

**Rabbi David Hartman,
Founder, Shalom Hartman Institute
New York, May 20, 2004
Graduation Address**

One day, it will spring forth. It will come forth because my faith, even though Israel has not built a perfect society, I still wait as Jews waited for the Messiah. I wait for my people to resurrect their strength. To resurrect their wisdom. And to build a just and decent society. A society in which Arab and Jew would walk as brethren with each other. In which Christian, Jew and Muslim would say to each other, I don't have to reject you in order to affirm what I am. I can love that which is the music of difference. And I hear sometimes in the mosque an Islam calling for prayer at four o'clock in the morning. And then I remember getting angry. I get-- broke up my whole sleep. But I say, look how beautiful, that music sounded. Muslims are being called to prayer.

And then I hear the church bells ringing calling people to church. And then I hear *Hasidim* singing, singing a welcome song for the Sabbath. To live in Jerusalem is to live with all this type of music. Christian music, Islamic music and Jewish music. We've come back there not to be triumphant, not to be heroic soldiers necessarily. But to be people who want to celebrate the music of everyone else's faith.

In the Institute, we try to celebrate the music of the reform movement, the conservative movement and the *reconstructionist* movement. And we celebrate the music of Arabs who come to study with us as well. In other words, celebrate your *Jewishness*. Celebrate the joy of living in an age where Jews have liberated their lives from exile. They're not a wandering people anymore. We've come home. And in coming home, we have to have the strength to sustain it.