



COOKING IN HEBREW COOKING MEMORIES

The Department for Diaspora Activities at the World Zionist Organization works to strengthen the Zionist identity of Jews in the Diaspora and their bond with the State of Israel. The Department devotes thought and invests many resources in developing and updating original content and programs in order to reach and bring additional groups into our circles of belonging.

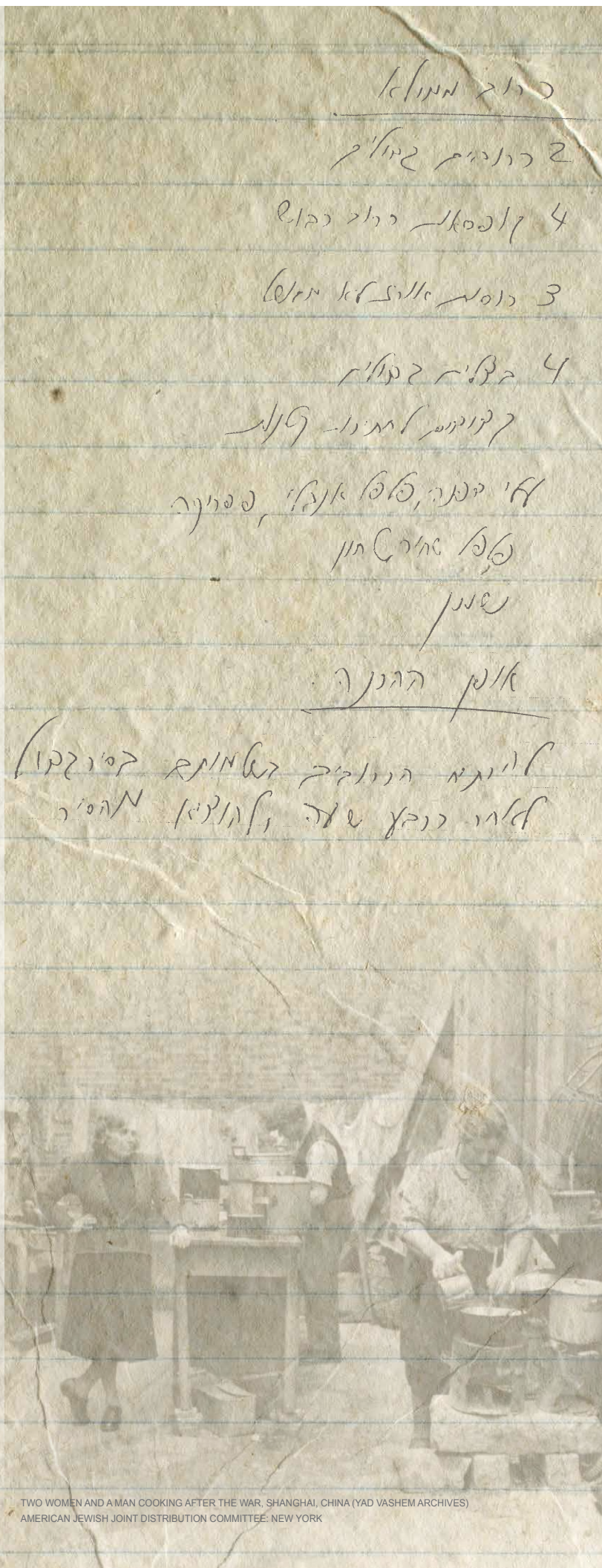
We are proud to present you with **Cooking Memories**, which is a special activity aimed at perpetuating the memory of the Holocaust. This first-of-its-kind program seeks to accent flavors and aromas from the kitchens of Jewish women in the years preceding World War II. These flavors were preserved in the memories of those who survived the horrors and tell the stories of communities that were destroyed. The kitchens of these women open a window into their world and into the spirit of the period they lived in. And, for us, they offer an opportunity to keep the memories alive.

In this day and age, when we find ourselves on the seam between remembering and forgetting, it is our obligation to find new and renewed ways to achieve that.

Cooking Memories joins other programs dealing with this day of remembrance that the Department has developed and implemented around the world in recent years: Memories in the Living Room (meetings with survivors in an intimate home setting) and Between Memory and Forgetting (a Beit Ha'am booklet that encourages a dialog through a variety of texts).

"We exist as long as somebody remembers us" / Carlos Ruiz Zafón

(From his book "The Shadow of the Wind")



כריש מתוק

2 כרישים חמוץ

4 קאסאל כריש בקול

3 כוסות אגוזים חמוץ

4 בריש חמוץ

קדושים חמוץ - קול

אוי יטנה, סאס אנדל, ספיקה

סאס חמוץ חמוץ

שמן

אין חנוכה

אויגא חנוכה גאמאס ביוקא
אלא כובץ שלד, אגוזים חמוץ



Jews from Northern Transylvania in Hungary, Birkenau-Auschwitz (Yad Vashem Archives)

On Holocaust Remembrance Day, we bow our heads in sorrow and commune with the memory of the six million victims. The Nazis wanted to eradicate not only the Jews themselves, but also their rich culture and religious, spiritual and artistic heritage. Musical works that characterized communities whose members were murdered in the Holocaust have been lost forever. Local dialects, typical clothing and special dances were destroyed, leaving next to no trace.

On this special day, Holocaust Remembrance Day, we want to revive a small taste of the glorious past that some sought to erase. Our meeting will focus on recipes from the kitchens of Jewish women who lived in areas where entire communities were wiped out.

Because it is nearly impossible to commemorate and remember all the six million, we will zero in on one community, the Jewish community in Hungary.

With little if any warning, German forces occupied Hungary on March 19, 1944. It occurred at the latest stage of the war, when the majority of European Jews were no longer alive. On the eve of the German occupation, there were around 850,000 Jews in Hungary. Immediately following the invasion, the Nazis began implementing the Final Solution – initially in the provinces and outlying areas. Scores of Jews were uprooted from their homes and were detained in temporary ghettos. Some of them had to live outdoors. A short while later, between May 15 and July 8 (within a period of just 56 days), close to 500,000 Jews were put on 147 trains and deported to the Birkenau death camp in Poland, not long before the liberation.

"When we were in the [Warsaw] ghetto we had to make sure Mother ate something too; otherwise, she wouldn't eat, so that we would have more."

When women reached the camps after having lost their entire families, they attempted to maintain vestiges of humanness. One way of doing this was to occupy themselves with food recipes. Recipes are a tradition among women; handed down from mothers to daughters, they capture the women's family, community, and geographic traditions. It is a tradition that has persisted for millennia, embracing and amassing a corpus of wondrous feminine knowledge: warmth of life, the phenomenon of giving and being concerned for the family, the imperatives of the faith, the directives of love. It is a continuation of a mother's nursing. For this reason, in the most unexpected place of all, amidst nightmarish physical slavery and the shattering of their world, women engaged in recipes.

They recorded recipes as if to prove and remind themselves whence they had come and to hand them on to posterity, as it were. They recorded recipes for their friends in order to show off their knowledge and brag about who they had been. Since they came from different places, they compared each other's recipes. Sometimes they prescribed exaggerated proportions of ingredients in order to make the fantasy more enchanting. Occasionally they inserted non-kosher ingredients that they had never used at all. Sometimes they composed detailed menus as if their whole world depended on it. They wrote on any scrap of paper that they could obtain and with every precious pencil butt that they either found or obtained in exchange for bread. They wrote on paper that they obtained from their workplaces, risking their lives in the event that the terrible crime of damaging German property would be discovered. They recorded a recipe in Yiddish on Hitler's face, on a propaganda sheet of sorts. They wrote in various languages and in various camps. And when they did not have pencil and paper, they shouted the recipes at night from bed to bed in the darkened camp barracks, transforming their quarters, for a moment, into the homes that they had once had.

Prof. Israel Gutman

Prof. Israel Gutman (1923-2013) was an Israeli historian and Holocaust researcher who was active in commemorating the Holocaust. Gutman was born and raised in Warsaw, the capital of Poland. He fought in the ghetto uprising, was sent to the Majdanek concentration and death camp, and from there to Auschwitz. He emigrated to Israel in 1946. During his academic career at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Gutman held the Max and Rita Haber Chair in Modern Jewish History. The Encyclopedia of the Holocaust, which was one of his major undertakings, was published in 1989. Starting in 1993, Gutman filled a number of positions at Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center.

BETWEEN MEMORY AND FORGETTING

BERL KATZNELSON, REVOLUTION AND TRADITION

We have been endowed with two faculties: memory and forgetting. We cannot live without both. If only memory were to exist, then what would be our fate? We would be crushed beneath the yoke of the memories. We would become slaves to our memories, to our ancestors. Our countenance would then be a mere copy of earlier generations. And if we were ruled entirely by forgetting – would there be any room for culture, science, self-awareness, and spiritual existence? Arch-conservatism would like to strip us of our faculty of forgetting, whereas pseudo-revolutionism regards any remembrance of the past as the 'enemy.' If humanity had not preserved the memory of its most highly valued assets, noble tendencies, periods of prosperity, and efforts to achieve liberty and heroism, no revolutionary movement could have been possible. We would have languished in our meagerness and in our ignorance, slaves to the world.

- Where are you, as an individual, found on the spectrum between memory and forgetting? And you as a people?
- What significance do memories have in the consciousness of a people? Its narrative? What role do the memories of the Jewish people play in Jewish peoplehood?

THE BOOK OF LAUGHTER AND FORGETTING

MILAN KUNDERA

'To liquidate a people,' said Hübl, you need to erase its memory. Destroy its books, its culture, its history. Then have somebody write new books, manufacture a new culture, invent a new history. Before long the nation will begin to forget what it is and what it was. The world around it will forget even faster.



- In the history of mankind, do you know of any nations that were erased in such a manner? Who erased their memory? Why did they do it? Did they succeed?
- In what other ways can a people disappear? And the Jewish people?





Malka was born in 1928 in the town of Mezokovacsghaza in southern Hungary. Her parents' names were Ilona and Jenő Weiss and she had six siblings. After the Nazis occupied Hungary, Malka was forced to perform hard physical labor. She survived long weeks in the extreme cold, with little food and cut off from her family. Right before the war ended, Malka was forced to join a death march that first went to Austria and from there to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, where she was finally liberated. Malka's parents and siblings were all murdered in the Holocaust. The recipe is dedicated to the memory of her mother, Ilona Weiss, who taught Malka how to prepare it.



Ilona Weiss, murdered in 1944 (photograph courtesy of Ilana Yogev, her granddaughter)

TOMATO SOUP AND DUMPLINGS

A RECIPE FROM MALKA (NÉE WEISS) GANTZ

Ingredients for the soup (makes 20 portions):

- About 25 ripe and healthy-looking tomatoes
- 4 large onions cut into small cubes
- 8 chopped garlic cloves
- 1 large can of tomato paste
- 1 cup chopped parsley
- Around 3 liters of water
- 4 tsp. sugar
- 4 Tbsp. sweet paprika
- Soup powder
- Ground black pepper
- Salt
- 1 egg yolk



Ingredients for the dumpling dough:

- 1½ cups flour
- 3 eggs
- Water as needed
- Mix all the ingredients together until they form a rather thick dough

Preparation:

Using a knife, make an "x" on the bottom of every tomato. Boil water in a pot, insert the tomatoes and cook for about 6 to 7 minutes. Drain the tomatoes, wait for them to cool and peel off the skins. Sauté the onions for a few minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the garlic and continue sautéing. Chop the tomatoes, add them to the onions and garlic and stir for about a minute. Add the water, the tomato paste and spices, followed by the parsley. Cook for about 50 minutes on a medium flame. Using a strainer with large holes, add the dumpling dough mixture to the boiling soup. Another option is to grate the dough into "icicle" shapes. Continue cooking until the dumplings rise to the surface (approximately 3 minutes). Beat the egg yolk and slowly add it to the soup, while stirring. Continue cooking for about another minute and remove from the flame.



STUFFED CABBAGE

A RECIPE FROM MALKA (NÉE WEISS) GANTZ

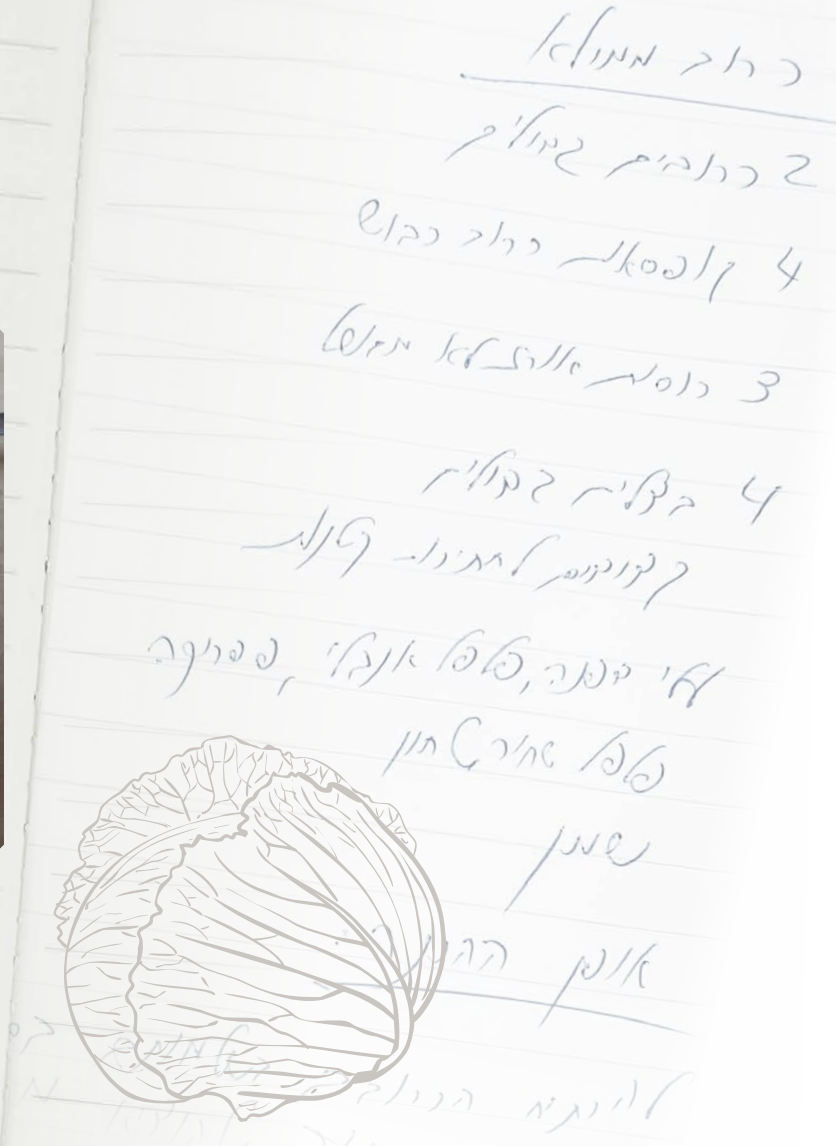
Ingredients for 20 portions:

- 2 large heads of cabbage
- 4 cans/jars of sauerkraut
- 3 cups uncooked rice, rinsed well
- 4 finely chopped large onions
- Bay leaves, allspice, pepper, sweet paprika, ground black pepper

Preparation:

Cook the whole heads of cabbage in a large pot of boiling water for about 15 minutes. After removing them from the pot, separate the leaves (an easy method for separating the leaves: before cooking, cut off the base of the cabbage. If the cabbage is large, the inner leaves may not be soft enough and it may be necessary to repeat the boiling process). When the leaves are separated, some unused pieces of the cabbage remain – either because some of the leaves could not be separated properly or simply because some of the leaves were too small to stuff). Chop all these remaining pieces as they will be used for cooking.

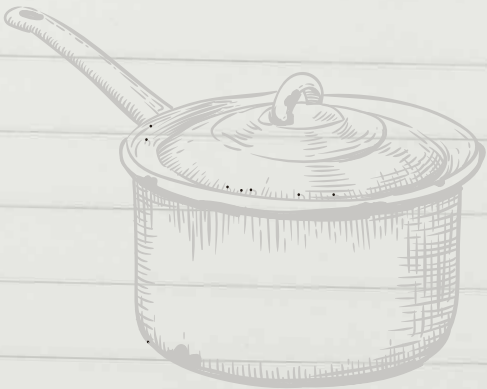
The stuffing can be prepared while the heads of cabbage are boiling in the pot: mix together 2 of the chopped onions, the rice, paprika, salt, pepper, and 3-4 tablespoons of oil. Place some of the stuffing in the middle of each cabbage leaf. To close the leaves, start from the outer section and fold them towards the base, creating a kind of envelope. Preparing the pot for the stuffed cabbage rolls: grease the bottom of the pot and add a layer of the following ingredients on top of the oil: the 2 remaining chopped onions, 1 jar of sauerkraut, bay leaves, allspice, paprika (a generous amount). Follow that with a layer of stuffed cabbage rolls and a layer of the leftover pieces of cabbage – and continue creating layer after layer until the pot is full. Full the pot with tap water until it covers the top layer of the cabbage. Do not use less water because the rice absorbs a lot of liquid. After it boils, continue cooking for about an hour on a low flame.





Etel Kahane, murdered in 1944 (photograph courtesy of Ms. Rachel Hanan, her daughter)

Rachel was born in 1929 in the town of Viseu de Sus in northern Transylvania. Her parents' names were Etel and Meshulam Feivish Kahane and she had seven siblings. The night after the seder in 1944, the members of her family, together with all the Jews who lived in the town, were deported to a nearby ghetto. A few weeks later they were put on trains that took them to the Birkenau death camp in Poland. Rachel and four of her sisters passed the selection process and survived. Her other siblings and family members were gassed to death shortly after arriving in the camp. This recipe is dedicated to the memory of her mother, Etel Kahane, who taught Rachel how to prepare it.



Conversations about food in the camps – the testimony of Mrs. Ada Potok Halperin
(Ada's testimony can be heard between the 30:14 and 34:03 marks)



Photo by: Nicu Băcutel, Wikimedia

SWEET CHEESE DUMPLINGS

A RECIPE FROM RACHEL (NÉE KAHANE) HANAN

- Ingredients for 20 dumplings:**
1 kilo dry white cheese (in Israel "Canaan" and "Tuv Taam" are suitable – and can be substituted by farmer's cheese)
8 Tbsp. semolina
8 Tbsp. bread crumbs
8 Tbsp. flour
6 eggs
4 packets of vanilla sugar
12 Tbsp. sugar
A drop of salt

- Ingredients for the dumpling coating:**
Oil for frying
About 15 Tbsp. bread crumbs
A drop of sugar
Cinnamon

Preparation:
The day before, mix together all the dough ingredients and refrigerate. Boil water in a large pot with a little salt. Form the dough into balls and insert them into the boiling water. Wait for the dumplings to rise to the surface and continue cooking for another 3 minutes. Turn off the flame. Wait a few minutes and remove the dumplings using a slotted spoon (to drain the water).
Heat the oil in a skillet, add the bread crumbs, frying them until they brown, and then add the cinnamon. Place the dumplings in the skillet and stir.
They are best eaten hot.



Freepik.com View of Jewish Holocaust Memorial, Berlin

LET THE MEMORIAL HILL REMEMBER

YEHUDA AMICHAÏ

Let the memorial hill remember instead of me,
that's what it's here for. Let the park in-memory-of remember,
let the street that's named-for remember,
let the well-known building remember,
let the synagogue that's named after God remember
let the rolling Torah scroll remember, let the prayer
for the memory of the dead remember. Let the flags remember
those multicolored shrouds of history: the bodies they wrapped
have long since turned to dust. Let the dust remember.
Let the dung remember at the gate. Let the afterbirth remember.
Let the beasts of the field and birds of the heavens eat and
remember.
Let all of them remember so that I can rest.

- ?
- Amichai wants others to remember instead of him. That way he'll be able to rest. According to his equation, remembering is exhausting. What does remembering do to you? Does it exhaust you as well?
 - Like Amichai, would you like others to remember for you? Or at least in part? Or both? Or not at all? And do you have any desire left for the national memory? Strength?

EVERYTHING IS ILLUMINATED (AN EXCERPT)

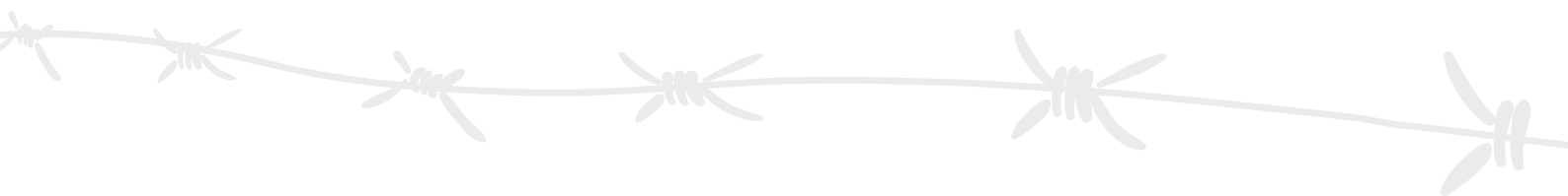
JONATHAN SAFRAN FOER

Jews have six senses - touch, taste, sight, smell, hearing ... memory. While Gentiles experience and process the world through the traditional senses, and use memory only as a second-order means of interpreting events, for Jews memory is no less primary than the prick of a pin, or its silver glimmer, or the taste of the blood it pulls from the finger. The Jew is pricked by a pin and remembers other pins. It is only by tracing the pinprick back to other pinpricks – when his mother tried to fix his sleeve while his arm was still in it, when his grandfather's fingers fell asleep from stroking his great-grandfather's damp forehead, when Abraham tested the knife point to be sure Isaac would feel no pain – that the Jew is able to know why it hurts. When a Jew encounters a pin, he asks: What does it remember like?"

- ?
- Do Jews really have an added sense that others don't have? The sense of memory? And what about you?
 - In what way is the memory of the Jewish people different than the memory of other nations?

*BUT BEWARE AND WATCH YOURSELF
VERY WELL, LEST YOU FORGET THE THINGS
THAT YOUR EYES SAW, AND LEST THESE
THINGS DEPART FROM YOUR HEART, ALL THE
DAYS OF YOUR LIFE, AND YOU SHALL MAKE
THEM KNOWN TO YOUR CHILDREN
AND TO YOUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN.*

DEUTERONOMY 4:9



Executive editing: Gusti Yehoshua-Braverman; Materials collection and content writing: Naama Egozi, Yad Vashem;

Materials collection and content editing: Erella Goren; Content development: Yaniv Nachmias

Graphic design: Lea Hour, 2 Mefikim

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