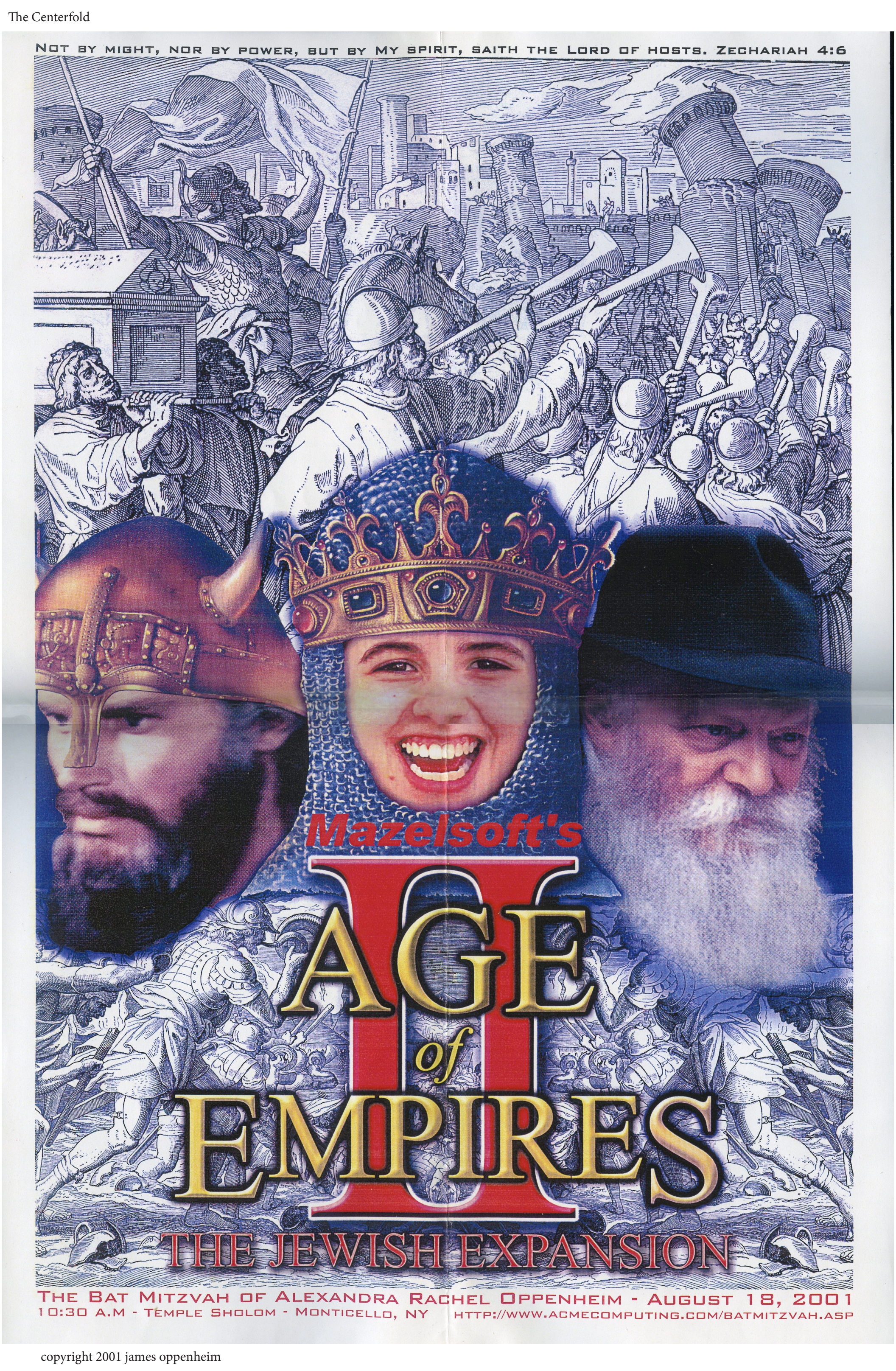

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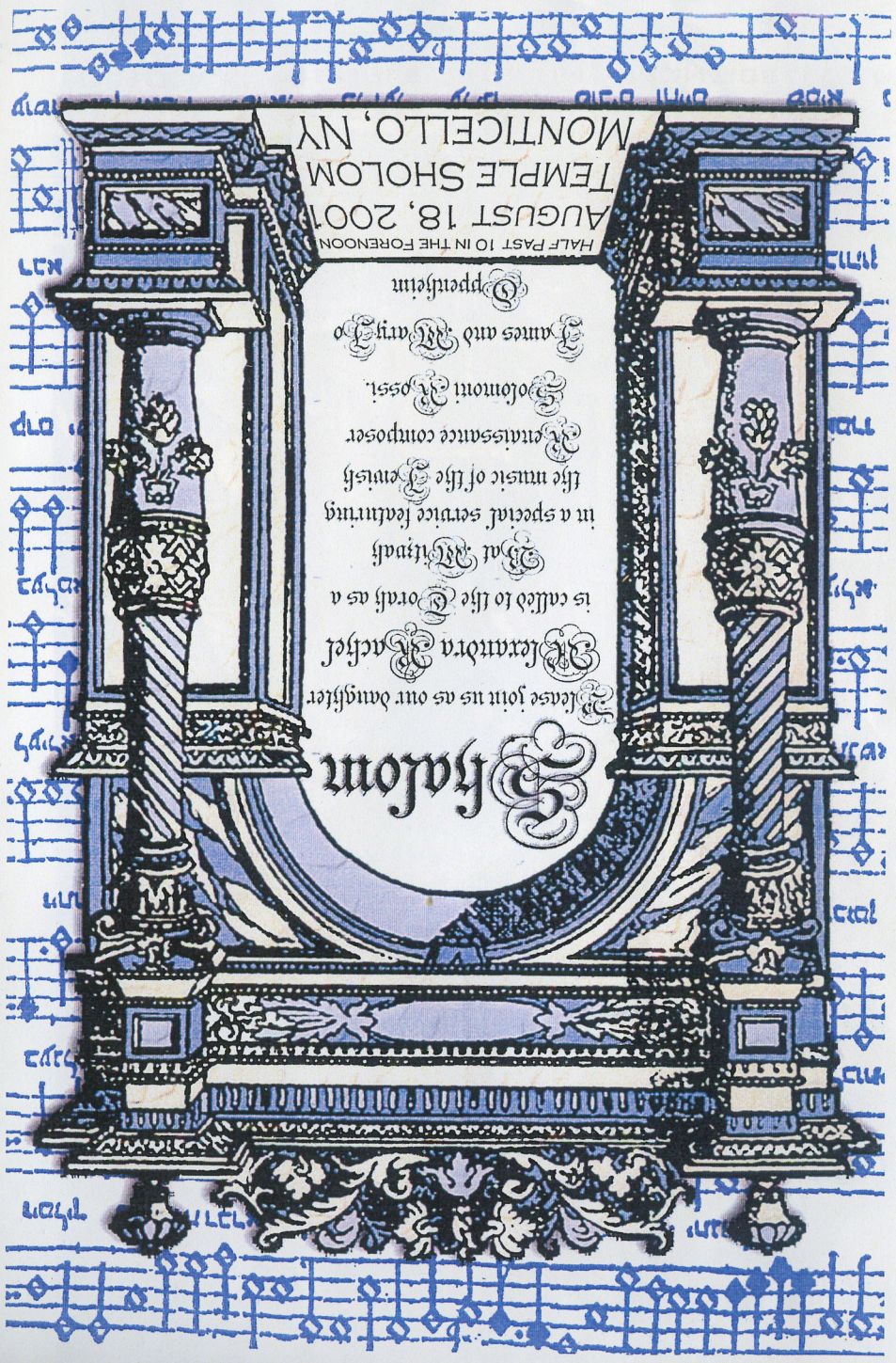


TO:

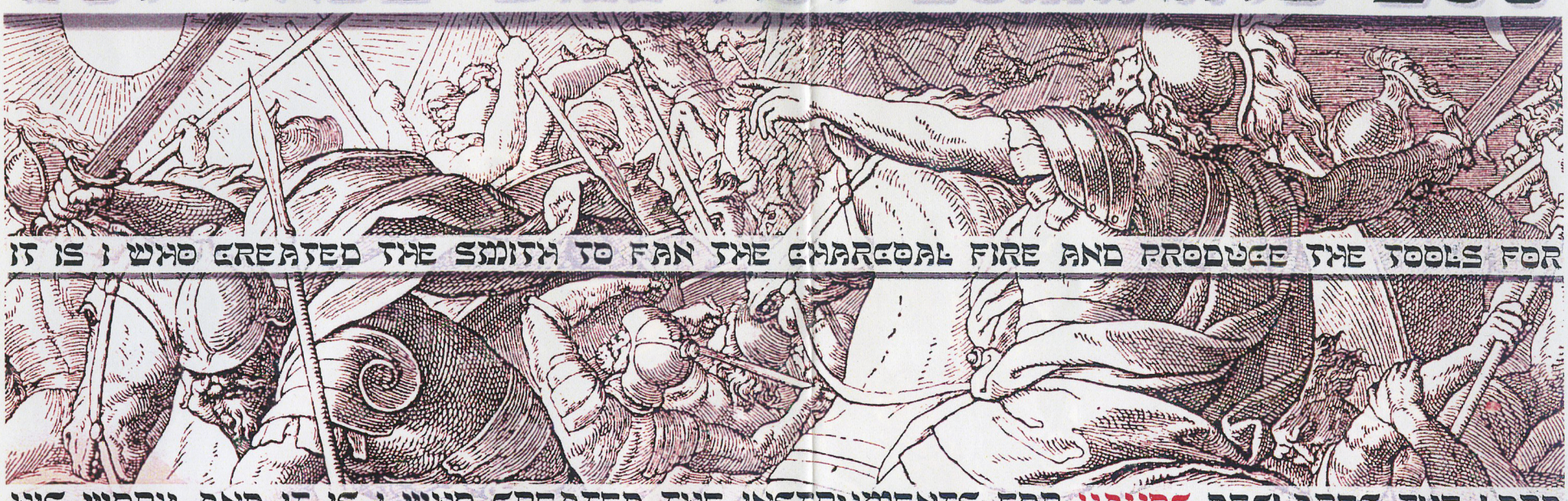
James and MaryJo Oppenheim
30 Fraser Avenue
Monticello, NY 12701

Bat Mitzvah and
Pool Party Invitation enclosed!
R.S.V.P. by July 4 @ 845/794-1053
or BatMitzvah@AcmeComputing.com.
Renaissance Attire Suggested.

YOU WILL DOMINATE MANY NATIONS

When the lord your god brings you into the land which you are about to invade and occupy, you shall pronounce the blessing at Mount Gerizim and the curse at Mount Ebal.

BUT THEY WILL NOT DOMINATE YOU



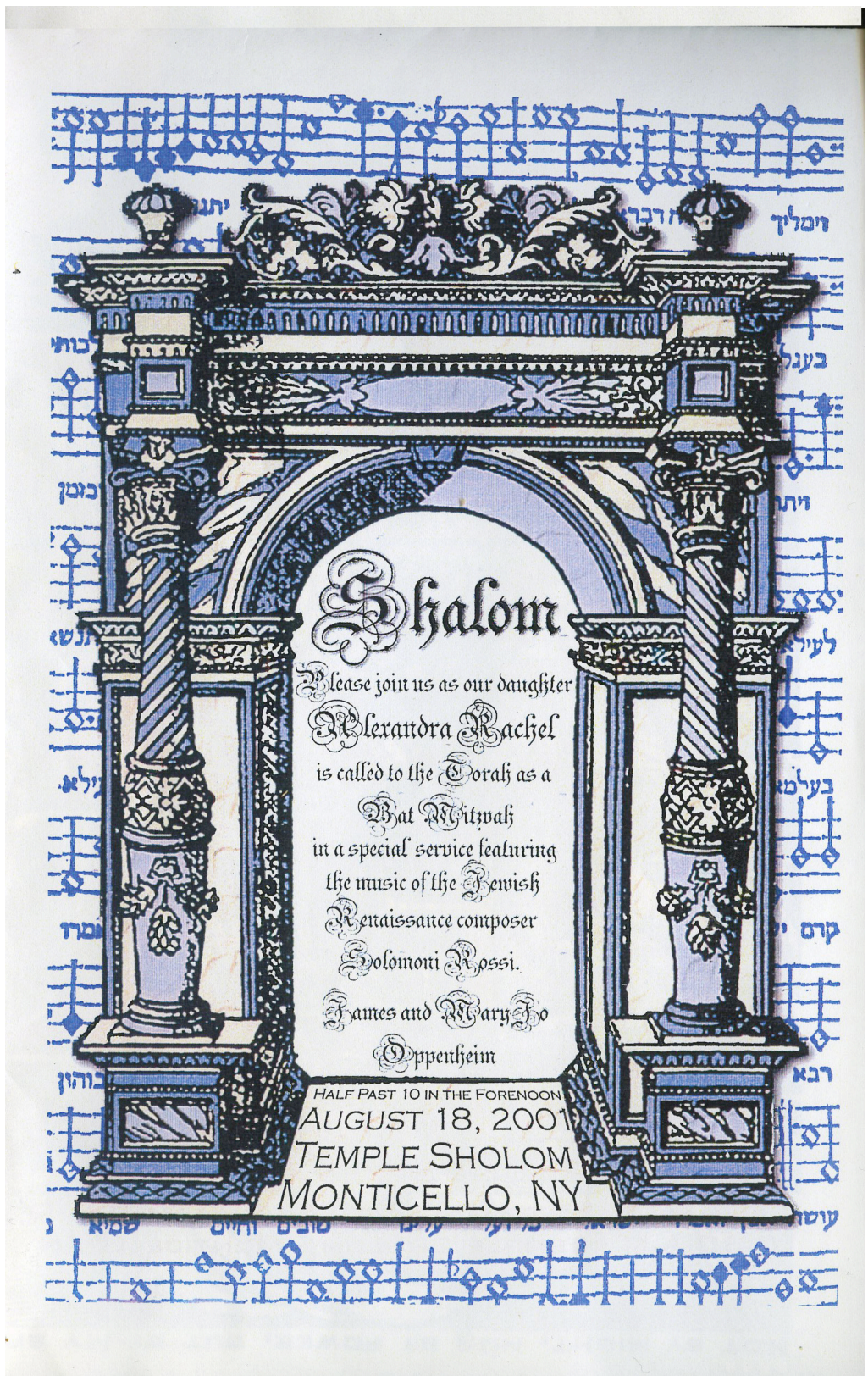
How can we reconcile the bravado and machismo of the Torah and Haftorah portions from my bat mitzvah quoted above with the history of a People who have lived through conquest from civilizations as old as Assyria, Rome and Greece? Moses proclaimed that we would be blessed if we followed God; cursed and defeated if we did not. Should we understand our place in history as that of a cursed nation?

Surprisingly, I found some of the answers in a computer game called Age of Empires which I love to play with my Dad. Each player guides a nation to victory through the centuries from the beginnings of civilization to the Imperial Age.

Although nearly every enemy of Ancient Israel is in the game, the Jews were omitted. I wondered why we were left out of the game. We had great cities and ancient wonders. We had military victories and a history of conquest and siege. Perhaps it is because we had different victory conditions.

To explore the meaning of "victory" my bat mitzvah will be set in Venice - home to many of Europe's Jews during the Renaissance, the time Age of Empires calls the Imperial Age. I invite you to come in Renaissance attire (but don't forget to bring a towel and swimsuit for the party afterward).

Jim Oppenheim



James and MaryJo Oppenheim
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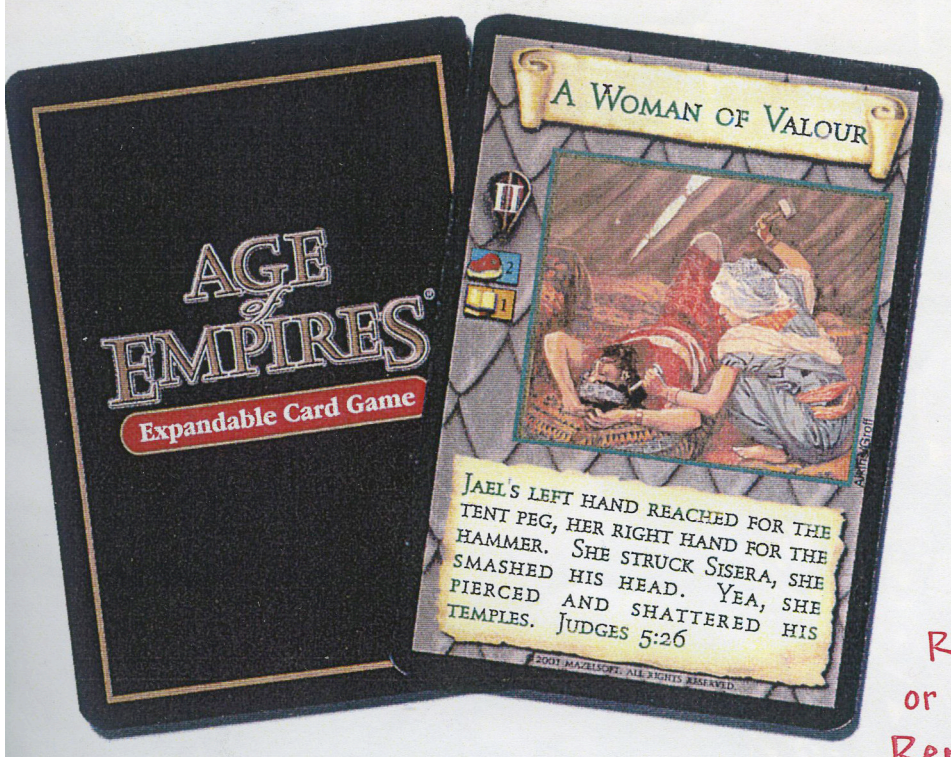

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IT IS I WHO CREATED THE SMITH TO FAN THE CHARCOAL FIRE AND PRODUCE THE TOOLS FOR

HIS WORK AND IT IS I WHO CREATED THE INSTRUMENTS FOR HAVOC DECLARES THE LORD

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Jeff Oppenheim