

## **The Waters of Marah and Translated Memories: Representations of Holocaust and Genocide in Literature Written for Children and Adolescents**

In the Hebrew Bible, water in all of its forms serves as representations of divine qualities. Largely, references to water present positive representations of divine qualities. In other instances, however, water symbolizes death and bitterness.

The Torah itself is compared to life-giving waters. The rabbis insisted that education and study are what imbue words into living water and maintain that the greatest danger to Judaism and to the world is illiteracy and failure to study, to remember, to tell. If words are water and scriptures are living water, then perhaps the stories of Holocaust and genocide are the waters of Marah - those which were too bitter to drink.

The primary goal of this presentation is to offer the findings of an in-depth analysis of the comprehensive collection of Holocaust and genocide literature written for children and young adults. This presentation provides a metanarrative of the collection based on both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Content analysis categories such as gender, age, location, sexual identity, religion, political affiliation, and date of publication were used to analyze the totality of the collection. Participants will be provided access to the database of literature as a primary source for their own ongoing scholarly work.

Often, in the course of this ongoing research, others have suggested that Holocaust literature for children and young adults is a dated topic – one not worthy of serious scholarly study. Months ago Nazis marched in the streets of Charlottesville. The greatest danger is still the failure to study, to remember, to tell. Perhaps through study, we take on the divine role and toss wood in to the waters of Marah.