



Google Meet link for the meeting: <https://meet.google.com/wph-mynn-gwt>

Date: 3/23/2026, 3:30- 4 pm PST, 6:30-7 EST

Hello everyone,

I am really excited for our first meeting of the Sapir Youth Forum. The goal of this group is to bring together students who are interested in exploring Jewish ideas, identity, history, and contemporary issues through thoughtful conversation. Each meeting we will read one article from Sapir Journal and use it as a starting point for discussion.

For our first meeting, we will be reading the article:

“The Origins of Chosenness.”

<https://sapirjournal.org/chosenness/2025/the-origins-of-chosenness/>

The article explores one of the most famous and debated ideas in Jewish thought: the concept that the Jewish people are “chosen.” It explains where this idea came from historically and asks what it might actually mean.

Our central discussion question will be:

What does it actually mean when Jews are called the “chosen people”?

You do not need to prepare anything formal, but reading the article beforehand will make the discussion much richer.

Discussion questions

To guide our conversation, here are some of the questions we will explore together.

1. When you hear the phrase “chosen people,” what is the first idea that comes to mind?
2. Why do you think this idea has sometimes been misunderstood as implying superiority?
3. The article explains that many ancient cultures believed their gods favored them. Does that change how we should think about Jewish chosenness?
4. If Jews are “chosen,” what do you think they are chosen for?
5. If chosenness means responsibility rather than superiority, what responsibilities might Jewish young people have today?
6. After reading the article, how would you personally define the idea of Jewish chosenness?

Optional further readings

If you are interested in exploring the topic further, here are a few additional readings that connect well with the article.

Additional articles from the same issue of Sapir Journal

“A 2,500-Year-Old Problem” by Malka Simkovich

Explores how the concept of chosenness created tensions with surrounding cultures in the ancient world.

“The Rebirth of Chosenness” by Rabbi Ari Lamm

Argues that chosenness can be understood as a hopeful moral calling rather than a claim of superiority.

Classical Jewish sources:

You may also find these passages interesting.

Exodus 19:5–6

Describes Israel as a “kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”

Genesis 12:1–3

G*d tells Abraham that “all the families of the earth shall be blessed through you.”

These passages raise an interesting question:

Does chosenness describe privilege, responsibility, or something else entirely?

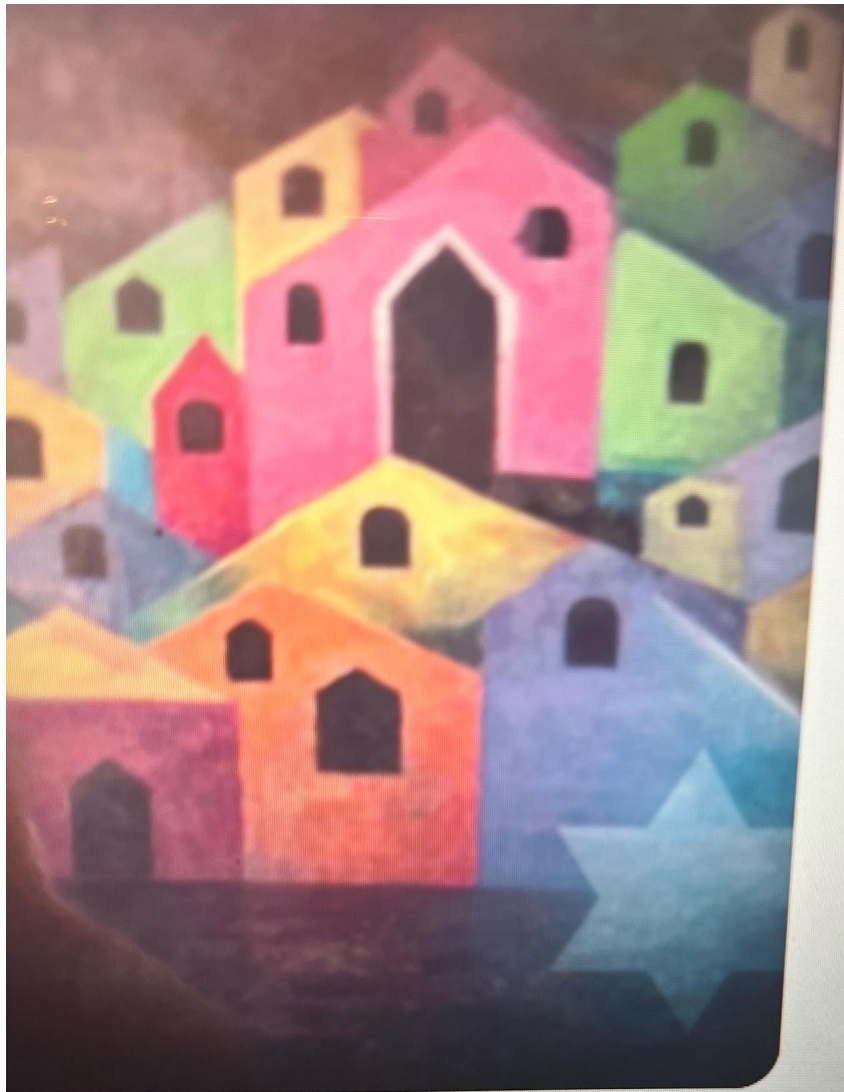
I am really looking forward to hearing everyone’s perspectives and starting what I hope will become a thoughtful and engaging series of conversations!

Looking forward to our discussion! :)

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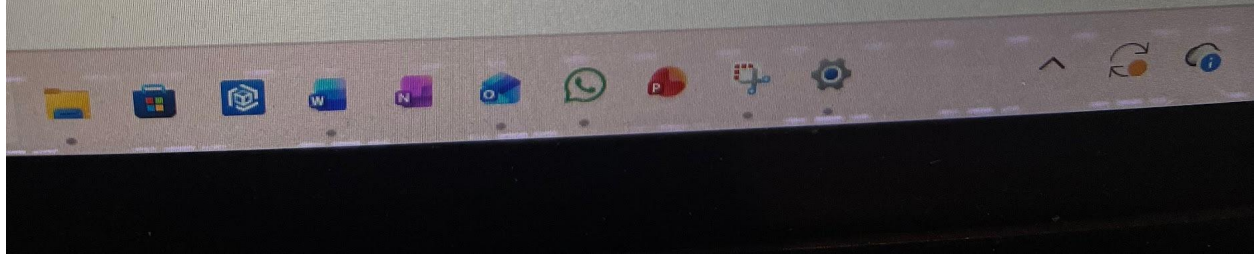


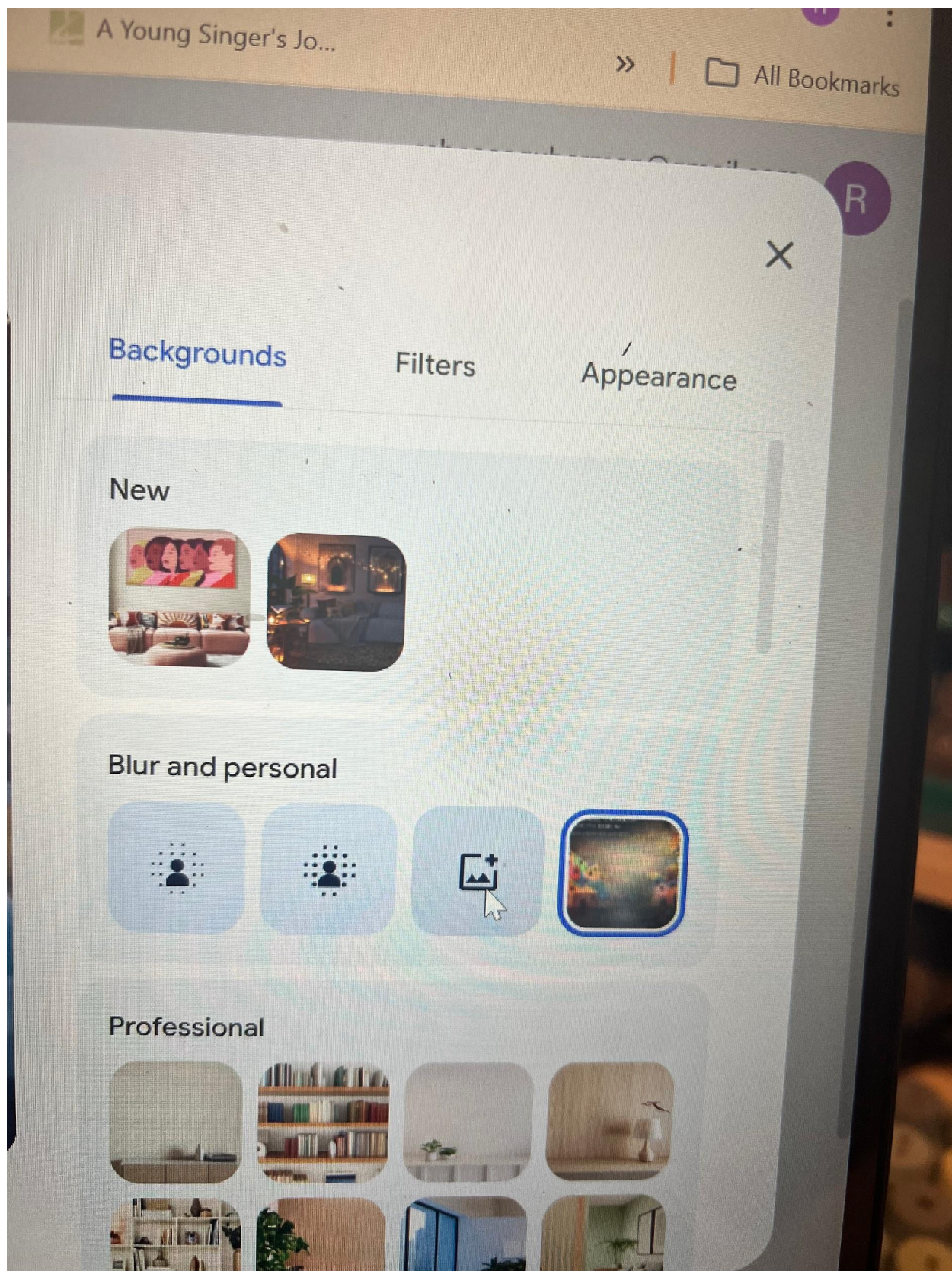
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Here are some examples of SAPIR salons in action from SAPIR's official YouTube channel:

“Jewish Identity vs. Identity Politics” with Rabbi Meir Soloveichik :

<https://youtu.be/IYSDNpipunA?si=1bfoz5Ulg26gsIJJ>

“Choosing to be Chosen” with Noa Kushner and Adam Mintz:

<https://youtu.be/JspDKWCYs7Q?si=iaX74xK36HPRXhir>

Sincerely,

Rebecca Guberman