House Stark was not the first to dread winter’s coming. According to the Talmud, Adam originated this fear; as autumn passed and the winter solstice approached, he lamented: “Woe to me! On account of my sins the world is darkening around me.”¹ In the winter, warns the Tur,² our yetzer rebels when we try to leave our beds for prayer. “How can you arise in the morning during this great cold season?” it demands. Fevers are worse in the winter;³ tossed corn and nuts will delight a wedding couple in summer but sicken them in winter;⁴ even a radish, which possesses medicinal properties much of the year, turns deadly during the winter months.⁵

Winter is coming, yes. But so is this first CCAR Journal of the year 2022, and it is altogether enchanting. Take comfort, my friends. Our articles this month are a marvelous, dazzling, and eclectic mix. Philip Graubart sets the perfect tone with his captivating “Notes from the Narrow Place”—revisiting the confinement of the past years with deep and inspiring insight. Our next article—“Sperm Donation and Surrogacy in the Time When the Judges Judged”—may bear the most unexpected and fascinating title in CCAR Journal history; and David Zucker’s scholarship and wisdom, as ever, does not disappoint. Although written independently of one another, Judith Schindler’s meticulously researched and thought-provoking “Cancel Culture, Billy Graham, and the Jews: Weighing Nearly Forty-Five Years of a Historical Record” and debut journal author Neil Hirsch’s superbly analyzed and earnestly written “On Accountability and T’shuvah: Two Talmudic Stories of Ostracism” are both rooted in history and text—but also guide us as we wrestle with how to draw boundaries, when to exclude, and when—and why, and how—to atone and forgive.

Two important articles on the state of Reform Judaism come next. In a much-anticipated follow-up to the fall 2018 CCAR Journal theme issue on the Reform Pay Equity Initiative, Savannah Noray offers an updated data narrative on our Movement’s gender wage gap—gratifyingly revealing where our efforts have borne fruit, but also illuminating how much work is left to do. Michael Rosen and David Ellenson also examine the development, progress, and
maturation of the Reform Movement in Israel—brilliantly employing as their source the new Israeli Reform/Progressive siddur T’filat HaAdam.

Our selection of articles concludes with two meditations on the greatest of issues: our relationship with the Divine and our longing to feel God’s presence and grace. Adam D. Fisher beautifully offers spiritual guidance and uplift in “Experiencing God’s Care,” while Paul Menitoff draws upon scholarship and personal experience to incorporate Spinoza’s pantheism, Kaplan’s naturalism, and Buber’s existentialism into a new, engaging, and meaningful theology. “Isaac and Iphigenia,” our final article, is my own; all I can say is that I hope you will like it!

Book reviews continue to be an ever-more important aspect of the Journal—as we see in this issue’s outstanding analyses of Plunder: A Memoir of Family Property and Nazi Treasure, A Rooster for Asklepios and A Bull for Pluto, The Jews Should Keep Quiet, Bait Shlishi, Shake and Tremor, and Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah: Lights in the Valley. We are grateful for our talented reviewers and are always ready to work with new ones; please do reach out to me anytime to learn more and—perhaps—to try your hand at writing a review of your own.

Glancing at the cover or the table of contents, you may have noticed that this issue’s poetry section is more robust than ever—which is saying a lot! We are proud to present a wonderful cluster of new poems from some of our beloved and familiar Journal authors, as well as important emerging voices. In expanding our understanding of what constitutes “Jewish poetry,” we have been blessed to publish unique and amazing work—and to receive, from one of our poets, “heartfelt thanks . . . for encouraging me to become a Jewish poet, not just a poet who happens to be Jewish.”

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Winter was also the season in which the prophet Elijah visited Akiva and Rachel, and she charged her husband to go study Torah. It was the season in which Esther was told she would ascend to the throne of Persia and save her people, the season of Hillel’s rescue from the snowy skylight atop the academy of Shemaia and Avtalion. It is the season for spicy and sizzling food, for honey and wine, for hot baths and fragrant oil. It is the season for cozying up with this very special issue of the CCAR Journal and
warming yourself with the words and the light of our colleagues and friends.

   Winter is coming! Enjoy.

Elaine Rose Glickman, Editor

Notes

1. *Avodah Zarah* 8a.
2. In *Orach Chaim* 1.
3. *Yoma* 29a.
5. *Eiruvin* 56a.
8. *Yoma* 35b.