

Rabbi Joseph Telushkin to Present in Omaha

Mark Kirchhoff, Program and Communications Assistant
with comments from Alan Potash, CEO

The Jewish Federation of Omaha is excited to bring to the Omaha community one of the most influential Jewish thinkers, scholars, and authors. CEO for the Federation, Alan Potash shared,

“Along with the synagogues we invite the community to hear from Rabbi Joseph Telushkin. There probably isn’t a Jewish home that doesn’t have at least one of his books on a book shelf. Through the years his work has been read, taught, and discussed in all corners of the world. In his spare time he writes detective novels (these are also worth reading).

I first came to understand the influence of his work when he and Dennis Prager wrote *Eight Questions*

People Ask About Judaism that later turned into the *Nine Questions People Ask About Judaism*. What a novel idea to add another question.

I have had the honor of hearing him on several occasions and look forward to his talk in Omaha at Temple Israel on Thursday, April 20 at 7:00 p.m.”

Beginning in November of 2016 and extending through February 2017, Rabbi Steven Abraham of Beth El Synagogue taught weekly classes to two groups of participants. The topic for these classes was Jewish ethics. The class used Rabbi Telushkin’s *A Code of Jewish Ethics, Volume 2, Love Your Neighbor as Yourself* as the textbook. In addition to the broad topic of loving your neighbor, the book presents such topics as hospitality, visiting

the sick, final kindness, tzedaka, Judaism's attitude to animals, and numerous other topics. Much like the rabbi's speaking style, the book is filled with illustrative narrations – many of them personal, that elucidate the topics in a straight-forward, insightful manner. Following the ethics classes, Rabbi Abraham has been presenting a course on Jewish wisdom, again using a Teluskin book, *Jewish Wisdom: Ethical, Spiritual, and Historical Lessons from the Great Works and Thinkers*. In his introduction to this 1994 book, Rabbi Telushkin writes, "For many years, I also have written at the front of a book the page number of passages that I wish to recall, along with a very brief summary of their contents. These marked passages, drawn from some thirty-five hundred Jewish books in my home library, constitute a large percentage of the texts cited in *Jewish Wisdom*." According to Rabbi Abraham, members of the two classes have demonstrated their wisdom in the reading of the

book and astuteness in their reflections.

Rabbi Joseph Telushkin was named by *Talk* magazine as one of the 50 best speakers in the United States. He was ordained at Yeshiva University in New York, and pursued graduate studies in Jewish history at Columbia University. He lectures throughout the United States, serves as a Senior Associate of CLAL (The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership), on the Board of Directors of the Jewish Book Council, and as spiritual leader of the Synagogue for the Performing Arts in Los Angeles. His two books (with Dennis Prager), *The Nine Questions People Ask About Judaism and Why the Jews? The Reason for Antisemitism* have been widely acclaimed as two of the most influential Jewish books of the past decade. His book, *Jewish Literacy: The Most Important Things to Know About the Jewish Religion, Its People and Its History* has been hailed by leading figures in all the major

movements of Judaism. A new edition was brought out in 2001. *Jewish Literacy...* has been the primary supplementary resource book for the Jewish Federation of Omaha's "Exploring Judaism" class for many years.

Rabbi Telushkin's presence in Omaha is an example of the commitment the entire Jewish community of Omaha has to Jewish learning. The Jewish Federation of Omaha is proud to present this evening in support with Beth El Synagogue, Beth Israel Synagogue, Chabad, and Temple Israel. Rabbi Telushkin is sure to speak on a broad range of topics, in all likelihood including comments from his a friend.

June 2016 release, *Rebbe: The Life and Teachings of Menachem M. Schneerson, the Most Influential Rabbi in Modern History.*

Rabbi Telushkin's 7:00 p.m. address at Temple Israel on April 20th is open to the community at no charge thanks also to the support of the Phillip & Terri Schragger Supporting Foundation and the Shirley & Leonard Goldstein Supporting Foundation. Please take this early notice of what will prove to be an interesting and informative evening to mark your calendars. More importantly, attend and bring