

CONGREGATION BETH EL LIBRARY – NEW TITLES - FEBRUARY, 2012

**The Anatomy of Israel's Survival**, by Hirsh Goodman. N.Y.: Public Affairs, 2011. **953.235 G** The question "Can Israel survive?" used to infuriate the author as he thought of its 60+ years of longevity, but now he sees merit to the question. Not since Hitler has the Jewish people had such threats. There are challenges from Arab demography, Iran, terrorism, growth of the ultraorthodox community, fragile relations with other Middle East countries, continuous attack of its liberal legal system by right wing and more. The book is Goodman's attempt to thoroughly examine all the perils and see the possibility of a better future for the region.

**Beginnings; The First Love, the First Hate, the First Dream...Reflections on the Bible's Intriguing Firsts**, by Meir Shalev. New York: Harmony Books, 2011. **220.8 S** One of Israel's prominent prize-winning authors provides us with a book of Biblical firsts, each one expanded into fascinating storytelling. There are many surprises here as Shalev focuses on Biblical texts to unearth the first love, death, laugh, crying, kiss, law, prophet and more. The author urges us, though familiar with the narratives, to go back to the original and make new discoveries about our heritage and ourselves.

**The Eichmann Trial**, by Deborah Lipstadt. New York: Nextbook/Schocken, 2011. **940.51 L** Lipstadt, Professor of Modern Jewish History and Holocaust Studies at Emory University, believes that the Eichmann trial, whose main objective was to bring a "Nazi who helped organize and carry out genocide to justice, transformed Jewish life and society as much as it passed judgment on a murderer. In the general world it changed our perception of the victims of genocide." She describes the capture and subsequent trial of Adolf Eichmann by Jewish authorities and examines the effects genocide has on survivors. Lipstadt contrasts this trial with Nuremberg where the victors conducted the trials of multiple defendants. At a later time, Eichmann stood alone at his trial and was judged by many of his victims.

**Extraordinary**, by Nancy Werlin. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 2010. **yFICTION** Werlin, Melrose, MA novelist, author of *Impossible*, a New York Times bestseller presents us with a wonderful story of friendship, loyalty, self-esteem and Jewish life in the US. Phoebe befriends Mallory, an awkward new girl at school, and the two become very close, but Phoebe is unaware that Mallory is a faerie, sent to trap her into fulfilling a promise made by her ancestor to the queen of the faeries. A good read for young adults.

**God of Me, Imagining God Throughout Your Lifetime**, by Rabbi David Lyon. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing Company, 2011. **251 L** The author states that this book is written especially for those who have wrestled with God and come out of the experience without much success. He himself has wrestled with God and remained faithful largely because of great role models. The book is founded on the principle that everyone can pursue a personal relationship

with God just as our patriarchs and matriarchs did. How we come to imagine God is an individual endeavor. Judaism has no dogma, but comes close with the principle of One God. The book's chapters follow traditional Torah text and Rabbinic Midrash to open the way for mature God seekers to find God's presence in their lives.

**The Torah, A Woman's Commentary.** Edited by Dr. Tamara Cohn Eskenazi and Rabbi Andrea L. Weiss. New York: Women of Reform Judaism, URJ Press, 2008. **R 222.07 E** This is a contemporary Torah commentary written by Jewish women. Distinguished women scholars, clergy and poets illuminate the meaning of the Torah by using both traditional tools and innovative approaches. New insights and questions are brought to our sacred traditions. The writers make use of many approaches—literary analysis, historical criticism, comparative linguistics, philology, archeology, anthropology, and society to explain and interpret Torah. This is an important book for both female and male students of Torah.