



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

NEWS

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Contact: Dr. Dana Herman, Associate Director – 513.487.3069

NEW! AJA DIGITAL COLLECTION

SERMONS & INTERVIEW OF SCHOLAR AND RABBI, **JOSHUA O. HABERMAN**

The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (AJA) is pleased to announce that the Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman Digital Collection is now freely available and fully searchable at <https://haberman.americanjewisharchives.org/>. With generous support of the Haberman family and Washington Hebrew Congregation, the digital collection includes sermons and interviews found in the Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman Papers.



One of six rabbis in his extended family, Haberman was involved in the rabbinate for seventy-two years, occupying pulpits at Congregation Shaarei Shomayim, Mobile, Alabama (1944–1946), Temple Beth Zion, Buffalo, N.Y. (1946–1951), Har Sinai Temple, Trenton, N.J. (1951–1968), and Washington Hebrew Congregation, Washington, D.C. where he was named Rabbi Emeritus upon his retirement in 1986. Haberman was a dedicated member of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, serving on the executive committee from 1967 to 1969. He also served as president of the Washington Board of Rabbis from 1982 to 1984. After his retirement, he became a member of the National Association of Retired Rabbis, serving as president from 1999 to 2000.

In addition to his duties as a pulpit rabbi, Haberman was a scholar who published five books, wrote many articles, and taught at various colleges. He held adjunct professorships at Rutgers University, American University, George Washington University, Georgetown University, Washington Theological Union, and Wesley Theological Seminary. His passion for scholarship culminated in 1984, when an anonymous donor gifted Rabbi Haberman one million dollars to use as he saw best. In response, he established the Foundation for Jewish Studies in Washington, D.C. as an organization to further adult Jewish education. His dream was to make high quality Jewish education accessible to any/all Jewish learners, no matter their background or level of knowledge. The organization sponsored guest lectures by scholars from around the world on a variety of topics related to Judaism and religious studies in general. After his death, it was renamed the Haberman Institute for Jewish studies in his honor and it is still thriving today.

The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (AJA) is deeply honored to serve as the repository of the papers of Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman, which were donated by the Haberman family in 2018 and 2019. This digital project has made available 4500 pages of material from his collection on a

freely accessible website. It is a lasting tribute to Rabbi Haberman and his legacy. “We are delighted that the Joshua O. Haberman website is now ready, and so proud to share with you some of our father’s writings, including notes and sermons, audio tapes and a series of videoed interviews with him,” writes the Haberman children. “This represents only part of the collection preserved by the American Jewish Archives, to whom we are most grateful for granting congregants, colleagues, scholars, friends and admirers a glimpse into this treasure of Dad’s wisdom and erudition.”

Rabbi Susan Shankman, senior rabbi of Washington Hebrew Congregation, is equally thrilled with the digital presentation of Rabbi Haberman’s rabbinic archive: “WHC is honored to partner with the American Jewish Archives and the Haberman family in making the sermons and recordings of Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman available online for the world to access and appreciate.” For the congregation’s longtime and newer congregants, the site offers easy access to Rabbi Haberman’s prolific and thought-provoking sermons and writings. “For nearly 50 years,” Rabbi Shankman continues, “Rabbi Haberman’s love of learning and passion for our Jewish texts led to the creation of many learning opportunities, including a Torah Study class on Shabbat mornings (still in existence), Bible Classes, and ultimately, the Foundation of Jewish Studies, which brings renowned Jewish scholars to the Washington DC area. He also nurtured a strong connection between our Congregation and the State of Israel. His oratorical prowess continued to inspire well after his retirement, as he reflected on the meaning of life and the power of legacy at Yizkor services each Yom Kippur.”

“There was yet another important component of Rabbi Haberman’s rabbinate,” said Rabbi David Saperstein, the long-time head of the Reform Movement’s social justice program and its Religious Action Center (RAC) in DC. “He was a formidable presence in the Washington national political, interfaith and civic arenas – a presence which I am confident is captured in his papers. A peer of Washington’s Cardinals, Bishops, and other prominent religious leaders, the combination of his prestigious pulpit, his powerful oratory and his dignified persona made him the go-to choice when a rabbinic presence was sought at the Washington National Cathedral or at events with the highest ranking of America’s political, cultural, religious or civic leaders. I cherished our friendship and appreciated his support even more precisely because we held respectful differences on policy issues.”

ABOUT THE AJA

The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, founded in 1947 by its namesake on the historic Cincinnati campus of the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, is committed to preserving a documentary heritage of the religious, organizational, economic, cultural, personal, social and family life of American Jewry. The Marcus Center contains over 25,000 linear feet of archives, manuscripts, nearprint materials, photographs, audio and videotapes, microfilm, and genealogical materials.

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3101 Clifton Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45220 | Ph:513.487.3000