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August 17, 2020 / FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***Hatikvah: A Sacred Reading of a Secular Text***  
**Renowned Scholar Edwin Seroussi Delivers Online Talk, Sept. 13**

NEW BRUNSWICK/PISCATAWAY, N.J. – The status of *Hatikvah* as the anthem of the Zionist movement, and eventually the State of Israel, was contentious from its earliest days and even into the present. Edwin Seroussi, the Emanuel Alexandre Professor of Musicology and the director of the Jewish Music Research Center at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, will explore the history of the embattled song, focusing on the unexpected, often obscured, and lesser-known alternative readings of the text. His talk will examine how Middle Eastern and North African Jews always viewed *Hatikvah* as a *piyyut* (religious song), or at least as an apolitical song of yearning for Zion.

The webinar, “*Hatikvah: A Sacred Reading of a Secular Text*,” will be held on September 13 at 2 pm. Presented by the Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life at Rutgers, the talk is free and open to the public. For more information or to register, visit [BildnerCenter.Rutgers.edu](http://BildnerCenter.Rutgers.edu).

A pioneer in the study of Mediterranean and Middle Eastern musical cultures and traditions, Dr. Seroussi was awarded the 2018 Israel Prize, the country’s highest cultural honor. He also won the Joel Engel Prize for Life Achievement in Jewish Music Research.

The Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life connects the university with the community through public lectures, symposia, Jewish communal initiatives, cultural events, and teacher training.