



Confronting Hate and Rising Anti-Semitism: French Philosopher Bernard-Henri Lévy Makes Rare Los Angeles Appearance

In Conversation with Special Guest Rabbi David Wolpe at Wilshire Boulevard Temple

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, January 12, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- LOS ANGELES, CA, January 12, 2017...In a rare Los Angeles appearance, Bernard-Henri Lévy, the French philosopher, activist, and a great moral voice of our time, will be in conversation with special guest Rabbi David Wolpe at Wilshire Boulevard Temple this Sunday evening, January 15 at 7:30 p.m. The free evening program, open to the public and sponsored by the Jerome N. Tober Fund and in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the USC Casden Institute, will build on Levy's passionate and personal new book *The Genius of Judaism* (Random House, release date: January 10), in which he examines a new and stealthy form of anti-Semitism, provides a provocative defense of Israel, questions his spiritual roots, and offers a new vision of what it means to be a Jew.

The Genius of Judaism is a passionate and deeply personal intellectual reckoning built on Talmudic traditions of argument and conflict. At the very heart of the matter is an obligation to the other, to the dispossessed, and to the forgotten, an obligation that, as Lévy vividly recounts, he has sought to embody over decades of championing "lost causes," from Bosnia to Africa's forgotten wars, from Libya to the Kurdish Peshmerga's desperate fight against the Islamic State. Beyond his critique of hate and anti-Semitism on the rise, he reveals the overlooked Jewish roots of Western democratic ideals and confronts the current Islamist threat while intellectually dismantling it. Jews are not a "chosen people," Lévy explains, but a "treasure" whose spirit must continue to inform moral thinking and courage today.

Bernard-Henri Lévy is a philosopher, journalist, activist, and filmmaker. Among his dozens of books are *American Vertigo*, *Barbarism with a Human Face*, and *Who Killed Daniel Pearl?* His writing has appeared in a wide range of publications throughout Europe and the United States. His films include the documentaries *Bosna!* and *A Day in the Death of Sarajevo*. Lévy is co-founder of the antiracist group SOS Racisme and has served on diplomatic missions for the French government.

Rabbi David Wolpe, named the most influential Rabbi in America by *Newsweek Magazine* and one of the 50 most influential Jews in the world by the *Jerusalem Post*, is the Senior Rabbi of Sinai Temple in Los Angeles. He is the author of eight books, including the national bestseller *Making Loss Matter: Creating Meaning in Difficult Times* and his newest volume *David, The Divided Heart*.

"On the occasion of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday weekend, the conversation between two gifted thinkers—Bernard-Henri Lévy and Rabbi David Wolpe—promises to be memorable and thought provoking," said Rabbi Susan Nanus, director of adult programs at Wilshire Boulevard Temple. The program takes place inside the domed sanctuary of Wilshire Boulevard Temple, the oldest Jewish congregation in Los Angeles.

"The Museum is pleased to co-present the appearance of Bernard-Henri Levy at Wilshire Boulevard Temple," said Steven Klappholz, Director, Western Region, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. "The program will offer an opportunity for spontaneous and engaging dialogue with the

audience. These types of forums are essential in creating awareness of rising anti-Semitism and understanding how to challenge such attitudes.”

A living memorial to the Holocaust, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum inspires citizens and leaders worldwide to confront hatred, prevent genocide, and promote human dignity. Generous donors make its far-reaching educational programs and global impact possible.

“It’s important to bring programs like this to our community,” said Steven Klappholz, Director, Western Region, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. “In addition, the Museum’s work in Los Angeles and nationally is critical in combatting rising anti-Semitism, ongoing genocide, and intolerable hate around the world.”

For more information and free admission, visit wbtl.org/bhl

About Wilshire Boulevard Temple

Wilshire Boulevard Temple is the oldest Jewish congregation in Los Angeles, founded in 1862 as Congregation B’nai B’rith. The Temple has two locations: The Ericka J. Glazer Family Campus in Koreatown/Mid-Wilshire houses The Temple’s historic building, built in 1929 and placed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1981, and The Audrey and Sidney Irmas Campus in West Los Angeles. Both campuses offer education, worship, adult, and youth programming along with Early Childhood Centers, Brawerman Elementary School, and Religious School. The Temple also operates Camp Hess Kramer and Gindling Hilltop Camp and the Steve Breuer Conference Center in Malibu. The Karsh Family Social Service Center, located at Wilshire Boulevard Temple, opened in November 2016.

Don Levy
Wilshire Boulevard Temple
2138352140
[email us here](#)

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