LEHRHAUS
Over Shabbat

Beshalah

Vol. 8, Issue 19 • 16 Shevat 5784 / January 26, 2024

Israel is at war, and the suffering is difficult to bear. To better appreciate this transformation and the pressures of this moment, we have assembled a symposium of community leaders and thinkers to address the effect of the crisis on Diaspora Jewry.

THE GREAT RECKONING: IS IT TIME TO RETHINK HIGHER EDUCATION FOR JEWISH STUDENTS?

Erica Brown is the Vice Provost for Values and Leadership at Yeshiva University and the founding director of its Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks-Herenstein Center for Values and Leadership.

Editor's Note: The following piece is part of Lehrhaus' current symposium: Israel At War.

We are at that anxious time of the academic year: when seniors in high school are panicking about college applications. They are fixing their essays, trying to impress, and figuring out who they are and what they want in the process. Those in their gap year in Israel are considering whether or not to stay for another year and defer (or change) colleges, and what night of the week would be best to have "that conversation" with their parents.

It's a time of transition, creativity, agitation, and excitement. There are so many choices out there, and each will create a different trajectory, some by degree and some by order of magnitude. Despite the pressures, it's also a beautiful time of questioning, discomfort, and development; these gorgeous young souls are forging their own way, individuating from parents and friends, and taking risks on the path to self-discovery.

But this application season in particular will be a time of even greater bewilderment than usual. Nursed on dreams of high achievement and its

attendant rewards and burdens, many Jewishly observant young people who want a break from the routine of Jewish day school to see the 'real world' will be rethinking choices. These students may feel their wings clipped by the recent wave of hate on many—but not all—college campuses in the United States.

It is precisely because of this new tension that it is time for students in the throes of this important decision to have some candid and brutally honest conversations with those currently in college to mine their experiences. We can no longer afford to hear only what we want to hear to confirm our preexisting choices and biases. We have to be open to painful truths.

Axiomatic to centrist Orthodoxy is the belief that one can live a Torah-saturated lifestyle and valorize and participate in the larger world of ideas while contributing to that world intellectually and through acts of service and justice. To that end, many have encouraged their children, consciously and subconsciously, to study at secular institutions of higher learning, especially elite universities, as preparation for this integrated future. They do so because they value the quality of instruction, the social integration, the cache of the degree, and the professional doors such degrees open in terms of employment possibilities. They also believe that our children have an important Jewish voice that should be freely expressed and influential on college campuses. They—we—have long been aware of the potential dangers of exposure but, for the most part, have decided that the benefits outweigh the costs.

It may be time to interrogate these suppositions.

The costs right now may be too great. The threatening landscape of many college campuses for Jewish students today should make us pause and question the value of an American university education, at least temporarily. There are excellent alternative options in the United States and in Israel where students can live fully and authentically as religious Jews and Zionists while advancing intellectually and professionally. But, if we believe that despite the many costs today, it is still worthwhile to promote secular colleges, we need to prepare students for new realities because our current crop was woefully underprepared for this tense historic moment.

For the sake of argument, let's present two scenarios from a student's perspective, analyze them, and then discuss pragmatically how we can better equip our high school students to more confidently and comfortably manage the challenges of higher education in this moment.

Best-Case Scenario:
You are studying at a secular college, getting a stellar education, continuing to learn and pray daily, and growing spiritually. You feel safe and respected as a Jew. You've made wonderful friends on campus, both Jewish and non-Jewish, and you feel informed enough to challenge the settler-colonial narrative about Israel that you've encountered on the quad. You are well prepared to educate your non-Jewish friends and classmates that intersectionality has been dangerous for Jews, and that antisemitism is the only microaggression—actually a real

aggression—that's currently tolerated by the university's DEI committee. Your non-Jewish friends are interested and growth-oriented and show up with you and for you at rallies to offer support against injustice. They are not silent. You help those friends understand what "from the river to the sea" actually means. You do not find identity politics distracting. You went to college to learn to think critically and have many opportunities to do so.

Worst-Case Scenario:

You are studying at a secular college. You do not feel physically or emotionally safe owning your Judaism or showing others on campus your religious/ethnic identity through outward symbols. You've walked past pro-Palestinian rallies several times in a kippah or star-of-David necklace and have been told that you are vermin by those praising jihad and the intifada. They tell you without shame that rape and murder is justified and that you do not belong. You see classmates and even friends at those rallies. You find yourself quietly shrinking as a Jew and as a human being from any attention whatsoever. You are afraid to tell your Friday lab partner that you are leaving early because of your Sabbath commitment. You are now spending more and more time with Jewish friends—especially those you knew from beforehand—because post-October 7th, few (if any) of your non-Jewish friends have acknowledged your pain. Their silence is deafening. Your favorite professor made overtly political pro-Hamas statements in class and no longer makes eye contact with you. Your college president waffled when confronted with Jew hate on campus and those who call for genocide. You are shocked by how quickly your comfort level at college has changed. It only took a few days. You have chosen not to share these feelings with your parents because you picked this college yourself after an expensive college tour. They are footing an enormous tuition bill.

Where to Go From Here:

This worst-case scenario is no exaggeration. It is a composite of observations culled from actual college students I've been in contact with or read about since October 7th, when assumptions they made about the world as they knew it collapsed.

There are institutions of higher learning—mostly coastal—where Jewish students have been spat at and screamed at with a rhetoric and a rancor unrecognizable. They have been taunted in texts and locked into libraries and kosher cafeterias, and some of them are afraid to go to class. In rare instances, they have been humiliated by professors. It is exhausting and punishing to learn under these conditions. It will be instructive to see what happens to the grade point averages of these Jewish students now that we've closed this semester. We can expect many Jewish students to carry considerable post-traumatic stress syndrome, even though we are not post-anything just yet.

Many of their college presidents made tepid statements that, if they revised, were edited due to fear of the tsunami of donor disgust they received and not out of some sudden moral urgency. Check the dates of these letters relative to October 7th, just to be sure. Some presidents of the most prestigious institutions in this country

have made dramatic errors of judgment that showed their true colors.

Yet, despite this, there are some parents within our Orthodox community who are still doing the dance of cognitive dissonance. They express disbelief, send angry emails of outrage to their alma maters, and question the weak or inadequate response of its leadership. They recognize how different their own university experience was from those waging the war of identity politics now on campus. They defend the right of Jews to attend these universities so that their children can speak out, protest, and secure Jewish safety on campus for all Jews in the future. If Jewish students leave, we're giving in to the enemy, they think. They are still encouraging their children to apply and attend these institutions of higher learning because, although this is happening, it is an aberration from the norm. And it is. But this is our reality *right now*. With this thinking, we risk deceiving ourselves about the psychological dangers to these young people. These are environments that not only challenge our core values, but they are also places where our children feel threatened.

A child's intellectual and emotional wellbeing is *not* up for grabs. It is not some kind of sacrifice made to prove a point or promote some elusive societal good. A child's soul is precious. Where anxiety lives, learning cannot live. Maybe it's time to wait until the identity politics of intersectionality has breathed its last so that our observant Jewish students can stand proudly with their convictions. Maybe wait—as I did—until graduate school for exposure to that big, wide world. Make no mistake. Our students, for the most part, are simply not informed enough right now to fight this fight. The lion's den is filled with menace.

To this point, it may be high time for the leadership of all Jewish high schools to revisit the curriculum for seniors. In many schools, senior year is the weakest year of learning, although the tuition is the same. The second semester experience is typically thinner on content and meaningful educational development and could be enhanced through intensive coursework and practical training in the following arenas:

1) Students should have a course on Zionism and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They should know the history and the major thinkers of the movement and situate their own beliefs within this framework.
2) Students need to leave high school having read about, discussed, and debated the philosophy of *Torah u-Madda* and what it really means to live an integrated life. What might their contributions to broader society entail? What is their ongoing responsibility to improve a world that has, of the moment, betrayed them? What filters should they put in place to protect their Jewish values while exposing themselves to alternative lifestyles, different ethnic and religious commitments, and competing beliefs?
3) Students also need to complete a comprehensive, historical, and

contemporary survey on antisemitism so that they can define it, identify it, and fight it.

4) Students should be given training in the mechanics of political activism. Religious activism, like prayer and singing, is important. So too is attending rallies, voting, and writing letters to political officials.
5) Students need to learn civics and more about the executive, judicial, and legislative branches of our government and how they can participate in the political process.

Our students are facing a moment for which they are utterly underprepared. A curriculum rich in Jewish texts but weak on how to live as a Jew in today's society will not serve our high school graduates well. We must train our students more explicitly for life on campus, no matter where they are going, because this will also serve them well in the offices and boardrooms of the future.

This is not a moment to retreat from society. Yet, if we have learned anything from the events and the aftermath of October 7th, it is to question some core assumptions about the world as we know it and possibly wait until it is safer for our students to embrace a world that is shunning them now. After October 7th, when people both say and demonstrate that they want to harm us and endanger Jewish lives on campus, we must believe them. College should be a time of enlightenment, intellectually and socially. It should not be a time of fear and anxiety. This should be an educational inflection point for the Orthodox community. Let us point to October 7th as a time that changed us for the worse and also changed us for the better.

THE CHALLENGES OF THE GAZA WAR AND GROWING ANTISEMITISM

Yosef Blau is the Senior Mashgiach Ruchani at Yeshiva University and was the president of the Religious Zionists of America from 2005 to 2017.

Editor's Note: The following piece is part of Lehrhaus' current symposium: Israel At War.

The Jewish people are in shock. Israel is facing its greatest threat since the War of Independence and the reaction has been a dramatic increase of antisemitic incidents throughout the western world. In Israel the response of its citizens has been remarkable. At a time of polarization with fear of a civil war, the people united in volunteering wherever needed. After the end of the war, when inquiries about policy mistakes and security failures will begin, that unity won't be maintained. There will need to be a period of re-evaluation for the spectrum of political parties, both the religious and the secular. The Religious Zionist world, which has seen itself as the emerging leadership, must examine its move to the extreme right politically and honestly understand its relationship to the broader Israeli public.

This war has ended the Zionist myth that having our own state will solve the problem of antisemitism. This observation in no way reduces the transformative impact of having a Jewish state and returning to our homeland Israel. The relationship between Israeli and diaspora Jewry,

particularly American Jews, has become much more complex. The number of Evangelicals in America who support Israel is far greater than the total number of Jews, but the interdependence of American and Israeli Jewry is of more significance; how to best structure this relationship is still an open question. The majority of American Jews showed their commitment to Israel in the massive rally in Washington. But how deep this commitment is, and how many young non-Orthodox Jews share it, is not clear. Young non-Orthodox American Jews are moving to the left and are universalists while young Israeli Jews are becoming increasingly nationalistic and right wing. The Modern Orthodox are the exception. Israel is part of their religious identity with most spending a year or more in Israel studying after high school. Even though they are most connected, there is a difference of mentality between Modern Orthodox and *Dati Leumi* adherents.

The Israel that will emerge after the war ends and Israel redefines itself and its relationship with world Jewry will affect whether *Aliyah* from America increases. An Israel that was not prepared to protect its citizens from a horrendous terrorist attack and now faces decisions which affect its identity may not be an alternative for many American Jews. On the other hand, the sense that America is different because it gives its Jews full opportunity to succeed, and is a place where antisemitism only exists on the fringes, is no longer clear. Having failed to recognize the growth of antisemitism, the leadership of American Jewry may need to be replaced. Moreover, attempting to ally American Jewry with a particular American political party is neither feasible nor desirable. A party that supports Jews today may turn around tomorrow.

Israelis are not united about how to treat their Palestinian neighbors—whether to grant them full citizenship rights in a greater Israel, or to accept some version of two states. It is no longer an option to delay any decision and maintain the status quo. After the war ends, someone will oversee rebuilding Gaza and governing its more than two million residents. Within the Religious Zionist community, many believe that a greater Israel is part of an irreversible Messianic process. The opposition of the rest of the world, including the United States, is irrelevant to them. War tends to move citizens to the right. However, an unpopular right-ist government in Israel has lost the trust of the people. The next election will hopefully lead to a coalition government that will determine the future direction of the State.

There are different strands of Religious Zionism. I belong to the approach that has lost favor. I don't view all events through a Messianic lens. From my perspective, Israel's future will depend on finding a path to live in peace with its neighbors, even at the cost of giving up territory. We must grant full rights to non-Jews under our jurisdiction. Israel is in a bind. Fighting a brutal enemy is not the time for rational analysis, but without a strategy for after the war the military lacks sufficient defined goals, which limits its ability to fight and reach a satisfactory conclusion for the war. While I want to promote *Aliyah*, I don't see American Jewry disappearing. For the near future there has to be partnership between the two communities of Israel and the diaspora. Israel is the Jewish country, implying it has an ethical responsibility

for world Jewry while granting full citizenship to its Arab minority. It is a difficult balance but a necessary one.

Whether we Modern Orthodox Jews are in America or Israel, we need to be a bridge between elements in our community who define their Jewishness in a variety of ways that are sometimes contradictory. On the one hand, the future direction of the Haredi community both in Israel and America is unclear. The contrasting reactions within the Haredi world to the Washington rally (some yeshivot supported it but some did not) and within Israel reflect a loss of trust in leadership. Future leadership of the Haredi community will be determined internally, and Modern Orthodoxy will not play a defined role. There is also the Israeli *Dati* community, but it is extreme; it would have to revert to an earlier model before it can help unite the Israeli Jewish community. Thus, Modern Orthodoxy must model a committed observant Orthodoxy that can function in a modern Western liberal world. Accepting the reality that not all young American Jewish men and women will go to Yeshiva University, withdrawing from secular universities is not an option. When Jews were in the ghetto there was at least as much antisemitism. We need to figure out how to respond to that antisemitism, but we cannot grow so insular that we shun the world around us. It is true that in America, Modern Orthodoxy has limited influence on the non-Orthodox and the Haredi worlds, but it is the only bridge between them.

"Lu Yehi": Between Fragility and Hope

Rebecca Cypess is Professor of Music and Faculty Affiliate in Jewish Studies at Rutgers University and recently visited Israel with the Jewish Studies Scholars Israel Solidarity Trip.

I visited Tel Aviv's Kikar Ha-Hatufim (Hostage Square) 88 days, nine hours, and one minute after Hamas's horrific attack in Israel on October 7, 2023. I know that length of time so precisely because of the enormous digital clock that looms over the square. If the clock conveys the profound urgency of the hostages' plight, the square itself offers a space for meditation, reflection, and the insistent, prayerful demands of the here-and-now that stand apart from the quotidian experience of time.

The renewed relevance of the song "Lu Yehi," written by the iconic Israeli composer Naomi Shemer (1930-2004) during Israel's Yom Kippur War 50 years ago, captures this paradoxical sense of time at Hostage Square, where the song seems to be on everyone's lips. Israel sustained terrible losses during the Yom Kippur War, and Shemer's song effectively became the prayerful anthem of the nation. Today, as Israel and worldwide Jewry continue to grapple with the horrors of the

October 7th attack, and as the list of casualties from the ongoing war grows, Shemer's song resonates with renewed urgency. During my brief but heartbreaking visit to Hostage Square, I heard numerous versions of "Lu Yehi" sung by people from a range of ages and backgrounds. Some renditions sounded insistent and confident, while others were halting, uncertain, and strikingly fragile.

The history of the song and the meaning embedded in the lyrics explain why it resonates so strongly in a post-October 7th world. Shemer initially conceived of "Lu Yehi" as a cover—a Hebrew version of the Beatles's "Let It Be." Yet, as Wendy Zierler explains, the result was a "linguistic and cultural translation" that was anything but literal. "Instead," as Zierler writes, Shemer created "a distinctively contemporary Israeli song of prayer. Even in the places where she borrowed directly from the imagery of the Beatles song, she transformed it into a more Jewishly resonant… form."[1] This transformation can be seen in a comparison of the lyrics of the two songs. Jeffrey Salkin points out that Paul McCartney's "Let It Be" conveys a dispassionate, detached approach to world events, as if to say, "whatever happens, it will be fine":[2]

> When I find myself in times of trouble, Mother Mary comes to me,
> Speaking words of wisdom, "let it be."

For McCartney, troubling times call for stoic acceptance. By contrast, Salkin shows, Shemer's "Lu Yehi"—"May it Be So"[3]—pleads for a better world:

> There's a white sail yet on the horizon,
> Against the black and heavy clouds,
> All that we request, may it be so.
> And if, in the evening windows,
> The light of the holiday candles flicker,
> All that we request, may it be so.

In Shemer's lyrics, national prayer—not traditional liturgy, but deeply Jewish in its literary allusions and its aspirational mode—has the capacity to change the world[4]. In this first stanza, the "light of the holiday candles" refers to the continued observance of the holidays of Tishrei—the month in which the Yom Kippur War

[1] Wendy Zierler, "Hebrew Poetry, Prayer, and Translation: Naomi Shemer's Songs of the Yom Kippur War," *Tradition* 55, no. 3 (Summer 2023): 74.

[2] Jeffrey Salkin, "How a Famous Beatles Song Became Jewish," https://religionnews.com/2018/09/21/beatles-let-it-be-lu-yehi/ (September 21, 2018; accessed January 11, 2024).

[3] While Zierler translates the phrase "lu yehi" as "let it be," I find this English construction too vague; it can mean either "may it be so" or "leave it alone," and I think the context in which it appears in the Beatles' song implies the latter.

[4] The footnote that she would like to include is: Motti Regev and Edwin Seroussi have argued that Shemer's "Lu Yehi" "gained the status of a secular prayer soon after its release." See Motti Regev and Edwin Seroussi, *Popular Music and National Culture in Israel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 67.

began—in spite of the despair and sadness of war. The "white sail" set against "black and heavy clouds" may simply refer to Shemer's stubborn optimism during the darkest times, but it may also refer to Ezekiel 27:7, in which the word *mifras* (sail) is equated to the word *nes*, which can mean either "banner" or "miracle": "Embroidered linen from Egypt was the sail that served as your banner/miracle." The image of the sail may denote miraculous salvation. In asking that her requests be granted, Shemer does not accept the world as it is but imagines what it could be.

As reported by the *Jerusalem Post*, it was Shemer's husband who insisted that she discard the Beatles' melody and create her own: "I won't let you waste this song on a foreign tune," he said. "This is a Jewish war, and you should give it a Jewish tune." With this advice, he was encouraging Shemer to create something original, something new to meet the distinctly difficult moment in which Israel found itself. But what, precisely, did he mean by "a Jewish tune?" Perhaps, in this case, a "Jewish tune" meant nothing more than a tune created by a Jewish artist, living in the context of a dreadful war against Jews in Israel, praying and expressing hope against all odds.

Shemer alluded to that sense of hope in the third stanza of her poem: "What is the sound that I hear? The sound of the shofar and the sound of drums (*tupim*). All that we request, may it be so." Like so much great Hebrew poetry, Shemer's lyrics evoke the biblical. Both the shofar and the drums have military connotations, to be sure, but their symbolism reaches beyond the military to conjure dreams of redemption. The shofar is a symbol of God's eternal covenant with the family of Abraham , who slaughtered a ram instead of his son at the Binding of Isaac, and it will ultimately announce the arrival of the Messiah. Shemer's reference to *tupim* recalls the music that Miriam and the other Jewish women made after crossing the Red Sea: "Then Miriam the prophet, Aaron's sister, picked up a *tof*, and all the women went out after her with *tupim* and *meholot* (timbrels)" (Exodus 15:20). At the end of a period of slavery—of generations of oppression and loss—the *tof* was an instrument of national redemption.

Because of its association with Miriam and the other women at the Red Sea, the *tof* bears a gendered connotation that may have resonated with Shemer. Midrashic commentaries on Exodus noted how strange it was that the women possessed musical instruments at all. The *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Yishmael* (15:20) explains that the presence of musical instruments confirmed that the Jews had faith that the redemption would come: "They were righteous people, certain in the knowledge that the Holy One, Blessed is He, would perform miracles and triumphs. At the time when they left Egypt, they prepared their *tupim* and *meholot*." Rashi deviates from the *Mekhilta* slightly, attributing this faith to the women in particular: "So certain were the righteous *women* of that generation…" The notion that it was the women who held onto their faith, and thus that *they* were the ones who brought their *tupim* with them when they fled slavery, aligns with the stubborn hope that the women showed in Egypt when they continued to bear children despite Pharoah's decree that all Jewish boys should be killed. When the men gave up on the future, the

women insisted that they give birth to the next generation. Shemer's reference to the sound of *tupim* in "Lu Yehi" recalls the faith that these Jewish women showed millennia earlier.

I visited Hostage Square with a group of college professors from the U.S. Many of us had just been through a semester filled with shock and anger at the way in which our institutions of higher education had devolved into a frenzy of anti-Israel and antisemitic hatred. As we anticipated, our colleagues at Israeli institutions reported that they are going through something similar—if not formal BDS resolutions, then what we might call a "soft boycott," in which academics throughout the world now give Israelis the silent treatment or allow long-standing research collaborations to collapse. We came to Israel to condole with one another, to extend a hand of friendship to our still grieving Israeli colleagues, and to start talking about how to build a different future. The reunions and the first meetings with those Israeli colleagues were emotional, to be sure, but nothing could have prepared me for the sense of loss and stubborn hope that engulfs Hostage Square.

The square struck me as an ever-evolving monument to the fragility of life. With the grand Tel Aviv Art Museum in the background, the plaza has become a site of pop-up art, organized by seemingly invisible hands. In addition to the empty Shabbat table that has been replicated in communities around the world to mark the absence of the hostages still held in captivity in Gaza, there are art installations of other sorts, some organized by non-governmental groups and others seemingly spontaneous and individual: tents commemorating each of the kibbutz communities destroyed on October 7th, posters that have been hung up by organizations and individuals, drawings and words left by visitors, rocks organized into elaborate messages and patterns, and a foam yellow brick road with handwritten messages to lead the hostages home. The square had been used throughout much of 2023 for protests of the Netanyahu government's planned overhaul of the Israeli judicial system, but it was transformed after October 7th into a site of constant vigil for the hostages, of whom over 135 remain in captivity today. Much of the same volunteer infrastructure that enabled the protests has now been repurposed to help the hostages' families and to work for their return.

As a musicologist and musician, I was drawn to the sounds of Hostage Square. A makeshift stage stands in the middle of the square, complete with a piano, microphones, and a portable amplification system. Plastic chairs are stacked on top of one another, sometimes taken down to allow for an audience, and sometimes pushed aside and out of the way. As I stood in front of the stage, numerous musicians came and went: two girls who played the piano together, a man who played and sang haltingly, hesitantly, as if he were rehearsing. A larger a cappella group came as well. I was unsure if they were performing formally—they started to do so just as we were leaving the square—but, at first, they, too, were merely rehearsing, starting and stopping as if finding their voices and looking around to see if anyone was listening. It struck me as precisely the right kind of music-making for Hostage Square: searching, uncertain, tentative. And it seemed

just right that "Lu Yehi" was among the songs they were practicing.

We wandered away from the stage, and the music I had heard—together with all the makeshift, do-it-yourself artwork and the highchairs at the empty Shabbat table—made me disintegrate into sobbing tears. A young journalist from *Haaretz* who had been assigned to talk to our group of professors, but whom I had not yet met, came over to hug me. I apologized profusely, though even I wasn't sure why I was apologizing—for crying, thereby drawing attention to myself, or for living in a world where innocent people could be taken hostage?—and the journalist reassured me that it was okay. Even total strangers hug each other now. In a world of fragility, it seems, everyone is seeking stability.

We wandered to another part of the square and encountered a circle of people, one playing a guitar, all singing "Lu Yehi." The woman leading the group had a microphone, and others were handing out sheets of paper with the lyrics to passersby. My group stopped to listen, and I took a short video.

Their "Lu Yehi" was not tentative—it was insistent, confident. In fact, it reminded me of Naomi Shemer's own performance of the song, full of expressive flexibility, but rendered in her characteristically insistent voice.

Especially by the later stanzas, Shemer's performance conveys a self-confidence that almost seems to contradict the sense of yearning embedded in her text. Perhaps that conflict between confidence and yearning captures something essential about the modern Jewish experience, especially since the founding of the State of Israel.

As we left the square, the a cappella group by the makeshift stage had amassed a large audience and was beginning a more formal performance. Writing this essay days later, I was certain that they had started with "Lu Yehi." Yet a friend corrected me: the a cappella group was singing "Let It Be." How had I made that mistake? Perhaps, in my mind's ear, I expected to hear "Lu Yehi." Perhaps I longed for the group to replace the passivity of the Beatles with the prayer and aspiration of Shemer's song.

Music is, by definition, a testament to fragility. Music is ephemeral—here one moment, gone the next. We capture its melodies and rhythms with certain kinds of writing (staff notation, masoretic trop) that is more or less precise. But the writing is not the music; it is merely a pictorial representation of music already made or an aide-memoire for music that is yet to come. In its ephemerality, its fragility, music mirrors something essential about life.

At the same time, music evokes memory and marks the passage of time. The melodies of holidays and special occasions return again and again; the quiet of the house of mourning is eventually replaced by the music of the everyday. Naomi Shemer's "Lu Yehi" does not have the long history of many of these melodies, but it forms part of a musical liturgy of modern Jewish life. Through its text, it reaches back to the hope and faith of Miriam at the Red Sea. Through its music—made "Jewish" by virtue of the person

who composed it and the tragic circumstances in which she did so—it points the way to a prayerful, hopeful future.