

BRING TO YOUR COMMUNITY TODAY!



Announcing the Official Release of *Faces of Israel* A New and Exciting Jewish Educational Film

Faces of Israel: A Discussion About Marriage, State and Religion in the Jewish Homeland was released to the public in March 2009 in a sold out debut event in NYC. *Faces of Israel* poses a series of questions about hot topics in Israel, such as:

- Who is a Jew and what determines Jewish identity?
- What does it really mean to be a Jewish and democratic state?
- What is the role of the Israeli Chief Rabbinate and what should it be?
- What is the place of Reform, Conservative and Modern Orthodox Judaism in Israel today?
- And more!

Faces of Israel explores these questions through the lens of the Israeli marriage process and is an exciting, educational and interactive documentary intended for a wide audience, from synagogue-goers to high school and university students to unaffiliated members of the Jewish community.

Faces of Israel was filmed, edited, and produced by Amy Beth Oppenheimer, a recent graduate of Johns Hopkins University with a strong interest in questions surrounding religion and state in Israel. Amy began filming *Faces of Israel* in early 2007, capturing interviews with Israelis ranging from openly gay secular university students to leaders in the Masorti movement to Ultra-Orthodox Jews, including Israel's Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi. While Amy had no formal training in film, through perseverance and many sleepless nights, she produced a feature-length documentary that has been called "**powerful... mature... honest... sophisticated,**" and "**a must see.**"

The film consists of ten themed chapters that can be viewed consecutively as a 75-minute documentary or as stand-alone five to ten minute discussion pieces. Institutional copies of the film include extensive educational materials and can be easily tailored into any curriculum or informal education program. Single-screening institutional copies are available for the highly-discounted price of \$250. Permanent or multi-use copies are available to educational institutions for \$400. Director speaking fee can be arranged separately.

Faces of Israel has been endorsed by a wide spectrum of Jewish leaders such as Rabbi Basil Herring (RCA), Rabbi Gordon Tucker (Conservative movement), Rabbi Judith Hauptman (JTS), Rabbi David Ellenson (HUC), Rabbi Avi Weiss (HIR / YCT), Blu Greenberg (JOFA) and Rabbi Erin Hirsh (JRF).

For more information and to view the film trailer, visit www.facesthemovie.com



Advance Praise

Faces of Israel has been praised and endorsed by a wide spectrum of Jewish leadership! See below for details.

“A **fascinating exploration** of religion and state in Israel. What particularly pleased me was that the camera took me to places I never could have gotten to by myself, like meeting the *rabbanit* for premarital counseling. A **very thoughtful - sometimes infuriating** - view of how religious authorities in Israel interface with couples on the brink of marriage.”



Rabbi Judith Hauptman, Chair of the Department of Talmud and Rabbinics at JTS

“*Faces of Israel* is a **mature and informative** piece on the topic of Jewish marriage in Israel. The film **thoughtfully discusses the challenges** that the Reform, Masorti and Modern Orthodox movements face in Israel and how these groups are coming to play a greater role in this arena as growing sectors of the Israeli public increasingly search for an alternate to the official Orthodox Rabbinate. *Faces of Israel* is **highly engaging** and is **recommended as an educational tool** for synagogues of all denominations across North America.”



Rabbi David Ellenson, President of HUC

“Documentaries are intended less to entertain than to educate. Amy Oppenheimer’s film educates yet does so **without compromising viewer interest** from beginning to end. It is a relief to view an **honest and sophisticated** presentation that sheds more light than heat on an issue many struggle with in the young Jewish State.”



Rabbi Irving and Blu Greenberg, Founder of CLAL and JOFA, respectively

“This documentary about religious life in Israel, particularly as it relates to marriage, is **very instructive**. I am **especially pleased that it presents frankly and forthrightly the perspective of religiously observant, but non-Orthodox, Jews** (Masorti and Reform). For them, the opportunity — often denied — to marry in accordance with the *Halakhah* of their communities is a most fundamental right, and one of the keys to healing the secular-religious rift in Israel.”



Rabbi Gordon Tucker, Senior Rabbi of Temple Israel Center in White Plains, NY

“*Faces of Israel* **enables and empowers** its viewers to discuss and formulate opinions about some of the most important questions facing the State of Israel and the Jewish people today. The film’s strength lies in its ability to fairly and regularly **intersect the voices of the Rabbinate with the voices of Israeli citizens**, thereby opening up a range of issues for discussion. *Faces of Israel* is **powerful, honest and is a must-see** for synagogues and schools across the country.”



Rabbi Saul Berman, Founder of Edah and Professor at Stern College and Columbia School of Law

“In *Faces of Israel*, Amy Oppenheimer has produced a **quality presentation** that provides much material for discussion with regard to the nature of Israel as a Jewish State. She focuses on areas in which the Chief Rabbinate, as an official State Authority, impacts the lives of Israelis. From my perspective, the answer is clearly greater pluralism and less authority for the Chief Rabbinate, but the essence of Ms. Oppenheimer’s **fine work** is that it leaves open to the viewer such judgments; she **does not try to force the viewer onto one path or another**.”



David Lissy, Executive Director of the Masorti Foundation for Conservative Judaism in Israel

“A **unique invitation to learn about Israel directly from Israelis, that does not depend on prior knowledge** of the subject and comes with teacher resources to delve yet more deeply into the issues raised by the film.”



Rabbi Erin Hirsh, Director of Education of the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation

“*Faces of Israel* is a **fair and insightful** film that is appropriate for all audiences and backgrounds.”



Rabbi Basil Herring, Executive Vice President of the Rabbinical Council of America



Viewer Feedback

Faces of Israel released to the public in March 2009 and has been met with record success! See below for details.

“These issues are more relevant than ever, and *Faces of Israel* is **a world-class production that is taking the Jewish world by storm**. I could not more strongly recommend a film.”

-Ari Hoffnung, *President of the Riverdale Jewish Community Council*

“*Faces of Israel* is a riveting 75 minutes, and it is powerful precisely because it calls on Jews of every stream and denomination to consider important questions about religion and state in Israel today. Amy Oppenheimer has created **a vital educational tool for teens, for adults, for all of us**.”

-Rabbi Moshe Edelman, *Director of Leadership Development for USCJ*

“*Faces of Israel* was **a catalyst for Riverdale’s diverse community to explore issues of both religious and political importance**. Bravo to Amy Oppenheimer and the rest of the film’s crew!”

-Marti Michael, *Executive Director of the Riverdale YM-YWHA*

“Ms. Oppenheimer has managed to capture on film the complexities and nuances of one of the most divisive issues in Israeli society. ***Faces of Israel* adds texture and depth**.”

-Rabbi Seth Farber, *Founder of ITIM and expert on religion and state in Israel*

“*Faces of Israel* thoughtfully presents people from across the religious spectrum speaking to the camera about issues central to Jewish identity. One of the successes of the screening of *Faces of Israel* in our community was that it **brought together Jews of different backgrounds**. While they could not speak to the Israelis in the film, they did speak with each other. That is a good start!”

-Rabbi Barry Dov Katz, *Rabbi of Conservative Synagogue Adath Israel of Riverdale*

“**Kol HaKavod** for devoting your talent and time towards this critical issue in Israeli society!”

-Anat Hoffman, *Executive Director of the Israel Religious Action Center*

“*Faces of Israel* was **done with grace, humor, and sensitivity**. Congratulations on the tremendous success and very packed house!”

-Shira Berkovitz, *Synagogue Professional*