

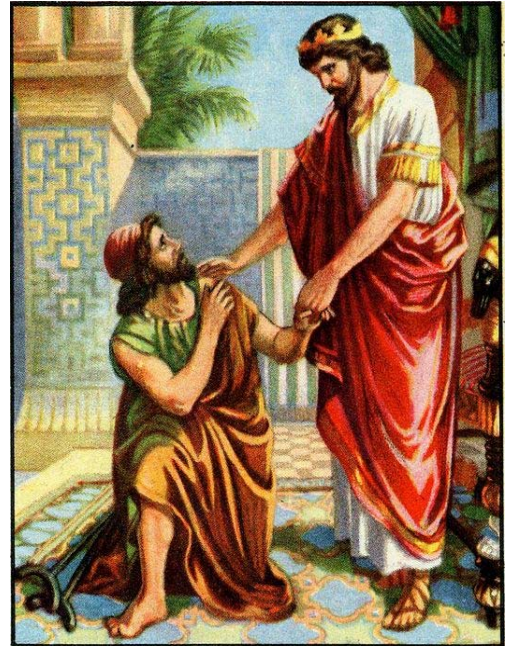
**ATTACHMENT #26**

**JEWS, ADOPTION & RADOVS**

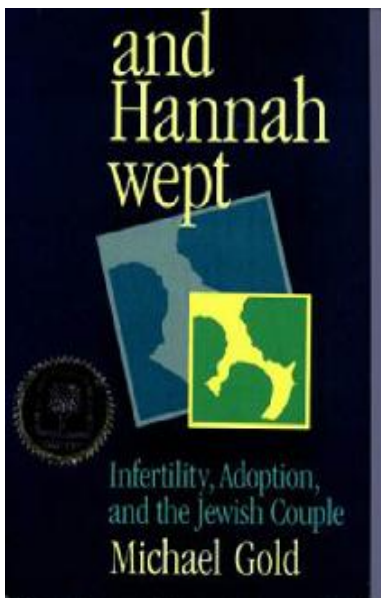
Discussion in conversations of Morris J. Radov, Edie Radov, Shelle Sakol Radin,  
and Barney Halperin.

## JEWS, ADOPTION & RADOVS

In surveying the family, it is clear that there have been a great number of adoptions, some very openly discussed, others quietly mentioned, but always mentioned proudly. Jews are at least twice as likely to adopt as Americans generally, often for reasons of late entry into the business of marriage or having children, as well as for altruistic reasons of providing homes to children otherwise homeless. The Radovs, at least from my survey, are probably two to three times greater adopters than Jews generally, trendsetters here as in so many ways. There have been adoptions in Judaism since at least the Bible. King David's wife, Michal, never had any children, yet somehow five sons appear at her side, probably nieces, nephews or cousins adopted by the King. Queen Esther was famously orphaned and then raised as the daughter of her cousin Mordecai, and there are any number of other cases throughout Jewish history. In fact, there is no Hebrew word for adoption traditionally, as adopted and naturally born children are treated identically until the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, when Israeli lexicographers came up with the term *ametz*, which, rather than meaning adoption, means strength or fortitude.



David showing kindness to his adopted son, Mephibosheth



Advise Book on Jewish Adoption

It would be fair to say that, in my rather subjective opinion, the Radov adoptions have been a stunning success. In that any part of this history has any genetic attribution (other than physical characteristics, and a few very disputed contentions in the attachment on Ashkenazis about both I.Q. and cancer rates) that would not be the intent. Most of what is passed on to us by way of values, humor, tradition, beliefs, and celebrations is culturally and family driven, hardly a matter of DNA. Jews enjoy a long tradition of wanting children ("Be prosperous and multiply," Deut. 30:5), as with Hannah (a common Radov name, often in the form of Anna or Ann) in I Samuel 1:5, "*But unto Hannah he gave a worldly portion; for he loved Hannah: but the Lord had shut up her womb. And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret because the Lord had shut up her womb. And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the Lord, she provoked her; therefore she wept and did not eat. Then said Elkanah, her husband, to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? And why eatest thou not? And why is thy heart grieved.*" Why indeed! However the solution to this, equal in wisdom to any in tradition, is found in the words of Edie Radov, whose two children were adopted by Jack Radov and who gave advice to other family members unable bear children: "Having a baby does not make you a parent. Living with a child and taking care of a child makes you a parent. It won't make any difference if you have it or if you adopt it. If you like children, don't just not have any because you can't have any. Just adopt one." Hence, bountiful and welcome additions time and again to the family.