

WHY TORAH FUND?

Narration and Song

Compiled and Edited

by

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Women's League for Conservative Judaism
475 Riverside Drive, Suite 820 New York, NY 10115

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This program may be presented by any number of narrators (two are suggested here) and any number of singers. The words to some of the songs may be duplicated and given out so that the audience can join in.

The songs used in this presentation were taken from the following Women's League scripts, with the lyrics slightly changed:

TORAH FUND REVIEW AND OTHER THINGS (800.35) by Zelda Wolf Jacobs

HOORAY FOR HOLLYWOOD
OF THEE I SINGS
ANYTHING GOES

WHERE WOULD WE BE WITHOUT US? (800.28) by Zelda Wolf Jacobs
FOR ME AND MY GAL

A FAIRY TALE (800.34) by Zelda Wolf Jacobs
YOU'RE A GRAND OLD FLAG

LULLABY OF 3080 BROADWAY (800.31) by Lora Lee Spiro
BABY FACE

ALL MY KINDER (800.29) by Zelda Wolf Jacobs
PRETTY BABY

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE PUSHKE (800.14A)
updated by Anita Carter from a script by Judy Sanders
BILL

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WHY TORAH FUND?

NARRATOR I: Torah Fund is the result of dreams and of the efforts of many people during this last century.

When Solomon Schechter came to America to teach 10 students, he could not have envisioned the growth and advancement that The Jewish Theological Seminary would accomplish.

When Mathilde Schechter, wife of Solomon Schechter, opened her home to these students, she provided them with home-cooked kosher meals, in a home-way-from-home atmosphere. She, too, could not have envisioned the Torah Fund Campaign of today.

NARRATOR II: Our program today hopes to reinforce the message we continue to bring to you, and to answer the question: "Why Torah Fund?"

(TUNE "HOORAY FOR HOLLYWOOD")

Hooray for Torah Fund, that job we love to do called Torah Fund,
Where different women with all kinds of interest become the greatest,
Develop talents galore.

You'll find it charming and not alarming.

If you make the effort, there's fun in store.

Hooray for Torah Fund, where you're terrific and you'll do some good,

Where there's a spot for you from cook to actor, age is no factor

It always is understood.

We're glad you're here today: we hope you'll like your stay.

Hooray for Torah Fund.

II: The survival of our Jewish way of life is important to us all. I assumes even greater importance when we hear, with us, the "still small voice" that the prophet Elijah heard when hiding in a cave on Mount Hebron. That voice asked him, "What do you hear, Elijah?" The message he heard was "GO, DO SOMETHING TO HELP YOUR PEOPLE."

I: "Begin with but 10 and you shall end with a myriad." So states an old proverb that reflects the Seminary, the worldwide spiritual and academic center of traditional Judaism.

II: In 1886, a committee of prominent lay leaders met with two distinguished rabbis, Drs. Sabato Morais and H. Pereira Mendes, resulting in the birth of the Jewish Theological Seminary Association.

I: The first class of 10 students met in the vestry of the Spanish Portuguese Synagogue, Congregation Shearith Israel, in New York City. At the turn of the 20th Century, prominent Jewish philanthropists endowed a new corporation, The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, with which the older Association was merged. The purpose of the new Seminary was "the preservation in America of the knowledge and practice of historical Judaism.

(TUNE: "OF THEE I SING")

We're here to say, ladies. JTS will save the day, ladies.

It's our silver lining, it's our special place.

It's our beacon shining, it's our trumping ace.

We're here to sing, ladies. It has got that certain thing, ladies.

Shining star and inspiration, worth of the Jewish nation.

Of thee we sings.

- II: Dr. Solomon Schechter was persuaded to undertake the challenge of heading a new school of Jewish learning. Under his leadership, the Seminary became the pre-eminent voice of traditional Judaism in the new world. He assembled a distinguished faculty and established the highest academic standards for the institution.
- I: The Rabbinical School was transformed into a graduate school. A program of advanced study leading to a doctorate degree was instituted, and the Teachers Institute was founded.

(TUNE: "FOR ME AND MY GAL")

The Seminary's for you and me, pal.
 The U of J's the west coast locale.
 Congregations are waiting, for the folks graduating,
 And we're here and are stating, that we need them—and how!
 The rabbis are learning, how they sermonize.
 The cantors scoring, how they harmonize.
 And this way we're going to build a better world for all,
 For you and me, you'll see.
 Together for you and me, pal.

- II: Dr. Louis Finkelstein, 4th President and first Chancellor of the Seminary, guided the Conservative Movement in the post-World War period of rapid expansion. He saw his role as explaining Judaism to the world and helping Jews confront the era's new challenges.
- !: Dr. Gerson D. Cohen, who succeeded R. Finkelstein, oversaw the Seminary expansion with the addition of two Residence Halls and a new Library wing. He also led the long debated discussion and guided the subsequent decision to ordain women.
- II: Rabbi Ismar Schorsch, the present Chancellor, succeeded Dr. Cohen. He continues in the tradition of his predecessor, bringing to the office the rare combination of scholarship and administrative ability. He has reinforced the Seminary's high standards of scholarship, while providing service to the American Jewish community, to the greater society and to the world.

(TUNE: "LULLABY OF BROADWAY")

The Seminary does its thing at 3080 Broadway.
 A place for work and studying—it's 3080 Broadway.
 Where rabbis, cantors, teacher train
 Inspired by great scholars.
 Where future leaders can attain
 Those academic honors.
 It's the Melton Research Institute
 And Seminary Library,
 The yearly summer institute
 And so much more.
 On the West Coast, there's a campus in LA.
 And, we can boast, one in Israel—hooray!
 But in New York, it's 3080 Broadway.

- I: In 1942, National Women's League initiated the first Torah Fund Campaign. In 1958, the need for student housing created the special project to build the Mathilde Schechter Residence Hall and the two efforts, Torah Fund/Mathilde Schechter Residence Hall, became the Combined Campaign.
- II: The Campaign then turned its attention to providing a residence for married and graduate students, culminating in the dedication of Goldsmith Hall in 1973 and its *Mo'adon* (the student lounge) in 1983.

(TUNE: "BABY FACE")

Torah Fund, we're raising money for the Torah Fund.
We're proud of all the projects we've begun—we're not done.
Our work is necessary—we help the Seminary.
Torah Fund, we work together, one for all, in unison.
To help defray expense, for Halls of Residence
We need help from everyone.

I: Women's League for Conservative Judaism has added many more projects since completing the Residence Halls:

We've gone on to provide residential facilities in Israel, where Rabbinic students can study;

II: The dedication of bookshelves in the Seminary Library;

I: Residence Halls at the University of Judaism in California, and the beautification and furnishing of the quadrangle and terraces of the Seminary Campus in New York.

(TUNE: "BILL"—MAY BE A SOLO)

It's just a bill, an ordinary one
You'd see it in your purse, and hardly notice it.
With prices high, what can it buy?
It just gets spent, and where it went is a puzzlement.
But put to use, just think it might produce
A teacher's skill
New cantors, and training rabbis need the help of
Just your bill.

(TUNE: "PRETTY BABY"—MAY BE SOLO)

When you need another method to make Torah Fund come true,
Try a *pushke*, try a *pushke*.
If you find your funds are lagging and your quota's not met
And you're running out of time,
Call the TF Office, have them send a package on to you
Pretty *pushke* of mine, pretty *pushke* of mine.

I: A recent endeavor was the Women's League Seminary Synagogue whereby we converted the former Library Reading Room into a permanent synagogue. From the splendor of the stained glass windows facing the Seminary Courtyard, to the practicality of the soundproof glass, rendering mute the trains running outside the windows facing Broadway, every detail has been carefully designed to create a warm and sacred place.

II: Your dollars donated to Torah Fund have made the dreams of a egalitarian sanctuary at the Seminary become a reality, enhancing the spiritual life of the men and women who worship there.

I: To provide the opportunity to study is to give the recipient the lift of a lifetime and will influence generations yet to come.

II: Your support, over the years, has enabled Torah Fund to underwrite projects which are unique in their diversity and singular in their commitment to the continuity of Conservative Judaism.

I: You have made it possible for Torah Fund to maintain residences and apartments for students away from home.

II: And now, the state-of-the-arts Education Center on the fifth floor of the new Kripke Tower.

- I: You have brought forth the creation of the Women's League Seminary Synagogue and provided sustenance and support for the day-to-day operation of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

(TUNE: "YOU'RE A GRAND OLD FLAG")

You're a super group, you're a gen-er-ous group,
And forever 'bout you folks we'll rave.
You're the leaders of the crowd we love.
We lift up our banners and wave.
You've a heart that's true, there is no one like you
And there's never a boast or whoop.
Should old acquaintance be forgot,
We give thanks to a super group.

- II: Torah Fund gives us all the opportunity to get involved in the sacred work of preserving Conservative Judaism, thus enhancing Jewish life in the community and in the home.

- I This we do by supporting the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, the fountainhead of the Conservative Movement and the Ziegler School of Rabbinics at the University of Judaism.

(TUNE: "ANYTHING GOES")

It's time to say "goodbye." We're ending
The message that we are sending is
Your help shows, as Torah Fund grows.
We hope we've told you with some better words
How your support works afterwards.
So you'll know, Torah Fund grows.

The show that we've done today, has been fund today.
And we're here to say, you've no peer today.
You've been sports today, of the best sorts today.
Your giving ways will show.
We hope we've done some great enhancing,
And shown you through song and dancing
What we all know:
Torah Fund Grows.