How can those of us who are religious and who accept the natural world as it is, understand what is good and what is evil, when nothing in the natural world can give us the answer? Each religious scientist will have his or her own answer.

Mine is grounded in the fact that no mind can properly emerge in the brain of a tiny child unless that child is deeply and completely loved in its first few years of life. From this fact comes the idea that we are therefore each obliged to spend our lives in acts of loving kindness, out of simple gratitude for that gift having been given to us in our beginnings.

Pain, suffering, unreasonable maldistribution of good and bad fate: these are the very stuff of nature, the visible expression of the random genetic variation which provides nature with the eerie capacity to produce some living thing that will survive any contingency. To work against these aspects of life is to work against its deepest mechanisms, and also to work against the meaninglessness of these mechanisms.

So far nothing I have said would seem to be in the slightest degree controversial. Yet we face today a local, national, international, and global failure to extend to strangers the minimum amount of respect and love that is the only fully human relationship between any two people. In his 1987 novel *A child in time*, Ian McEwan says of a senior civil servant, “The art of bad government was to sever the line between public policy and intimate feeling, the instinct for what is right.”
At a time when the line seems quite completely frayed both in our country and even in Israel, we must try to understand, and teach how to correct, this scandal of neglect and denial that embarrasses our sciences and trivializes our faiths. This is why Robert Satloff’s book is so important.

From *Genesis* 25, lines 7-9:

This was the total span of Abraham's life: one hundred and seventy-five years. And Abraham breathed his last, dying at a good ripe age, old and contented; and he was gathered to his kin. His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah...

It should not come as a surprise to learn – recall — that exiled Ishmael, circumcised patriarch of the twelve Arab tribes, rejoined his half-brother, the Jewish patriarch Isaac, to give their father a proper burial alongside Isaac's mother. If the tradition of descent from Isaac links Jews together despite the absence of any useful biological confirmation for that ancestry, it must also link Jews forever with their Muslim cousins.

By showing that Muslims were among the righteous gentiles who saved Jews from Shoah at risk to their own lives, this book is a necessary and even critical counter to the voices in our community here and in the government of Israel, who have lately profited from the religious and scientific error of casting Muslims, per se, as intrinsically, biologically untrustworthy to be Israeli citizens.

That is the same error that led seventy years ago in Germany to the broad-stoke dehumanization of us as a people. It was the beginning of the downward spiral that ended in disaster for us a few generations back.

This new history of Muslims who saved Jews is the best answer possible to those who would claim today that being a Muslim today, is a sufficient reason justify distrust, discounting, and discrimination.

But there is little time to lose. As my friend the recently deceased and much missed Bill Coffin of Riverside Church put it, “Hell is the truth learned too late.”

I hope you will all agree that just to keep us from any further delay in learning the truths Satloff discovered in the JDC archives, he and his book richly deserve the Katzki award.