

THE JEWISH FOUNDATION *for the righteous*

“WHOEVER SAVES A SINGLE LIFE IS
AS IF ONE SAVES THE ENTIRE WORLD.”—TALMUD

HAGGADAH SUPPLEMENT

The following should be read after singing Dayyenu.

READER: Throughout the year, we remember how despots have sought the exile and annihilation of the Jewish people. At *Pesach*, we tell of Pharaoh. At *Hanukkah*, of Antiochus. At *Purim*, of Haman. At *Yom HaShoah*, of Hitler. We speak of past oppressors, hoping through awareness we may prevent future tyrants from arising.

But we also give thanks for those in every generation who came forward to lead our people out of the darkness. We recognize the heroic rescuers in each generation, hoping that the memory of their strength would fortify us if confronted with similar evil.

We remember Moses, who with both vision and courage led his people from slavery to freedom. We remember the Maccabbees, whose strength and determination saved both the Temple and Jewish life in the land of Israel. We remember Esther, who interceded to save fellow Jews from destruction.

READER: While we commemorate the heroes of the past, we often fail to remember modern heroes who saved Jews from the Holocaust. During this dark time, there were those who had the courage to care – non-Jews who risked their lives, and often the lives of their families, to save Jews from death.

Just as we tell of Moses leading our people to freedom, at our *Seder* we also tell of contemporary heroes and how they led Jews to their freedom sixty years ago.



Helena Blaszczyk

READER: This year we recount the story of Helena Blaszczyk and her brother Stefan. It was 1942 when the Germans began rounding up the Jews of Czestochowa, Poland. Helena and Stefan were members of the Polish underground. Their two-room home, where they lived with their mother Agnieszka, served as a repository for weapons and a radio. Helena and Stefan made a hiding place where they hid four Jews behind a wall. This is where the Jews lived for three years, not venturing out for fear of discovery.

Helena, Stefan and Agnieszka lived in one room as the other room was occupied by a German officer. This arrangement proved to be both dangerous and safe – dangerous, when the officer was present – safe, when the officer was out as the Germans did not raid their home looking for Jews, since a German officer lived there.

READER: One day Helena and Stefan were denounced. They were arrested and beaten – but they did not betray the Jews, nor did the Germans find the hidden Jews. The underground was eventually able to obtain the release of Helena and Stefan and they returned to their home.

Helena and her family hid the four Jews until liberation in 1945. Stefan and Agnieszka died years ago. Helena is in her 80s and continues to live in Czestochowa.

READER: Let the story of Helena Blaszczyk inspire us to do right when faced with evil.

READER: How can we pass this spirit on to future generations?

READER: First, let us honor these rescuers by learning from their deeds and dedicating ourselves anew to fulfilling the traditional Jewish commandment to be responsible for the safety and well-being of our neighbors.

READER: Second, let us also honor these rescuers by dedicating ourselves to assisting those among them who need our help. As Jews, we must ensure that these heroes live out their remaining years in dignity – with adequate food, medicine and housing. We have the ability to make an enormous difference in their lives.

READER: Tonight, let us commit to learning the stories of these righteous men and women who saved thousands of our people from death. Let us also commit to making these stories a part of our *Seder*. As we recall those who rose up against us in every generation, let us also remember those who stood apart from the evil. On this night of Passover, we recall Shifra and Puah, the two Egyptian midwives who defied Pharaoh's edict to drown the male children of Israel in the Nile. We recall the daughter of Pharaoh who violated her father's decree to drown the infants and who reached out to save Moses. Just as we remember and praise these first rescuers of Jewish children, let us ensure that the stories of those non-Jews who rescued Jewish children and adults during the Holocaust are remembered and passed down to our children and our children's children.

READER: This year after the tragic events of September 11th, we have been inspired by the extraordinary courage of thousands of men and women who have acted in the spirit of the Righteous. May we pray for peace in Jerusalem and in all the world.

For more information about the work of the The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous or to learn more about other rescuers we support, like Helena Blaszczyk, please visit our website at www.jfr.org or contact us at the address listed below.