clips and media reports, many Jews were angry at their alma maters—institutions they once loved and long supported—for tolerating Jew-hatred and abandoning the culture of meritocracy that long enabled American Jews to succeed in college and beyond. They felt guilty rather than proud for sending their kids to schools like Columbia—or still wanting to send their kids there—given the anti-Semitic environment that now festers worsens. Many Jews no longer knew what to do or how to think. They just knew that something was deeply wrong.

As so often in history, Jews are once again the messengers of deeper civilizational troubles. Our challenge is not simply keeping Jews safe or fighting against anti-Semitic discrimination by classifying Jews as another protected group of vulnerable victims. Safety alone is a feeble aspiration for a great people and a great nation, and Jew-hatred is not merely a form of discrimination but a radical ideology that seeks to rid Western civilization of the Hebraic spirit by delegitimizing the Jewish people and wiping the Jewish state off the map. The Jewish experience in recent days is simply the most vivid demonstration of why the existing citadels of elite American culture are broken beyond repair. They indulge mob rule over ordered liberty, revolution over civic piety, appeasement over principle, and utopian fantasies about social justice over the weighty work of preserving civilization. The moral and intellectual degradation of our most prestigious universities is not a new problem. But the rot has now spread so far throughout the teaching faculty and so deeply into the elite corners of academia that the whole edifice has finally collapsed. As Jews and as Americans, we can no longer avert our eyes. We need a new strategy.

Since October 7th, American Jews have been mugged by reality, and we will need to choose how to respond: will we accommodate the demand to shed all Jewish and Zionist attachments as the progressive price of admission at the elite universities, or will we live bravely in opposition within these broken institutions? Will we separate ourselves as a people apart within America (as many Orthodox Jews already do), or will we abandon the American project entirely for Israel? Will we declare that the golden age of American Jewry is over, or will we take responsibility—as proud Jews—for helping renew the American experiment? The case for an exodus from the corrupt quads of Columbia and Harvard seems both urgent and clear. The question is: an Exodus to where and for what purpose? To save ourselves as Jews or to help save America from those who seek to destroy us?

For Jews who care about the American future, I believe the best strategy is to marshal Jewish energy, talent, and money to create centers of excellence within those colleges and universities that value Jewish civilization, respect Israel, and celebrate the Hebraic spirit of America and the West. We can build new honors programs at supportive institutions that put Jewish ideas at the center; we can create scholarship funds that attract the most talented young Jews to these new places; we can train a new generation of professors who understand the Jewish meaning of the West and the hard-won lessons of Jewish history; and we can launch new Jewish colleges that prepare young Jews for the weighty responsibility of preserving American liberty. We need, in other words, a new Exodus Project.

I. How We Got Here

Our first mission is understanding how we got here and what is at stake in the current crisis of the universities. As citizens and as Jews, we care about higher education for serious reasons. At their best, universities teach the rising generation about the meaning of being human. The great books that once stood at the center of a true liberal education were meant to instruct young men and women about the heights of human greatness and the limits of human will, the possibility of love and the reality of death, the moral norms that sustain civilized societies and the ever-present threat of disorder and decay. The earliest American colleges were founded to transmit and perpetuate the religious identities and God-fearing vocations of their students. They were Christian to the core. This mission eventually expanded to prepare young men and, eventually, women of myriad faiths to live as responsible citizens and public-spirited leaders of the

American republic, and then expanded still further to create engines of scientific ingenuity and technical training to advance American industry and promote American progress. These different aims did not always fit easily together, giving rise to the modern mega-university. But they all still pointed towards a positive purpose: the preservation of American civilization and the dignified exercise of American liberty.

Then came the ideological assault that reached full force in the 1960s: the family was repressive, America was evil, and God was dead. During the early days of this new adversary culture—which coincided with the high-point of the cold war—the universities persisted as engines of scientific and technological progress. They still trained engineers, analysts, and practical men and women of affairs. Yet the radicals were given their spoils, with a new generation of academics taking ideological control over nearly all the humanities and social science departments. Eventually, in their hands, the soul-shaping and citizen-forming purpose of the universities was turned upside down, celebrating nihilists who believe in nothing and anti-citizens who looked upon America as a nation of sin rather than a land of hope, or as a supermarket of rights rather than a sacred inheritance.

During this assault on American civilization, many Jews were tempted to play along or look away. After decades of informal quotas that limited Jewish access to the most prestigious universities, Jews were the eager newcomers at the Ivy League reception. Some Jews even bought into—and helped advance—the radical ideology of dismantling everything in the name of “liberation.” Maybe America would be better—and maybe the Jews would be better off—if the last vestiges of the once-Christian character of our universities were deconstructed into oblivion. Maybe the embrace of secularism was the price of admission for Jewish success in America. Or maybe we could simply keep our heads down and focus on getting from Harvard and Penn to the blue-chip firms and first-tier graduate schools, paying little attention to the ideological assault on American civilization happening all around us.

Then came the reckoning that finally reached its climax in the months following October 7th. We woke up and realized that the universities had long since turned against the Jews: in admissions, where Jewish numbers at our most elite schools were in stark decline, and in the suffocating application of an intersectional ideology gone mad, which made Israel the paradigmatic enemy and Jews the embodiment of “white privilege.” Universities that believed their purpose was to create dreamlands of pluralism degenerated into the worst forms of tribalism and acrimony. Universities that prided themselves on creating “safe spaces” for their students believed it was necessary—even noble—to tolerate gangs of pro-Hamas activists calling for the genocide of the Jews.

Tragically, many upside-down Jews actively celebrate the perverse ethos of the intersectional university and join hands with these pro-Hamas activists and their progressive apologists. Such Jews believe that Jewish tradition is oppressively patriarchal and thus needs to be overthrown; they believe that Zionism is a form of colonialism and that Israel is an “apartheid state”; they believe that America is racist and that Jews are part of the white privileged class. They proudly march against their own people—sometimes alongside those who seek the total annihilation of Israel—in some perverse drama of Jewish self-expiation for the sin of Jewish exceptionalism. There is little to say—and little to do—to help such Jews. One simply mourns for them and everything they have lost.

The Jewish accommodationists are very different and far more numerous. They have no grand ideological project. They are pragmatists focused on upward mobility and professional success, and the more hard-nosed

among them see themselves as realists who simply accept that the spoils system of the elite universities is an inescapable reality of American life. In their minds, it is much better to be on the inside rather than the outside of our most prestigious institutions. And so the accommodationists coach their children to focus their ambitions on practical fields like engineering, medicine, and business. They condition them to avoid ideological conflict with their enemies. In humanities courses, the accommodationists submissively write papers that progressive professors want to read; mindlessly mouth slogans that progressive professors want to hear; and compliantly play the pronoun games that progressive administrators want to play. Some parents broadly agree with these progressive ideas, and many children come to embrace them after four years of accommodating their own indoctrination. Others think the whole game is silly or misguided, but they see no reason to make trouble. Better to check the progressive boxes and, prestigious degree in hand, move on to McKinsey, Goldman Sachs, and Apple.

For many Jewish accommodationists, October 7th was a wake-up call. They realized, for the first time, that the rules of the game are now stacked against them; and they came to believe, for the first time, that hiding their sympathy for Israel or minimizing their Jewish identity to appease the progressives in charge was simply too undignified to continue. And so they demanded that universities treat Jews fairly, which means ensuring that Jews are equally protected against hate speech and violence. They demanded greater fairness in admissions policies, where Jews have suffered unjustly for many years as collateral damage of the affirmative action system. They wanted their children to feel comfortable attending their own alma maters, because they could still never imagine the possibility—or the imperative—to create something better. They disliked being singled out for being Jewish—and yet they suddenly felt more Jewish (and fiercely so) than ever before in their lives. They began to wonder whether they had done enough as parents to impart a real Jewish and Zionist identity to their kids before sending them off to college.

Along the way, Jewish activists—and their allies in public life, like Congresswoman Elise Stefanik—forced the high-profile resignations of presidents Claudine Gay of Harvard and Liz Magill of the University of Pennsylvania for their pathetic equivocations on how to respond to overt calls for the annihilation of the Jews on campus. There was a brief sense that maybe we could return to a better version of the old normal, especially if Israel's war against Hamas reached its end. Maybe the universities would become better—more Jew-friendly—versions of themselves, remorseful for their anti-Semitic excesses and practical enough to satisfy the demands of generous Jewish donors.

And then the latest round of encampments began at Columbia and UCLA and Northwestern and Princeton and dozens of other campuses. Classes, final exams, and in-person commencement ceremonies were cancelled. Jews were told to stay away from certain buildings. Public-safety alerts were sent out to students warning them of on-campus threats. Physical fear fed a renewed sense of moral outrage. And moms and dads on listservs everywhere were finally saying: maybe the golden age of the elite American universities is truly over. Maybe it was time, once and for all, to leave. Some even wondered whether the golden age of American Jewry had truly ended. Maybe the Jewish experience in America would turn out to be just as bad as it was in Europe a century ago.

In response to this crisis, I believe there are four clear strategies that honor Jewish dignity, each worthy of consideration and understanding: (i) living in opposition (“the dissident”), (ii) living in isolation (“the separatist”), (iii) moving to Israel (“the Zionist”), or (iv) using Jewish energy to help renew the American project (“the Americanist”). My own energies are focused on the fourth strategy, recommitting as proud Jews to the revitalization of the American soul. Yet each option deserves its due.

II. The Dissidents

The first option—a near-necessity for current upperclassmen in college, who are unlikely to transfer—is to live as Jewish dissidents; to stay and fight at places like Columbia and Penn; to live in opposition at places like UCLA and Harvard. It is to confront the widespread campus assault on Jews, Israel, and America with a proud and courageous defense of our people, our nation, and our civilizational inheritance. The brave young Jews at these campuses surely also seek to preserve the practical advantages of their prestigious degrees, which they worked so hard in high school to access and in college to realize. They appreciate the handful of good teachers that they still have, and they love their college friends and fellow comrades-in-arms. But such students now recognize that they are dissidents, standing up for Jewish dignity against an academic culture that disparages them, and living with actual physical threats as pro-Hamas activists become ever bolder and more violent.

I am proud that many of the dissident Jewish leaders on campuses across America are Tikvah students and alumni. To name just a few of them: Dore Feith, David Lederer, and Michael Lippman at Columbia, Sahar Tartak and Gabe Diamond at Yale, Alex Orbuch and Darius Gross at Princeton, Sabrina Soffer and Alex Lucero at George Washington, Eitan Moore at MIT. These Tikvah students—and hundreds more like them—have organized counter-rallies, written articles in the national press describing the assault, penned public letters to their university presidents detailing the absurd double-standards on their campuses, testified before Congress as witnesses to the moral madness, and organized reading groups of fellow Jews interested in the real study of Jewish and Zionist history. At a recent pro-Israel rally at MIT, the Tikvah student Shabbos Kestenbaum declared: “To my professors who support Hamas, who support the Houthis, who support Hizballah, who are chanting ‘globalize the intifada’ and ‘resistance is justified,’ no keffiyeh nor mask will be able to cover your unvarnished Jew-hatred.”

His words cut to the heart of the matter: the problem is not simply radical student groups and morally confused college presidents. The problem is that the intellectual lifeblood of our elite universities—the teaching faculty—promotes, sympathizes, and encourages the perverse ideology that brings progressive radicals and pro-Hamas activists together to call for the annihilation of Israel and the overthrow of America.

There is surely great nobility in being a Jewish dissident. It requires courage, boldness, and moral conviction. Such students ought to be praised, supported, and encouraged; and their struggle is offering them an education in moral bravery that will serve them well as future leaders. But no sane parent would actively choose to send his son into the underground or entrust his daughter’s education to madmen and frauds—all for the perverse tuition price of \$90,000 per year. And no great civilization can educate its future leaders by forcing them to live entirely in opposition within the very institutions whose purpose ought to be the pursuit of wisdom and the formation of American citizens.

Yes, Jewish donors should fight back against the corruption of their alma maters, pulling their money in the hope that it will lead to meaningful reforms. But the dream of reform seems remote and unlikely, with symbolic victories that obscure the deeper truth: these institutions have no desire to change, and they have enough other sources of money to shrug their shoulders at Jewish pressure. Jewish donors, having already built the laboratories and libraries upon whose walls the Hamasniks project their calls to intifada, do not have enough leverage to change the strategic direction of any elite college in America. These colleges are controlled by true believers. Their faculties and administrators enthusiastically embrace the very worldview—call it “intersectionality,” call it “critical race theory,” call it “wokism,” call it “DEI,” call it “social justice,” call it whatever you want—that nurtured the civilizational assault that now treats the Jews and Israel as target number one and America itself as the big game. Later this month, after all the controversy of the past six months and all the phony gestures toward remorse, Harvard’s commencement speaker will be the Nobel Prize-winning journalist Maria Ressa, who compares Israel to Nazi Germany. The great restoration, alas, is never coming.

III. The Separatists

For the most religious Jews in America—who come from the so-called yeshiva world—the current madness at our universities is not very surprising; it simply confirms, in their mind, their own isolationist or semi-isolationist approach to Jewish life and culture in America. Yeshiva Jews are a relatively small part of American Jewry but also the fastest growing. They decided long ago to separate themselves from the secular (and secularizing) institutions of American higher education. Culturally, Jews from the yeshiva community see the university world as a threat to core Jewish values: sexual modesty; different roles for men and women; observance of Jewish ritual life, the sacred calendar, and the laws of *kashrut*. Intellectually, yeshiva Jews enshrine the study of Jewish law as the highest form of higher learning, and they emphasize practical vocational training over classical liberal education. So they built citadels of their own—like Ner Israel in Baltimore and Beth Medrash Gohova in Lakewood—with thousands of enrolled students.

To the extent that yeshiva Jews access the American university system at all, they do so in very transactional terms, at arms-length and from the cultural security of yeshiva homes rather than from co-ed dormitories or fraternity houses. And while many yeshiva Jews love America—especially for its devotion to religious freedom and economic prosperity—they do not see the fate of America as their responsibility; and they do not believe that renewing America is central to their calling as Jews. America to them is a safer and gentler form of exile—or so it has been for a long time. But America is not, in Lincoln’s phrase, an “almost chosen people,” and if America succumbs to the rising culture of Jew-hatred, the yeshiva Jew will either erect higher walls or leave America entirely for the last and only refuge for God’s chosen people: Israel.

A few months ago—after October 7th but well before the latest round of riots—a colleague of mine taught a group of Modern Orthodox Jews as part of their gap-year studies in Israel between high school and college. Most of these students were not raised to be a people apart in America; and most of them are slated to attend schools like Columbia, Princeton, the University of Maryland, and Yeshiva University. Here is how he described their attitude toward the United States:

What I learned is that, of these 30 or so young Americans, all on the spectrum between modern Orthodox and perhaps a shade to the right of modern Orthodox – virtually *none* care deeply about America. Don't get me wrong: they don't wish America ill. But they are simply not inspired by the American story, or feel much obligated to American loyalty, and they have been taught from a very young age that they are always *potentially Israeli*. It's as if they didn't even grow up in America; they grew up instead in a community called "potentially-Israel, but for the time being Lawrence/Baltimore/Teaneck/Los Angeles."

The sad spectacle of progressive America's response to October 7th will only push many such Jews—and perhaps many secular American Jews, with deepened Jewish pride and collapsing faith in American exceptionalism—to make their lives in Israel. In other words: farewell Columbia and Harvard; Jerusalem and Tel Aviv await.

IV. The Zionists and the Americanists

Every Jew should celebrate when young Jews in the diaspora decide to move to Israel; to marry their lives and destinies to the re-born Jewish state; to raise Jewish children who will serve in the Israeli army, speak Hebrew as their first language, and live in the sacred land of our ancestors. And we should especially admire those young American Jews whose response to the war against Israel is to join the Israeli army, to hear the call of Jewish history, to trade the well-trodden path of American college life for the underground tunnels of Gaza and the dream of marrying under a *huppah* in Jerusalem.

In the last few months, the major Israeli universities have launched active campaigns to recruit American students—offering English-language BA programs, with three-year degrees at a lower cost than their American counterparts. They are betting that American students will be attracted to the ancient heritage of the Jewish people and the start-up nation culture of innovation, and to the promise of attending college in an environment that celebrates Jews and Israel rather than attacking or discrediting them. It is a compelling case, marrying the pull of appealing to the deepest yearnings of the Jewish soul and the push of Jewish self-doubt about the viability and security of American Jewish life. The deeper message is clear: Israel is—and should be—the ultimate destiny of the Jewish people. No Jew—lucky enough to live in the age of Israel re-born—can question that Zionist summons.

Yet in this moment of civilizational crisis, American Jews should also understand and appreciate the unique importance of the United States—as a nation, as an idea, as a force for good in shaping the future of the world. Without a strong America, Israel will potentially face enemies it cannot overcome—or be forced into great power alliances with China or Russia that risk compromising its highest values. Without a strong America, tyrants and madmen—eventually armed with nuclear weapons—will hold civilized peoples hostage. Without a strong America, the Hebraic vision of the world will lose its greatest defender. Without a strong America, the renewal of Western civilization is doomed. America remains the indispensable nation, and a strong America means a more Hebraic America: a nation that returns to its covenantal roots. This is why America needs the Jews—including our "Old Testament" wisdom, clarity, and toughness—more than ever. And this means that American Jews have a grand purpose—a sacred call to help redeem the American project—if we choose to accept it.

V. The Exodus Project

To heed this call, American Jews will need a paradigm shift in our political, moral, and civilizational imagination. We will need to build deeper friendships and alliances with patriotic Americans—especially Christian Americans—who love Israel, share our Hebraic values, and seek our guidance in renewing the moral center of American culture. We will need to relocate in large numbers to new and more welcoming parts of the country—including the Southeast, the Southwest, and other more conservative regions of the country that protect religious freedom and promote religious education. We will need to regain the confidence that we—as Jews—can help build new centers of academic, scientific, and professional excellence and accept that many of the old ones are irredeemable. And we will need to reassert, for ourselves and for our children, that being Jewish matters, that being Jewish is a majestic inheritance, that being Jewish is a great responsibility, that being Jewish is an invitation to play a leading role in the center of the human drama.

As a central part of this effort—and our boldest answer to the current campus crisis—American Jews ought to inaugurate and invest in a new Exodus Project, encouraging young Jews to matriculate en masse to colleges and universities that welcome and embrace us. American Jews should see this communal imperative as equivalent in scope and significance to Birthright Israel: a large-scale effort to steer young Jews to colleges and universities that meet very clear standards of Jewish excellence and Jewish purpose. University by university, we should identify those places (i) that value the unique contributions of the Jewish people to Western civilization; (ii) that celebrate the study of Israel and encourage students to study abroad in the Jewish state; (iii) that offer core courses on Jewish thought, history, and culture that probe the great questions of human life and the great leaders of Jewish history; (iv) that have zero tolerance for student groups whose purpose is the delegitimization and destruction of Jews and Israel; (v) that celebrate religious freedom and encourage students of every tradition to deepen their faith commitments; and (vi) that believe their purpose is to educate loyal American citizens and leaders, who will carry our nation forward as a force for good in the world.

The Jewish community should ensure that every worthy university with these values builds the basic infrastructure of Jewish life: places of worship, kosher dining houses, rabbis-in-residence, higher forms of Jewish culture and spirited forms of Jewish friendship. We should create honors programs that put Jewish civilization at the center, and we should invest in scholarships that encourage the most talented and most knowledgeable young Jews to be pioneers in schools that will welcome them with open arms. These pioneers will form the nuclei of Jewish life, attracting more and more students in admissions cycle after admissions cycle. In fields like medicine, law, and engineering, Jewish donors can help these universities attract the best professors and best students, by investing heavily in the infrastructure and human capital that create oases of creativity and excellence.

Alongside strengthening important institutions like Yeshiva University and Touro, we should also endeavor to build new Jewish colleges of our own that put greater focus on the political and moral lessons of Jewish history, on the meaning of Jewish nationalism, and on the role of Jewish ideas in shaping Western civilization. We need a core curriculum that focuses on the great books and great leaders of Jewish civilization, on the Hebrew Bible and the rabbinic tradition, on thinkers like Maimonides and Samson Raphael Hirsch, on novels like *Daniel Deronda* and writers like

Sholem Aleichem, on leaders like Herzl and statesmen like Ben Gurion, on the meaning of the Six-Day War and the culture of start-up nation.

In truth, the first rumblings of this exodus of American Jews is already afoot, with more and more Jewish students heading to major universities in states like Texas, Florida, and Alabama. We simply need to celebrate and encourage the new exodus; and we need to help make the best of these schools into true exemplars of academic excellence. “Wow Harvard!” should give way to “Why Harvard?”. We simply need the nerve to build anew in new places, and we need the clarity to recognize that our true friends—the ones attending our seders in Florida, flying Israeli flags in Texas, and seeking Jewish wisdom in rural Michigan—need us as much as we need them.

VI. Jews and the American Soul

Throughout the 20th century, Jewish talent, energy, and ambition helped build many of the most important institutions of American life—in business, science, media, and the academy. And, going back to the American founding, the spirit of the Israelites shaped the very meaning of America as a land of exile from tyranny, as a nation devoted to religious freedom, and eventually as a great power that could proclaim and defend liberty throughout the world when it came under its greatest assault.

In their response to the current crisis, many Jewish leaders have focused on the imperative of Jewish safety and the defense of free speech. These are worthy aims, and no doubt young Jews will be safer and more respected in places like the University of Florida and SMU than at Columbia and Harvard. Yet these aims alone—safety and free inquiry—are far too limited if we take our high calling as American Jews seriously. The purpose of a great American university is not to let every ideology have free rein, however discredited by fact and history. The purpose of a great American university is the perpetuation of the best of our Judeo-Christian civilizational inheritance and the formation of young men and women who seek to preserve and renew our way of life. That leaves great room for free inquiry and civil disagreement, as we seek together to uncover the mysteries of the world and to make sense of the difficult challenges of living well within history. But free speech and free inquiry are not gods; and even in an academic culture that has succumbed to a perverse form of progressive thought-control, we should not allow our devotion to academic freedom to empower those who seek to destroy the very moral and political foundations of ordered liberty. The issue is not fear of evil speech or the need for safe spaces; it is contempt for evil itself—and the confidence that we, as Jews and as Americans, still know the difference between civilization and barbarism.

The current assault against the Jews is not driven by irrational prejudice. It is deeper and more purposeful. The Jews represent everything the enemies of American civilization seek to destroy: the *moral code of the Hebrew Bible*, which the anti-Jews seek to replace with woke secularism or radical Islam; the *culture of meritocracy*, which the anti-Jews seek to replace with the false justice of the new “diversity, equity, and inclusion” regime; and the *belief in national sovereignty*, which the anti-Zionists seek to destroy in the name of UN-style utopianism. As go the Jews, so goes the West. The radical activists and their academic apologists understand this deep civilizational truth—and so must we.

American Jews are a twice chosen people, chosen by God and chosen by history. If, as Jews and as Americans, we still believe that America matters

for the fate of mankind—and that the fate of America itself now hangs in the balance—then we should commit ourselves to the project of American renewal. We should focus not simply on our safety in America but our responsibility for America. Are we up for the challenge? Shall the new exodus begin?

This essay was adapted from a speech given at Tikvah in May 2024.

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**Photo Credit: Students hold a rally in support of Israel and against anti-Semitism at Columbia University, February 14, 2024.
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