The CCAR Journal is published only three or four times a year, staffed almost entirely by volunteers who hold down full-time-plus rabbinical jobs, with an up-to-twelve-month gap between the time an article is accepted and it sees the light of day. So how are we possibly unveiling an amazing, comprehensive, and essential symposium on “Disruption in Twenty-First-Century Rabbinical Life” just a year and a half after the declaration of a global pandemic? Two words: Eddie Goldberg.

Our colleague Rabbi Edwin Goldberg actually approached me before the days of COVID-19 to propose a theme issue on leadership in a time of disruption—a topic that has turned out to be one of the most significant, and prescient, that the Journal has yet tackled. In just a few pages, you will find his introduction to the symposium; his words—and those of the talented authors, scholars, rabbis, educators, book reviewers, and poets with whom he worked to produce this issue—speak beautifully for themselves. So I will add only my sincere thanks and admiration to Eddie and his team—and my advice to all Journal readers to avail yourselves of Eddie’s wisdom whenever you can. If not a prophet, he is certainly the child of one!

But this symposium is not all that awaits. We at the Journal are delighted to present four additional—and exceptional—articles by five authors making their welcome return to our pages. In “Art for Art’s Sake”—a review essay of Arthur Green’s 2020 National Jewish Book Award winner, Judaism for the World: Reflections on God, Life, and Love—Michael Marmur crafts a magnificent analysis of Green’s thinking, work, and “inspir[ing] and unsettl[ing]” impact on Reform Jews. Elliot B. Gertel’s “The Biblical K-R-H” is a marvelous study of chance and synchronicity, taking us on a compelling journey from the Hebrew Bible to Jung and beyond—and guiding us to “address the problem [of divine providence], and best do so with reverence and humility.” Also brilliantly employing a Hebrew
root to deepen our understanding of our relationship with God is “When a B’rachah Is Not a Blessing,” in which Edward S. Treister suggests that a perhaps-unfamiliar translation of Baruch can lead us to a more meaningful and genuine theology. Finally, lovers of Israel and supporters of her Masorti and Reform movements will thrill to David Ellenson and Michael Rosen’s fascinating exploration of Moshe Zemer and David Golinkin’s halachic writings—and how, through this work, “a fuller and often overlooked portrait of Israeli Jewish liberal religious expression will emerge.”

Our enhanced book review and poetry sections continue to illuminate and inspire. Returning reviewers Joseph A. Skloot and Israel Zoberman join authors-turned-reviewers Geoffrey Dennis and Laura Geller and debut journal reviewer Raphael Asher in bringing to our attention important books on modern American Jewish thought, what we can learn from the Germans as we confront and consider our own place in history, legal authority in the State of Israel, the “new Chasidism” and how it might influence our own spirituality, and a charming survey of prayers offered by rabbis on Capitol Hill. And poetry lovers will be gladdened to see new work by previously published journal poets Stephanie Friedman, Lonnie Monka, Roger Nash, and Daniel Polish—as well as wonderful debuts by Elisa Subin, Steven M. Critelli, and our colleague Pamela Wax. Enjoy!

I am of course not a prophet, but perhaps I am the child of one—because as I write these words in the early days of Av, I picture you reading them, God willing, in the early days of 5782. So across the months I offer you this blessing: May the year ahead be free of difficult disruption—and full of sweetness—for you and all those you love. L’shanah tovah!

Elaine Rose Glickman, Editor