

First some background information,

In february of this year, my father and I went with the J-teen organization on a chesed trip to Havana, Cuba. We spent time their helping out the Jewish community in a variety of ways. We held a Purim carnival at the Conservative synagogue, visited and bought hand-made kippot at the Orthodox synagogue, and did everything in-between. My father and I found it to be a fascinating and unforgettable experience. Here is a brief poem that I wrote several months after the trip, after allowing the experience to really sink in:

Untitled poem by Joshua Moher:

It was on those cobbled streets,
That were once grand like the cities of europe
But had become dilapidated through the years
That I realized what the place was more of a museum than a modern metropolis.

But not a museum of vintage cars, or an insight into communist life,
Or a view into the history of Jewish immigrants
Well, it was all of those things, but not just that
It was a history of a place that was fled to, and is now fled from,
A place that was once so grand and illustrious, in the spotlight of our culture,
turned into a place to project resentment and fear,
And ultimately forgotten.

The home of a people, who despite the terrible decisions
Of those enlisted to protect them
Continue, nevertheless, because their is no other option.

These are the Cuban people,
But there is something familiar about them,
And their struggle
Not too many peoples can identify with that consistent terror,
Of what your own masters may do next.
But we can.
And we will always be able to.

No matter how free the world becomes,
We will always be able to.