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Preserving American Jewish History

MS-603: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum Collection, 1945-1992.

Series C: Interreligious Activities. 1952-1992

Box 15, Folder 13, Conference: The People of God - Jewish-Baptist Perspectives, 13-16 June 1971.

Tsevat, Matitiah, Professor of Bible, Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio

Vogel, Manfred, Rabbi, Professor of Religion, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois

Wacholder, Ben Zion, Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics, Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio

Waxman, Mordecai, Rabbi, Temple Israel, Great Neck, New York: Editor, *Conservative Judaism*

Brief, Seymour, Director, Ohio-Kentucky Area, American Jewish Committee, Cleveland, Ohio

Moss, Norma B., Executive Assistant, American Jewish Committee, Cincinnati, Ohio

Strober, Gerald S., Consultant in Religious Curricula, American Jewish Committee, New York, New York

☆☆☆☆☆☆

THE PEOPLE OF GOD: JEWISH AND BAPTIST PERSPECTIVES

A Conference Co-Sponsored By



THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERFAITH WITNESS
OF THE HOME MISSION BOARD
OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

and the



INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT
OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

JUNE 13-16, 1971

Hebrew Union College—
Jewish Institute of Religion
Cincinnati, Ohio

INTRODUCTION

The complex and agonizing task of applying one's religious faith to the problem of the "secular world" is a major aspect of the struggle for religious identity in our time.

This task is incumbent upon Church and Synagogue, Christians and Jews. It may be lightened as each group faces human brothers who share in the struggle for religious identity and responsibility for building human community.

For Baptists and Jews, who take to heart the admonition that we must be "a light to the nations," discovering that it means to be faithful to the living God together may be the highest calling a people of God can ever know in a pluralistic world society.

In that spirit of mutual exploration, we meet together at this Second Annual National Conference co-sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention and the American Jewish Committee. The symbolism of Baptists and Jews meeting together annually in fellowship and mutual respect in itself is as meaningful as the subject matter we choose to discuss. Hopefully, the symbolism as well as the substance will serve as a model encouraging Christians and Jews everywhere to turn walls of isolation of the past into bridges of friendship and reconciliation for the future.

Dr. M. Thomas Starkes
Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum
CONFERENCE CO-CHAIRMEN

☆☆☆☆☆☆

Dr. Glenn A. Igleheart
Rabbi A. James Rudin
Dr. Gerald S. Strober
CONFERENCE CO-ORDINATORS

JEWISH-BAPTIST SCHOLARS' CONFERENCE

JUNE 13-16, 1971

THEME OF CONFERENCE

"THE PEOPLE OF GOD: JEWISH AND BAPTIST PERSPECTIVES"

SUNDAY, JUNE 13

OPENING SESSION: Mohawk Motor Inn
MARC H. TANENBAUM, Presiding
8:00 P.M.

GREETINGS: from the President of Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion,
ALFRED C. GOTTSCHALK
KENNETH D. ROSEMAN, Dean,
Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio

WELCOME: JAMES L. MAGRISH, Chairman,
Cincinnati, Ohio Chapter, American Jewish Committee

"Order and Freedom: A Perspective on the Meaning of Religious Community"

FRANK E. REYNOLDS, Professor of History of Religion, University of Chicago Divinity School, Chicago, Illinois

MONDAY, JUNE 14

HERBERT R. BLOCH AUDITORIUM

"THE PEOPLE OF GOD FACING EACH OTHER"

Monday Morning M. THOMAS STARKES, Presiding
9:30 A.M.

"A Jewish Perspective of Christianity"
SAMUEL SANDMEL, Distinguished Service Professor of Bible and Hellenistic Literature, Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio

RESPONSE: RALPH LEE SMITH, Professor of Old Testament, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas

GENERAL DISCUSSION

12:15 LUNCHEON

1:30 P.M.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS
SISTERHOOD DORMITORY LOUNGES

3:30 P.M.

WALKING TOUR of Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion Campus

6:30 DINNER

Monday Evening A. JAMES RUDIN, Presiding

8:00 P.M.

"A Baptist Perspective of Judaism"

JOSEPH R. ESTES, Pastor,
First Baptist Church, DeLand, Florida

RESPONSE: . . . BEN ZION BOKSER, Visiting Professor
of Homiletics, Jewish Theological Seminary
of America, New York, New York,
and Rabbi, Forest Hills Jewish Center,
Forest Hills, New York

GENERAL DISCUSSION

TUESDAY, JUNE 15

"THE PEOPLE OF GOD FACING THE WORLD COMMUNITY"

Tuesday Morning JUSTIN FRIEDMAN, Chairman,
Interreligious Affairs Committee, Cincinnati,
Ohio Chapter, American Jewish Committee
Presiding

9:30 A.M.

"A Baptist View of the World Community"

JOHN P. NEWPORT, Professor
of Philosophy of Religion, Southwestern
Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas

RESPONSE: URIEL TAL, Visiting Professor
of History, Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute
of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio, and Professor
of Modern Jewish History,
Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel

GENERAL DISCUSSION

12:15 LUNCHEON

1:30–3:30 P.M.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

6:30 DINNER

Tuesday Evening GLENN A. IGLEHEART, Presiding

8:00 P.M.

"A Jewish View of the World Community"

JACOB AGUS, Professor of Rabbinic Civilization,
Reconstructionist Rabbinical College,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Rabbi,
Congregation Beth El, Baltimore, Maryland

RESPONSE: ROLLIN B. ARMOUR, Professor of Religion,
Stetson University, DeLand, Florida

GENERAL DISCUSSION

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16

Wednesday Morning A. JASE JONES, Presiding

9:30 A.M.

WORSHIP SERVICES

10:00 A.M.

"Religious Identity and Pluralism"

JOHN KILLINGER, Professor
of Preaching, Vanderbilt Divinity School,
Nashville, Tennessee

GENERAL DISCUSSION

12:30 CLOSING LUNCHEON

GERALD S. STROBER, Presiding

GREETINGS: RICHARD G. UNGAR
Immediate Past Chairman,
Cincinnati, Ohio Chapter,
American Jewish Committee

"Prospectus for the Future" . . . M. THOMAS STARKES
MARC H. TANENBAUM

☆☆☆☆☆☆

BAPTIST PARTICIPANTS

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Walker, Arthur, Director of Missions, State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, Columbus, Ohio

Williams, Donald L., Professor of Old Testament Interpretation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky

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Sandmel, Samuel, Rabbi, Distinguished Service Professor of Bible and Hellenistic Literature, Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio

Tal, Uriel, Visiting Professor of History, Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio and Professor of Modern Jewish History, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel

Tanenbaum, Marc H., Rabbi, National Director, Interreligious Affairs Department, American Jewish Committee, New York, New York

Radio Broadcast Over
NBC-Radio Network, May 2, 1971

by

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, National Director of
Interreligious Affairs, American Jewish
Committee

Sponsored by
National Catholic Office of Radio and Television

JUDAISM, ECUMENISM, PLURALISM

This has been called the ecumenical century. The ecumenical movement, as it is generally known, is a major effort to unite all Christians in one household of faith and witness. In the process of articulating a concern for Christian unity, inevitably Christian ecumenists have performed a valuable service by raising to public consciousness the critical issue of the unity of mankind as a whole. Of course, the concern over the unity of the human family has been publicly articulated by many other thoughtful persons as well -- historians, social scientists, economists, and statesmen. The catchy phrase, "the global village" coined by Marshall McLuhan, symbolizes the reality that transportation, worldwide mobility, and instantaneous communications have transformed the formerly isolated seven continents of the earth and their inhabitants, at least potentially, into a global neighborhood.

Indeed, some social scientists have observed, that it is the very fact of that emergent common core culture on a worldwide basis, mediated by science and technology, that has made possible at all the development of world ecumenism. That new global reality makes it necessary that we develop conceptions that enable our people to understand and live meaningfully in this new world.

What does Judaism have to say about the unity of mankind? Does Judaism have any relationship to the Christian ecumenical movement? What does Judaism have to contribute to the achievement of world community and to global pluralism?

Quite obviously, this is a vast and complex subject, and these remarks can only be considered as "a small talk on a very large topic." At the risk of sounding triumphalist, it needs to be acknowledged at the very outset, that there would probably be little awareness of the very concept of the unity of the human family as we know it, nor of Christian unity, had there not been a Hebrew Scriptures which

helped shape decisively the consciousness of Western civilization.

The Hebrew Bible, which reflects the millennial struggle of the Jewish people to realize the Divine will through their covenanted community, begins not with an account of the origins of Israel. It begins with Genesis - the creation of the world. The Jewish theology of Creation and Judaism's view of the Bible as "the book of the generations of all men" in fact established the conceptual terms for the writing of universal history. Thus, we realize once again how much our knowledge and our lives are shaped by the ongoing movement between the particularity and universality which are in continuous creative tension in the Hebrew scriptural tradition.

It is not widely known that there is available a substantial body of Jewish doctrine and teaching which, though composed over the past 3,000 years contains ideas, conceptual models, spiritual and human values of surpassing insight and meaning for our present situation. Let us review briefly some of the highlights of what is called "the Jewish doctrine of the nations of the world--ummot ha'olam," which today we might well call the Jewish doctrine of pluralism--and world community.

The relationship of the people of Israel to mankind takes as its first and foremost principle the fact that, according to the Torah, all men are descended from one father. All of them, not as races or nations, but as men, are brothers in Adam, and therefore are called bene Adam, sons of Adam. (And if anybody from Women's Lib is listening, this description is intended to include women whose forebear Eve was united with Adam until surgery of the rib separated them.)

From the time of the occupation of the Promised Land of Canaan down to the present day, the treatment of every stranger living in the midst of an Israelite community has been determined by the commandments of Mount Sinai as recorded in the book of Exodus:

"And a stranger shalt thou not oppress, for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." (Exodus 23⁹).

In the extensive Biblical legislation dealing with the stranger, the ger (sojourner) or the nokhri (foreigner), whom you are to love as yourselves (Deut. 10:19), are equated legally and politically with the Israelite.

From the first century of the present era and thereafter, the "stranger within the gate" in the Diaspora who joined in the Jewish form of worship but without observing the ceremonial laws, became known as a

yiré adonay -- a god-fearer. A god-fearer was one who kept the Noahide principles, that is, the moral principles known to Noah and to pre-Israelite mankind. As described in the Babylonian Talmud (Sanhedrin 56), the seven commandments of the sons of Noah are these:

The prohibition of idolatry, of blasphemy, of sexual immorality, of murder, of theft, of cruelty to animals, together with the positive commandment to establish courts of justice.

The great 12th century Jewish philosopher, Maimonides, formulated the normative Jewish conception, held to and affirmed by all periods of Judaism (in Mishnah Torah IV, Hilkot Melakhim, Section X, Halachah 2:) in these words:

"Whoever professes to obey the seven Noachite laws and strives to keep them is classed with the righteous among the nations and has a share in the world to come." Thus every individual who lives by the principles of morality of Noah is set on a par with the Jews. Indeed, a statement made by Rabbi Meir (ca. 150 CE) is recorded three times in the Talmud, "The pagan who concerns himself with the teaching of God is like unto the High Priest of Israel." (Sanhedrin 59a; Baba Kamma 38a; and Aboda Zara 36a).

Thus, this Rabbinic doctrine about "the righteous men among the nations" who will be saved made it unnecessary from the point of view of the Synagogue, to convert them to Judaism. At the same time it should be acknowledged that Jews pray daily in the Synagogue for what appears to be the ultimate conversion of the Gentiles not to the cult of Israel but rather to the God of Israel.

"Let all the inhabitants of the world perceive and know that unto thee every knee must bend and every tongue give homage. Before thee, O Lord our God, let them bow down and worship, and unto Thy Glorious name let them give honor."

While there is no unanimity in Judaism regarding the ultimate conversion of the Gentiles, there can be no doubt that, theologically speaking, Judaism does expect a redeemed mankind to be strict monotheists -- in the Jewish sense. It is the duty, therefore, of every Jew to encourage both by teaching and personal example the universal acceptance of the "Seven Principles of the Sons of Noah." The ultimate conversion of the world is understood by Judaism to be one of the "messianic" events. We will know that the messianic age has come when we realize a change -- a conversion -- in the kind of life being lived on earth, and not just in the inner life of the individual. Wars and persecutions must cease,

and justice and peace must reign for all mankind.

Translating this religious language into contemporary terms, it suggests that Judaism affirms that salvation exists outside the Synagogue for all who are God-fearers, that is all who affirm a transcendental reality as a source of meaning for human existence, and who also live by the moral code of the Sons of Noah. This Jewish theological view also perceives and undergirds world pluralism as a positive good. Thus Judaism advocates a unity of mankind which encourages diversity of cult and culture as a source of enrichment, and that conception of unity in the midst of diversity makes possible the building of human community without compromise of essential differences. Symbolically, the human family is like a symphony orchestra. Each group, each religion plays its own instrument; none are interchangeable. The violin is no substitute for the oboe, nor the oboe for the cello. When they play separately and in dissonance, there is chaos. When harmonized, with each performing at his or her creative maximum, the end result is a magnificent symphony which ennoble the players themselves, the entire audience, and the conductor.

From the point of view of Rabbinic Judaism therefore, the righteous Christian qualifies as a "righteous among the nations" who has a share in the world to come. Beyond that Maimonides spoke of Christianity and also of Islam as being preparatio messianica, agents in the divine economy who prepare the way for the messianic age by helping to bring the words of Torah to the distant ends of the earth. Maimonides implies therefore that Jews have a profound stake in the Christian and Moslem presence in the world since both daughter religions of Judaism are in fact missionary arms of monotheism among all the nations of the earth.

For these reasons, I believe that Jews have a genuine interest in the development of the Christian ecumenical movement and in its success, just as I believe that the renewal and reform of Christianity in its spiritual dimensions will depend on its capacity to restore its Biblical and Hebraic modes of thinking and worshipping. While on one level it is entirely appropriate that Christian ecumenists concentrate on their internal affairs, without any necessary reference to the Jewish community, on another level, that of its ultimate spiritual character, it would appear inconceivable that the Christian ecumenical movement can afford not to be related in active and open dialogue with the Jewish people and with Judaism, for its own sake, not just for the sake of the Jews. Just as Jesus and the early church are incomprehensible without a deep understanding of first century Judaism, so a Christian ecumenism will become rootless in its Biblical origins

without continuous interaction with the living witnesses of Judaism, the Jewish people today. A distinguished Protestant theologian, Dr. Albert Outler, makes this point forcefully:

"The Christian theologian and churchman cannot understand the church and the Christian message in anything like their fulness apart from the problem of the relationship of the Church and Synagogue-- the mystery of Israel, the mystery of the New Covenant, the mystery of God's authentic revelations in and through the people of Israel...Christian eschatology makes no sense without some understanding of the future prospects of Church and Synagogue... The Church cut off from the Synagogue is forever incomplete." (Journal of the Perkins School of Theology, Fall, 1970.)

"From the Sermon on the Mount to the crucifixion," writes the eminent church historian, Dr. Jaroslav Pelikan of Yale University, "nothing that Jesus said and did is intelligible apart from his Jewish context." The implications of such contemporary Christian scholarship for ecumenism, according to Professor Markus Barth of the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, is critical:

"If Jews were excluded from the respective encounters, discussions and decisions, the unity reached might well resemble a pagan symposium, but hardly the unity of God's one people gathered from all the nations, on the mountain of the Lord. Christians cannot help but beg the Jews to join the ecumenical movement, not for the sake of a super church, but for the search of true service to the one true God."

From a Jewish perspective, therefore, a united Christianity that is truly Biblical in character may rightly be seen as a major step toward fulfillment of the Jewish messianic hope that "all mankind will form one companionship" to realize the divine will through works of redeeming this world, and to that extent Jews should rejoice in positive ecumenical growth.

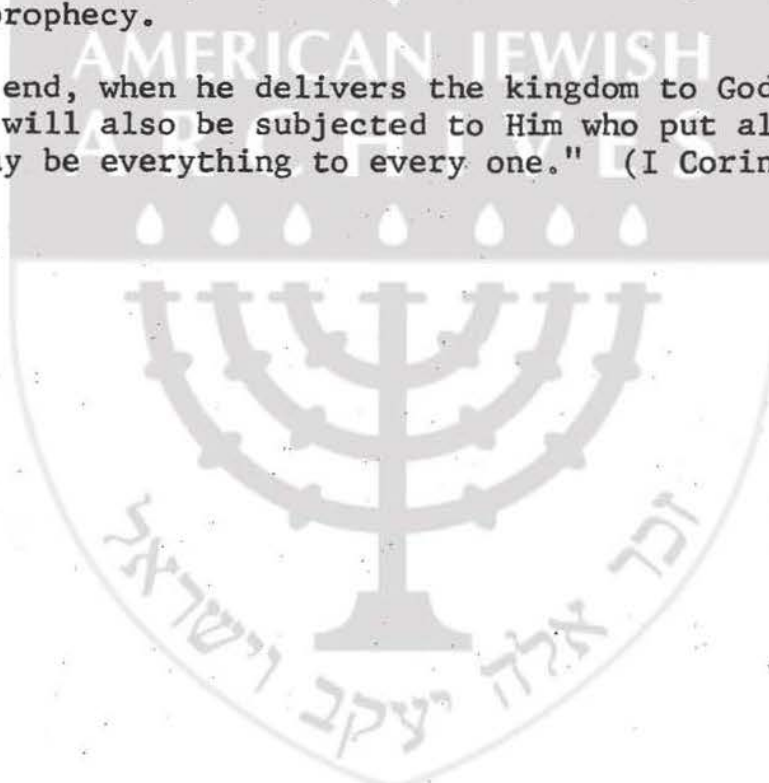
If Judaism and Christianity can grant the validity of each other's

covenants, and seek to affirm the best in each other rather than deny it, there need be no reservation about their fruitful coexistence.

Indeed the two covenants could be seen in the divine scheme of things as mutually complementary, not mutually exclusive. The very concept of the "covenant of the sons of Noah" shows that Judaism did not limit God's covenanting to the Jews.

The New Covenant, according to St. Paul in Romans 9 to 11, does not revoke the old. Both covenanted communities have after all for some 2,000 years uttered the same prayer, "Thy kingdom come." And when the Kingdom comes, when the Jew sees the fulfillment of the prophecy, "The Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day the Lord shall be one, and His name one (Zech 14:9), the Christian, too, will see the fulfillment of prophecy.

"Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father... the son himself will also be subjected to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be everything to every one." (I Corinthians 15:24, 28).





THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

Institute of Human Relations • 165 East 56 Street, New York, N. Y. 10022 • PLaza 1-4000 • Cable Wishcom, New York

May 26, 1971

TO ALL JEWISH PARTICIPANTS IN THE BAPTIST-AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE CONFERENCE AT HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION, CINCINNATI, OHIO, JUNE 13-16, 1971

We are looking forward to your participation in the forthcoming Conference in Cincinnati. It promises to be an important meeting and we feel the theme is a vital and timely one.

1. The Conference will open with a dinner beginning at 8:00 PM on Sunday, June 13th at the Mohawk Motor Inn, 2880 Central Parkway, Cincinnati, Ohio - telephone (area code 513) 681-3330. The Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday sessions will all be held at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 3101 Clifton Avenue. We will conclude with a formal luncheon on Wednesday, June 16th.
2. All out of town participants will be housed at the Mohawk Motor Inn in private rooms and automobile transportation will be provided to the College.
3. Kosher lunches and suppers will be available. Please indicate below whether you desire kosher food.
4. Cincinnati is served by many airlines and we suggest that you take a cab directly from the Cincinnati airport to the Mohawk Motor Inn on Sunday, June 13th. We need to know your estimated arrival time.
5. Please keep an accurate record of your expenses and send them to us at the conclusion of the Conference.

PHILIP E. HOFFMAN, President

Board Chairmen

MAX M. FISHER, National Executive Council

DAVID SHER, Board of Governors

ELMER L. WINTER, Board of Trustees

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ORIN LEHMAN, New York, Vice-President

RAYMOND D. NASHER, Dallas, Vice-President

SAM RUBINSTEIN, Seattle, Vice-President

ALFRED I. SOLTZ, Cleveland, Vice-President

MAYNARD I. WISHNER, Chicago, Vice-President

As noted in the letter of invitation, participants are expected to remain for the entire Conference. Please fill out the attached form and return it as soon as possible in the enclosed envelope.

Thank you so much for your cooperation and we look forward to seeing you in Cincinnati.

Cordially,

A. James Rudin

Rabbi A. James Rudin
Assistant Director
Interreligious Affairs Department

AJR:FM
Encl.

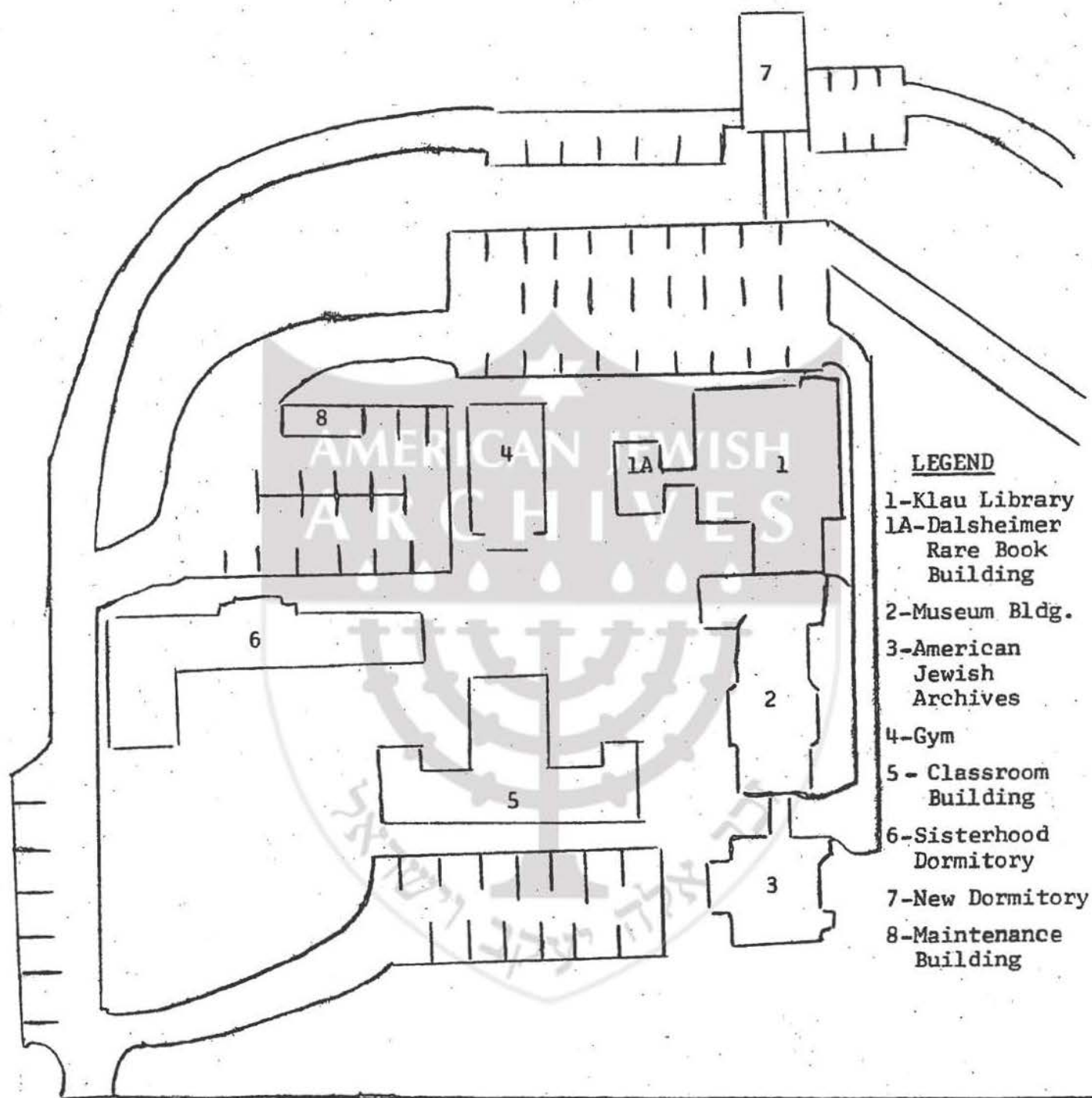
P.S. I am enclosing some material that will be of help to you during the Conference. Programs are currently being printed and as soon as they are available we will send you a copy prior to the Conference.

Date and Time of Arrival

I do ☒ I do not ☐ desire kosher food during the Conference.

Signature
(Please Print)

71-700-34



Clifton Avenue

WEST

HOPPLE STREET



APPROACHING HUC-JIR



SOUTH

TAKE I-75 TO HOPPE STREET EXIT
FOLLOW HOPPE (ACROSS CENTRAL PARK)
WHICH BECOMES OAKMATH
TO CLIFTON AVENUE.
TURN RIGHT, H.W. 15
1/2 MILE UP THE HILL
ON THE RIGHT.



EAST

BUBB
WOOL

HERZEA
UNION
COLLEGE

UNIVERSITY
OF
CHICAGO

**LIST OF INVITEES TO SOUTHERN BAPTIST/AJC CONFERENCE IN CINCINNATI, OHIO
AT HEBREW UNION COLLEGE - JUNE 13th - 15th, 1971**

Professor Sheldon Blank
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Associate Professor Jewish Studies
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Professor Stanley Chyet
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Professor Howard M. Sachar
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Professor Matitahu Tzevat
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Professor Ben Zion Wacholder
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Professor Gershon Greenberg
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Dartmouth College
Hanover, New Hampshire

**LIST OF INVITEES TO SOUTHERN BAPTIST/AJC CONFERENCE IN CINCINNATI,
OHIO - HEBREW UNION COLLEGE - JUNE 13th - 16th, 1971**

Rabbi William Braude
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Professor Marvin Fox
Department of Philosophy
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Professor Norman Golb
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Professor Milton Kanvitz
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Cornell University
Ithaca, New York

Professor Manahem Mansoor
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Professor Bernard Martin
Case Western Reserve University
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Professor Jacob Neusner
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Brown University
Providence, R. I. 02912

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Rabbi Emanuel Rackman
Fifth Avenue Synagogue
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New York, N. Y.

Professor Lionel Rubinoff
Professor of Social Science &
Philosophy
York University
Toronto, Canada

Professor Nahum Sarna
Brandeis University
Waltham, Massachusetts

Professor Lou H. Silberman
Hillel Professor of Jewish
Literature and Thought
Vanderbilt Divinity School
Nashville, Tennessee

Professor Shmaryahu Talmon
Professor of History
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Rabbi Herbert Weiner
432 Scotland Road
South Orange, New Jersey 07079

April 15, 1971

Rabbi William Braude
70 Orchard Avenue
Providence, R. I. 02906

Dear Rabbi Braude:

AMERICAN JEWISH

The Southern Baptist Convention is joining in sponsoring with the American Jewish Committee the second national colloquium of Baptist and Jewish scholars to explore together a variety of historical, theological and sociological issues that affect our interaction and mutual perceptions. The colloquium will be held June 13-16, 1971, at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Ohio. It will bring together carefully selected scholars from both communities who will seek to open up new avenues of communication between our communities. The theme will be "The People of God: Jewish and Christian Perspectives."

This letter is to extend to you a warm and personal invitation to take part in this discussion. This seminar is intended to help identify the specific issues that require clarification of this theme, as well as to recommend proposals for helping Christians and Jews on various levels of their intellectual competence to deepen their mutual understanding.

We will, of course, cover your travel and living expenses. An honorarium of \$50.00 will be paid in order to cover whatever personal expenses you may incur. It will be necessary for you to remain at the Conference for the entire four-day program.

I hope it will be possible for you to join this select group of

academicians and scholars for this important purpose. If you could let me know by phone or wire of your decision, it would help me in arranging for the printing of the program at an early date.

With warmest good wishes, I am,

Cordially,

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum
National Director
Interreligious Affairs

MHT:FM



Precis of "A Jewish Perspective of Christianity"

by Samuel Sandmel

(Jewish-Southern Baptist Scholars Conference,
Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, June 13-16, 1971)

The nub of this paper is historical rather than theological.

That is to say, the author is possibly a historian but he has no great competency in theology. Even if he had such competency, the presuppositions in Jewish and Christian theology are respectively so different that the theological perspectives ought to ensue on the historical, rather than accompany it or, as so often has been done, precede it.

The paper will not deal with persecution; it will not deal with reciprocal hostilities. In as amicable a way as is objectively possible, it will set forth what seems to the author the essential points of division and, hence, what the essential points for understanding and affirmative relations can be.

From the author's perspective, central and crucial as may have been the figure of Jesus (acceptance of him as the Messiah or the rejection of him), this has not been the major substance of the on-going differences, for beyond the keystone matter of Jesus, the essential difference would appear to be in the antithetical suppositions in the two traditions respecting the laws of Moses. In a general way, the Jewish supposition has been and is that the Law of Moses, and the laws, represent a revelation of on-going validity and that this revelation is neither surpassed nor superseded; in Christendom, especially through the influence of Paul, the supposition is that the revelation of God in Christ was the apex, and was more climactic (and more recent) than the revelation to Moses, and concomitantly the laws of Moses were superseded and, in fact, were null and void. (The church perhaps a century after

Paul modified his total abrogation of the laws by distinguishing between the ceremonial, which were indeed abrogated, and the ethical, which were deemed still valid, but this did not affect the principle involved in nullification.)

The continuing and abiding Judaism focused on the axiom of the eternity of the laws, and hence saw the need for derivative application of these to new situations. As a consequence, the literature most sacred to the Jews embodies the derivative Jewish laws (as found in the Mishna and the Gemara, which corporately comprise the Talmud). While legalism does not exhaust the character of Judaism and that legalism has been recklessly and wrongly described in Christian scholarship, the essential basic legal character of Judaism is beyond dispute. On the other hand, Christendom has both departed from the legalism as the vehicle for attaining salvation and has believed that the Christian way supersedes and is superior to the Jewish way.

The difference on this point seems to me clear, unmistakable, and in some terms, quite irreconcilable, for it is an antithesis.

A by-product of the common origin, however, has been an immense gray area wherein there are, between Judaism and Christianity, similarities and overlaps (often enough elusive), and also differences that are basic (yet even more elusive because of the presence in both traditions of the common terms of religion, such as sin, repentance, faith, righteousness, and the like). Within each of these traditions, the particular terms take on their denotation from the antecedent assumption respecting the laws. The role of the Christ in atonement, for example, is congruent with the non-legal character of Christianity, but not congruent with the legal character of Judaism or with the view in Judaism

of what atonement is. Faith, creed, and dogma in the Christian sense are readily intelligible from the basic assumption, but these same theological tenets, if they can be called that, are not congruent with Judaism; the reverse is also true.

The important point is that a strictly theological reconciliation of Judaism and Christianity is an impossibility. Reciprocal theological understanding, by adherents in the one tradition of the doctrines of the other tradition, is not impossible, but theological reconciliation and theological understanding are totally different things.

If theological reconciliation is impossible, where are we? Though it is not possible that Christianity and Judaism be reconciled, Jews and Christians, on the other hand, can become reconciled. Are there common concerns, of such profundity and such far-reaching significance, that can be mutually accepted, even if the antecedent theological premises cannot be? Can one recognize in the lives of individual Jews and of individual Christians a manner of living and dedication to holiness that hold/promise of cooperation and collaboration beyond what is superficial?

The thrust of the paper is to argue that this is the case. The irreconcilability of the theologies need not be an obstacle to the reconciliation of the people. At the lowest level, the issue is whether Jews and Christians should regard each other as sinners and outcasts of God, as in the past, or whether they can make room in their understanding of the flow of history for diverse forms of a tradition, once single, to live side by side in amity and mutual respect. A doctrine of election can be held by either to the extreme of excluding the other, and this may satisfy many, especially when gratifying passages can be judiciously cited from the ancient literature of each community. But the issue has become this, whether such exclusivist ancient formulations can be reasonably held by

independent minds of our day.

I have personally had four sisters and two brothers. Each has had his own household. Christians and Jews each have their own household. Can they be brothers, children of a common Father? If so, how?



THE PEOPLE OF GOD FACING THE WORLD COMMUNITY - A BAPTIST VIEW

JOHN P. NEWPORT

Rather than attempting a technical, scholarly individual statement, I have sought to reflect in this paper my understanding of the perspective of the majority of educated or semi-educated Southern Baptist leaders as to the mission of the People of God. It seems to me that this approach will afford a more helpful basis for honest and frank dialogue than an attempt to reflect the view of a limited number of more sophisticated scholars.

Over twenty-five years ago I left the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, to accept a pastorate in a college community which was a suburb of Jackson, Mississippi. After a pastorate of three years, I left for a period of study in Europe. Recently I returned to the Mississippi community for the college commencement. The visit afforded an opportunity to talk to a number of the former members of the congregation about the relatively uncomplicated life we knew in the earlier days in the community and in the state. Some expressed a desire to return to what they called "the good old days."

In the last twenty-five years that state along with all of our states and our world have experienced urban, scientific, communication, and social revolutions. What should be the reaction of the People of God? What is the mission of the People of God in light of these developments?

The development known as "secularism" should be deplored. Secularism represents a closed world view that is indifferent to religious institutions and practices and even to religious questions.

It functions like a religion by making its own interpretation of reality ultimate and something to be forced upon everyone. In more crusading forms secularism replaces the vestiges of the Hebrew-Christian world-view with a throw-back to tribal gods and superstitions such as the worship of the gods of race and blood.¹

There are, of course, reasons why secularism has arisen in modern times. For example, Karl Marx saw traditional religion as a dogmatic system that was the opium of the people and the instrument of the cynical rich to oppress the poor. For Marx the only alternative was to produce another closed system that rejected all traditional religions.²

On the other hand, the development known as "secularization" has much to commend it. Secularization represents the historic process in which society and cultures are delivered from tutelage to dogmatic religious control and closed metaphysical world-views.³ It is the state of human relations in which no particular religion or ideology dominates. It calls for pluralism in human society.

Secularization can be seen as a strong affirmation of this world and its significance. It is not merely anti-religious but it is more basically pro-world.⁴ Although many ministers and laymen within Baptist ranks do not understand secularization, some are beginning to see that certain of its aspects are the result of the biblical understanding of the world and man's relation to the world. There is a growing appreciation for Bonhoeffer's emphasis that Christ came to set men free to true worldliness. Some understand the teaching of Harvey Cox that the biblical doctrines of creation, the covenant, the sovereignty of God, and the incarnation are all presuppositions of the process of secularization.⁵

Baptist people are known as "people of the Book." In times of crises and change, reflected in such developments as secularism and secularization, they are drawn to what has been called a telescopic approach to the Bible. Baptists--clergy and laity alike--attempt to evaluate these complicated and seemingly contradictory developments of our time in the light of central biblical emphases. It is the Bible that they seek for guidelines for their mission.

The majority of Baptists are convinced that the central theme of the Bible as it is seen in the light of the New Testament is the Kingdom of God.⁶ They would agree with John Bright and George Ladd that the bond that binds the two Testaments together is the dynamic concept of the rule of God or the Kingdom of God. They accept a growing consensus in New Testament scholarship that the Kingdom of God is in some sense both present and future. It is clearly future and apocalyptic. However, the Gospels and Paul teach that it is also present in a qualitative if not in a quantitative sense. The Kingdom is a synthesis of future hope and present fulfillment. The Kingdom concept is usually seen in terms of three principles.⁷

I. The first principle that Baptists emphasize is as follows: The Kingdom of God is a present, personal power and reality.

Baptists take seriously what they consider to be the New Testament teaching that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah. In the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God brought the powers of the Kingdom of God into history in a unique and saving way. A person enters into the Kingdom when he accepts Jesus Christ as the Messiah. Becoming a part of the Kingdom of God involves a personal response to Jesus Christ.

The Jesus Christ-centered orientation of Christianity both unites and separates Christianity from Judaism. It unites

Christians to Judaism because Christians believe that Christ is the consummative event of the salvation history which God began in and through Israel. It separates because Judaism has not accepted Jesus as the Messiah.⁸

The following experience illustrates something of a representative Baptist viewpoint. I had been at Harvard University on sabbatical leave. As you can imagine this was a very abstract, intellectual atmosphere. I went directly from this experience to be Interim Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Amarillo, Texas. This is the church which affords the largest financial support of the world mission program of Southern Baptists. On my first Saturday in Amarillo I was asked to meet with a group of laymen who participated in a prayer meeting each Saturday night. At this meeting the men have prayer for the conversion of the people to whom they have witnessed during the week concerning Jesus Christ as the Messiah. For these men the first responsibility of the Christian is to share his understanding of the meaning of Jesus Christ as the personal Savior and Messiah for all men.

Another recent experience illustrates some of the problems which the average Baptist has in following through on his theory about the urgency and necessity of conversion. I was assisting as a new church in a rapidly growing section of a large southern city. The chief emphasis in the church was on the necessity of house-to-house visitation and urging people to accept Jesus Christ as the appointed Messiah. A prominent business man who had several hundred employees in his firm said that he did not have time for the personal witness. In fact, he suggested that he would like to be able to force people into the Kingdom of God utilizing a chain of command such as he used in his business.

This discussion led to a series of discussions concerning the background of the Baptist understanding of religious liberty. A review was made of the events leading up to the union of the church and state in the fourth and fifth century Roman empire. A study was made of the struggle for religious freedom in seventeenth century England. The men were reminded that during the religious struggles of that time a number of the persecuted people fled to Holland and later to New England seeking religious liberty.

Ironically, the leaders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony did not extend full religious liberty to all people. Roger Williams, who for a short time was a Baptist, fled to Rhode Island where he established a community which was one of the first in the world's history to give complete religious liberty. Here was a pious Christian who believed that the new country would never survive and fulfill its purpose unless religious liberty was extended to all, including the Quakers, Jews, and Baptists. The men were reminded that the Virginia Baptists had helped to elect Madison to the Congress, and they supported Madison and Jefferson as they incorporated the idea of religious liberty and tolerance into the Bill of Rights.⁹

Considerable discussion was given to possible solutions to the problem of religious diversity. The group agreed that the monopoly approach was not valid today. They further agreed that the secular approach is not valid because it always borders on moral nihilism. They agreed that the approach of religious liberty was the proper approach. This approach seeks to maintain freedom of religious worship, propagation, and zeal yet without government persecution or direct government help.

Each religion or denomination can proclaim its highest insights, with great zeal. At the same time each faith must preserve humility and realize that all actual expressions of religious faith are subject to human error and finiteness. In other words, you are to hold and state your religious convictions with enough humility to live peacefully with those who have other ideas. This approach is in keeping with the biblical interpretation of man's tendency to be proud, self-centered and provincial. Authentic biblical religion should keep a man humble and moderate his pride. The men all agreed that religious tolerations through religiously inspired humility and charity is difficult but it should and can be achieved.

At the point of religious liberty Jews and Baptists have stood together. Pluralism and religious liberty are desirable. Furthermore, Baptists see much truth in some of the ways which Seymour Siegel suggests Jews have utilized in facing religious plurality. Since man is created in God's image, he is entitled to freedom even if he is wrong. The Noachic covenant, including basic laws of morality, was made with all mankind. We must leave it to God to settle some problems at the end of time.¹⁰

It is quite interesting that a Roman Catholic sociologists, Andrew Greenley, contends that religious pluralism in the United States has deepened faith and caused the various religions to have more intellectual and social vitality.¹¹

The concept of the necessity of personal conversion to Jesus Christ is carried by most Baptists into their attitude toward all world religions. As will be seen later, most Baptists believe that Judaism is the one unique religion which stands apart from the other world religions. In the light of their historical emphasis on religious liberty, most Baptists do not have an aggressive

condemnation of non-Christian religions. On the other hand, they do not believe that all religions are one, or that all people are climbing up equally safe or valid ladders to the same place. I believe it would be correct to say that most Baptists contend that Christianity is a unique and final religion although they do not deny values and general revelation in the other religions. In fact, many emphases of other religions are seen as enriching. Dialogue has opened up facets of the Christian religion which have been neglected. ¹²

In recent years, other religions have increased missionary activity and anti-Christian propaganda in the United States and elsewhere. This has tested Baptist convictions on religious liberty. Gradually most Baptists have come to see that religious freedom means freedom even for those who deny the dominant faith of the community and try to convert the people to other religions. ¹³

As the world community has become post-Christian and anti-Western, Baptists have developed an apologetic approach. There is an attempt to remove misunderstandings about the nature of authentic Christianity. Christianity should not be seen as sadistic, arrogant, or domineering. Salvation is not related to race, nation, or place of birth. The gospel is a gift to be shared. Although Christians witness to the gospel they stand under the judgment of God as do all men.

Furthermore, the Bible is to be seen as an historic book dealing with the relations between persons--a personal God and individuals made in His image. Christianity is not an abstract set of principles. The doctrines of the Trinity and Christology are to be seen as time-bound attempts to formulate the events of history and Christian experience in a systematic form-not as final statements.

Authentic Christianity should be seen as more of a community and distinctive life-style than as a legalistic code. Renewals and reformations are built into its essential nature.¹⁴

Baptists also are making what has been called a fundamental approach. They believe that in the world community there should be a presentation of key issues with openness, honesty, cross-questioning, and listening. To assume that all religions are one is to rob all religions of seriousness.¹⁵ All dialogue must begin with a clear grasp of pre-suppositions. It is important to get everything on the table.¹⁶

For the sake of comparison it should be affirmed that there is a unique Hebrew-Christian world-view. God is the creator. Limiting Himself he gave men freedom. Man rebelled. God still loves man and seeks to restore this creature who is caught up in blindness and revolt. In such a condition man's innate capacity to see religious truth and restore himself is not adequate. Special help and revelation must come. Without this special revelation men only know God in a distorted way. Such a view undercuts all self-help religions. The uniqueness of man undercuts all animal views toward sex.

The place of history and nature as the theatre of God's purpose points out their importance. But they, too, are created and not the same as God. Thus nature worship is disallowed.

God's sovereignty and self-limitation and man's creative status and blindness account for both order and contingency in the universe.

The reality of time, the accountability of man to God, and the gratitude of man to God demand that men live meaningfully and dynamically. Modern science, at least in part, found its incubation in the idea of man's responsibility to conquer nature for God's glory

and man's good. Democracy, likewise, found congenial soil in the dignity and responsibility and sinfulness of man. The larger groups of mankind desperately need scientific as well as spiritual help.¹⁷

The Christian is willing to expose his world-view to open tests. Generally accepted criteria include comprehensiveness, coherence, and creativity. A Christian is willing to speak in terms of conviction and witness and consistent with freedom, fair play and open dialogue. If there is mutual respect, he is not afraid of friendly competition. Which view will stand up before the criteria of truth and adequacy? Which view humanizes instead of dehumanizing? Which view can give the fullest account of reality in all of its aspects and meet man's deepest problems most adequately?¹⁸

Baptists, along with other Christian groups, will admit, however, that probably the most needed approach of our time is not in terms of thinking, but in terms of being.¹⁹ As will be seen later, it is a growing conviction among Baptists that the best authentication of the Christian view is in this area of emphasis.

There are two fundamental principles of all confrontations with persons of other faiths. The first principle is dialogue. The second principle is the positive side of the above coin. It is known as witness. Baptists believe that the dialogue and witness approach is in keeping with the principles of religious liberty and voluntary churches. For Baptists it was apostasy in Christian history when state churches and anti-Semitism developed. The dialogue and witness approach does not depend on state pressure or direct government support and thus challenges Christians to become more radiant and disciplined so that others will see the fruits of their faith in their lives. In the tradition of Roger Williams, persuasion, proclamation, and incarnation are to be utilized rather than official authority.²⁰

II. There is a second principle concerning the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God, as the redemptive activity and rule of God, has chosen to work through the Christian community or church in this present age or stage of God's redemptive program.

God began his redemptive work through the Jews. The New Testament is rooted in the Old Testament. Christians are beginning to realize the extent of their dependence upon Judaism.

I would agree with Abraham Heschel that there has been a conscious or unconscious dejudaization of Christianity from which we are just now beginning to recover.²² The entire fabric of Christianity is grounded in Judaism: its theology, liturgy, and ecclesiology. Christian scholars, including Baptists, now understand more clearly their indebtedness to Judaism for the basic tenets of their world-view.²³

More and more Baptists are seeing the error of their one major prejudice against the Jews. Slowly but surely they are seeing the theological basis of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. They are recognizing that the positions which Christ took would have produced the same result in any culture. They see the greater role of Pilate in the execution.²⁴ Although they do not fully understand the Jews, most Baptists believe that they are a unique people and have a unique destiny. The speaker, like many others, has been deeply interested in Israel and has made five trips to Israel in recent years. He also spent a sabbatical studying with Abraham Heschel.

Baptists as a whole, however, accept what they understand as the New Testament witness about the developments in the first century. Israel as a whole did not accept Jesus Christ as the

Messiah. Whatever is God's continuing or ultimate purpose for the Jews, the Baptists understand that spiritual Israel or the Church is God's unique redemptive instrument, at least in this stage of His redemptive program.²⁵ They accept the designation of the Epistle of James that the Christian people are "the twelve tribes in dispersion," or that of the Epistles of Galatians that the church is "the Israel of God." A favorite statement is the one made in the First Epistle of Peter that the Christian people are to be seen as the chosen race, the royal priesthood, and the holy redemptive nation.²⁶

There is much discussion today in Baptist circles as to the place of the Covenant and the place of the Jews in the Covenant. Some Baptists have become identified with Dispensational Pre-millennialism. This view teaches that Israel and the church are two separate peoples with two different programs. God's theocratic program with Israel was interrupted when Israel rejected Christ. God then turned to the Church. When His purpose there has been fulfilled, God will revive or renew the Old Testament order.²⁷

Amillennialists hold that because Israel rejected Jesus as the Messiah, God has rejected Israel. The Church is the spiritual Israel.²⁸ The majority of Southern Baptists believe that for redemptive purposes the Church has taken the place of Israel. They understand that this "spiritualizing" of Israel began in the Old Testament and continued in the Church. However, many contend that God is still working in and through Israel and eventually all Israel will be saved. In Romans 9-11, Paul does not think about the final return of the Jews to their Messiah as the result of a

mission to the Gentiles. This return is a mystery which lies in God's hands. Paul warned the Christians against Christian boasting and superiority feelings.

For the majority of Baptists, as mentioned above, God is working in a special and unique way in and through the Christian community. This does not mean that the Church is the Kingdom. Rather, the Kingdom creates the Church. Furthermore, the Church's mission is to witness to the Kingdom in the world and be the instrument of the Kingdom.³⁰

Some years ago it was frequently stated in large Baptist evangelistic conferences that God's purposes were not only related primarily to Christians but to a large extent to Baptists. This attitude has changed, however. The emphasis now is that in most cases God will only use Baptists or any other group as they are related to his redemptive purposes.

It has already been indicated that most Baptists believe that the central or at least the basic part of God's purpose is that which is designated as direct evangelism and missionary endeavor. From the time of the Jerusalem Council described in Acts 15, Baptists understand that the Church's most fundamental and important function is that of the universal missionary enterprise.³¹ Israel's covenant was of universal scope. This universalism was neglected. Herberg contends that through Christianity, God's covenant with Israel was opened to all mankind--without requiring a change of ethnic or "national" status.³² Baptists would agree with Herberg that in Pauline universalistic Christianity God's plan for the Gentiles triumphed.

Many Baptists believe that there is some relationship between the missionary task and the inauguration of the final stage of God's kingdom as reflected in many biblical texts such as Matthew 24:14. In order to more adequately accomplish the missionary purpose, the churches must be willing to change their structures and procedures more drastically and rapidly.³⁴

It is a growing conviction among Baptists that a second and important part of God's purpose is the creation and exhibition of authentic community based on the Christian doctrine of Agape love, worship and authentic Bible study.

Baptist scholars are pointing out that both the Protestant Reformation and frontier America had an over-emphasis upon the individual and an under-emphasis on community. As a consequence of such influences the churches which should see themselves as the body of Christ view themselves as voluntary gatherings of like-minded individuals. They have little sense of being bound to the church and to one another as members of the household of God.³⁵

Especially in an increasingly urbanized and depersonalized culture, the emphasis upon community is seen as a vital part of God's purpose. This community, however, is to be based upon the norms of Scripture and the redemptive purpose of God. It is not just another secular fellowship. It is to be a model of the new community in the future Kingdom.

Baptists are seeking to restore the Anabaptist tradition that contended that all members of a congregation should be active participants in a group involved in worship and discipline. The Christian fellowship should provide a community of love, sharing, and encouragement. It should be a fellowship of frankness, honesty, confession, and forgiveness. Above all it should be built around

God's purposes.

Baptists are also coming to understand that another vital part of God's kingdom purpose is prophetic and ethical. One of the results of recent biblical scholarship is the recognition that Judaism has been and is a religion of the highest and strictest demands in personal and social ethics.³⁶

Despite Christians' claim for the uniqueness of redemption in Christ, practical ethical superiority has not been widely demonstrated. Christians can point out the outstanding Christian insights in measuring the inner contradictions of the human spirit and in the demonstration of spiritual power in overcoming the defects of the human will. However, the Jews have been more creative in establishing brotherhood~~ness~~ with the Negro, especially in the South where the grace of a new life in Christ has been widely proclaimed.³⁷

As Heschel rightly points out, Christians have too often withdrawn from history.³⁸ Perry goes so far as to contend that Judaism has had to suffer for our Christian ethical adultery and perennial paganism.³⁹ There is obviously truth in the statement made last year at the Louisville conference by Rabbi Friedman that unless there is some change seen in the world, there should be a question as to whether or not the Messiah has come.

It must be reiterated, however, that the ethics of Christianity are not only ethics of the inner life but also ethics of an active righteousness. Newer Pauline studies point out that Jesus Christ does not mean the termination or annihilation of the Law. Rather Christ fulfilled the Law.⁴⁰

Nineteenth century frontier pietism and certain types of contemporary evangelism have obviously conceived of Christianity in too

individualistic and other-worldly terms. There is truth in the statement that a number of the Baptist churches have been and are provincial, legalistic, and narrow. There is also some truth in the accusation that religion has been used as a tool to maintain the status quo. Undoubtedly some ministers and Christian laymen have sought to use the Bible to justify their prejudices.

A recent incident is illustrative. A layman called over long distance telephone and asked about a certain minister who had been graduated from the seminary. He wanted to know if he was a "safe" preacher. I knew what he meant but I answered this way. "We try to teach the ministers to be biblical ministers and biblical Christians. If you think that Amos and Micah and Jesus Christ are safe I think he is safe. If you do not think that they are safe and the Bible is safe, then I do not think that this man would be safe."

I confronted this problem in some of my pastorates. One church was dominated by middle class business people and was a segregated church. Another church was composed to a large extent by laboring people and was more open to integration and socio-economic change. Was I to change my perspective with the change of pastorates? I learned what more and more Baptists are learning that an authentic church and an authentic minister must proclaim the great ethical principles of the Bible and not just reflect the Chamber of Commerce or the labor union, the North or the South. A community grounded in the Hebrew-Christian revelation stands for both justice and security, and for both freedom and community. Human personality is of central importance.

Sin and demonic distortion are always present. However, meanings may be actualized in men's communal and cultural life which express the mind of God and some aspect of his purpose. It is encouraging that

the official sermon and the resolution at the recent Southern Baptist Convention in St Louis pointed out the concern of Baptists for racism, pollution, the Vietnam war, religious liberty, and anti-Semitism.

Biblically-oriented Baptists are questioning the "Secular City" approach of our time. They are pointing out that God's activity is not always identical with secular developments. They are noting that the Bible suggests that whatever the Christian's responsibility to love the world and live in it there should remain an element of tension with the world. The Christian life in the world is not just adjustment to the world. The Church must speak out against extremes of both right and left. The biblically oriented man stimulates, criticizes, learns from, and seeks to participate in directing the changes and forward thrusts which are occurring constantly. ⁴²

Institutions of society such as industry, commerce, higher education, and health, politics, mass communication and leisure should not be allowed to operate under their own logic without questioning. It is the responsibility of the Hebrew-Christian faith to bring its perspectives to bear upon any dehumanization that is occurring in these areas. Even the so-called civil religion or vague religiosity of our time must be questioned in the name of the universal Hebrew-Christian faith. ⁴³

It is the conviction of Baptists that God is continuing to be active in time and history despite the continuance of evil powers. Although God will not take over the responsibilities he has assigned to man, in many ways He is preparing the soil for the planting of the biblical seed. The United States and the world may be culturally

post-Christian but they are still God-haunted. This fact can be seen in significant contemporary literature and drama.⁴⁴ Langdon Gilkey contends that modern secular man reflects on his own characteristic attitudes and discovers the traditional religious questions are still there. For example, man is facing religious questions when he experiences contingency, the limits of his powers, the ambiguity of his destiny and freedom, and his temporality. Man's weakness and "boundary" concerns have not simply dissolved in the world's "coming of age." These issues are inherent in man's being and they arouse a destructive anxiety if man has no means of dealing with them.⁴⁵

Baptists also see that there is truth in the apocalyptic and antichrist teachings of the Bible. This emphasis recognizes the reality and continuing power of evil in history. Both the Church and secular history are subject to demonic pretensions. There will be no utopia on earth before the end of history or the Second Advent. This is a part of the meaning of the doctrine of the Antichrist. Closely related to this idea of the final evil at the end of history is the general anticipation of evils in the course of history. The final stage of the Kingdom will come from God alone. However, in the interim, God's people should be active participants in His purposes.

III. There is a third biblical principle concerning the Kingdom which is important to Baptists. The final stage of the Kingdom of God will be inaugurated by the Parousia or the Second Coming of Christ. At that time there will be an unveiling of a new era of Christ's sovereignty among men in the world.⁴⁶

Most Baptists take seriously the idea that history is purposive and meaningful and is moving toward a telos. This view is in contrast

to that of many of the peoples of the world who see history as an unending circle of birth and rebirth. Professor Eliade of the University of Chicago calls the circle view "the myth of eternal return." For many people in the world what appears to be something new or changed is actually just a repetition of what happened before or is a revelation of the changeless, eternal world.

Baptists believe that a basic contribution of the Hebrew-Christian world-view to human thought is that it sees man in terms of the historical and the future. From the time of Abraham, the Hebrews had a future view of history. They looked forward to occupying the Promised Land. After the captivity they looked forward to the Restoration. Then they looked forward to the Messianic age. The covenant was renewed again and again as the Hebrews kept on the move toward the future Messianic era.

Christianity did not throttle this view of the future. According to the New Testament, in Jesus Christ the Kingdom was inaugurated but not completely fulfilled. The crucified Messiah was alive and would return to inaugurate the final stages of His Kingdom. Christianity is future-oriented. Life is to be seen in the light of the New Jerusalem, the heavenly city, the Messianic banquet. The Christian understanding is that a Christian is inwardly united by the Spirit with Christ, the Messiah and King. Nevertheless he is outwardly separated from him and engaged in an agonizing combat with the powers of evil. The Christian, like Buber, feels the unredemption of the world.⁴⁷ Unlike Buber, however, Christians believe that Christ has brought them a "foretaste" of the future Kingdom and a "down payment" on what will come in fullness at His Second Advent.

The Christian's life is to be characterized by urgency since he sees his life in the perspective of the future. The New Testament urges the Christian to redeem the time in view of the fact that history is moving toward an end.

G. Beasley Murray of England states that one of the ironies of history is that the Communists have perverted and taken from the Bible the concept of a realistic future fulfillment in history.⁴⁸

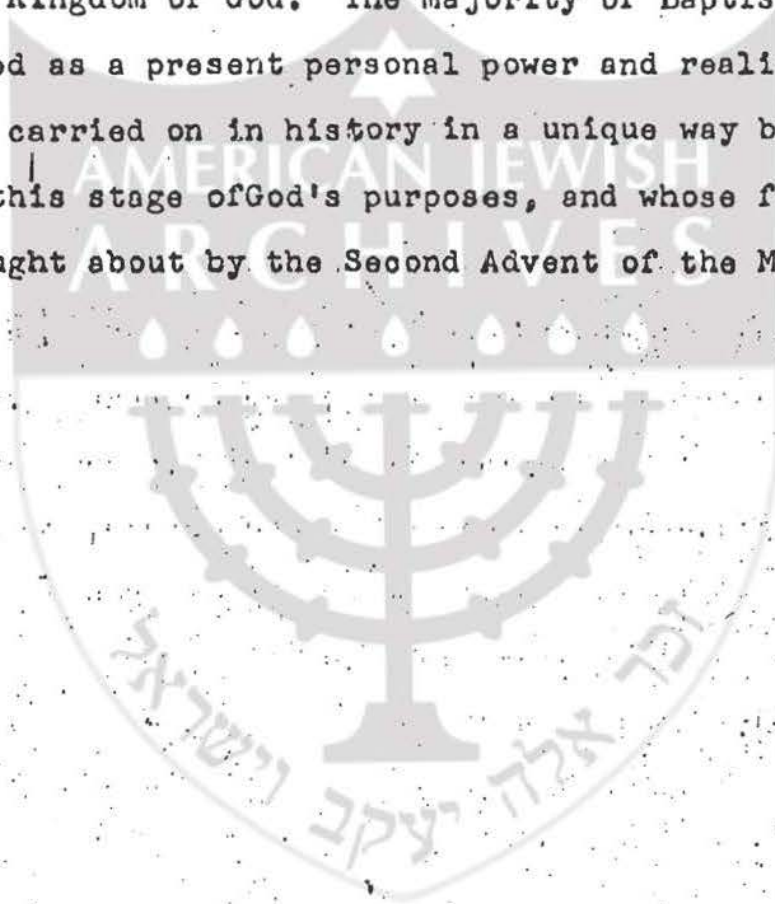
Two recent trips to Russia have convinced me that part of the reason for the Marxist dynamism and purposiveness is their concept of the future and fulfillment. The biblical teaching of a realistic fulfillment must be recovered.

Baptists accepted the emphasis of a number of prominent Protestant theologians who emphasize that biblical eschatology gives depth to life.⁴⁹ Eschatology is seen as fundamentally ethical in its character and purpose. It is never interested in the future for its own sake, but speaks of the future because of its impact upon the present.⁵⁰ If one is unfaithful, like the idle servant (Matthew 25:14-30), he will be shut out. Eschatology gives incentive to action. It gives courage to be honest and ethical. It gives personal dynamic and a sense of responsibility. Eschatology also keeps the Church from becoming too identified with this world. Most Baptists are learning to live with one of the strange paradoxes of Christianity. The Kingdom is here and yet it has only been inaugurated. The final stage will be brought in by the last great event which means that all of the the mark of the People of God is charged with eternal issues.

The Baptist people are beginning to understand that the biblical world-view of the future, properly understood, does not encourage ascetism or dualism. Even nature is to share in the renewed creation.

This view affirms reality and meaning in history and time without falling into the delusion of Communism which is that time and history can fulfill themselves.

Although there are other rubrics under which the Baptist understanding of the mission of the People of God might be organized, I am convinced that the most important and unifying model is the model of the Kingdom of God. The majority of Baptists see the Kingdom of God as a present personal power and reality, whose purposes are carried on in history in a unique way by the Church at least in this stage of God's purposes, and whose fulfillment is to be brought about by the Second Advent of the Messiah.



FOOTNOTES

¹Cf. Joseph L. Allen, "The Revolution of Secularization," unpublished lecture given at senior Colloquy, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Sept. 13, 1967.

²Ralph L. Moellering, "Marxism and the Secular," in Christian Hope and the Secular, D. F. Martensen, ed. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1969), p. 89.

³Harvey Cox, The Secular City (New York: Macmillan, 1965), p. 2.

⁴Unfortunately, Bonhoeffer's views are not consistent and systematic. He gave many hints and suggestions but died before they were worked out. It is especially important to see his last letters in the light of his entire theological work.

Cf. John McQuarrie, New Directions in Theology Today: Volume III, God and Secularity (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), pp. 38f.

⁵Harvey Cox, The Secular City, p. 167.

⁶Charles Trentham, "Kingdom of God," in Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists, Vol. II (Nashville, Tenn., Broadman Press), pp. 751-754.

⁷George E. Ladd, Jesus and the Kingdom of God (New York: Harper and Row), pp. 3-38. Cf. also John Bright, The Kingdom of God. (New York: Abingdon Press, 1953).

⁸Edmund Perry, The Gospel in Dispute. (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1958), pp. 138-139.

⁹Cf. Robert G. Torbert, A History of the Baptists (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1963), p. 235.

¹⁰Lecture given at Jewish Theology Seminary, New York City, 1965.

¹¹Andrew M. Greeley, Religion in the Year 2000 (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1969), pp. 97, 159, 164 f.

¹²Herbert C. Jackson, Man Reaches Out to God (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1963), pp. 112-114.

¹³E. Luther Copeland, Christianity and World Religions (Nashville, Tenn.: Convention Press), pp. 134-135.

¹⁴John P. Newport, Theology and Contemporary Art Forms (Waco, Texas: Word Books), p. 90.

¹⁵Edmund Perry, op. cit., pp. 83-107.

¹⁶Stephen Neill, Christian Faith and Other Faiths (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 1-19.

- ¹⁷David L. Edwards, Religion and Change (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), pp. 217-235.
- ¹⁸John A. Hutchison, Paths of Faith (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1969), pp. 605-608.
- ¹⁹Hendrik Kraemer, World Cultures and World Religions (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), p. 376.
- ²⁰Cf. Martin E. Marty, Varieties of Unbelief (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964).
- ²¹George E. Ladd, op. cit., pp. 258-274.
- ²²Abraham Joshua Heschel, The Insecurity of Freedom (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1966), p. 169.
- ²³Herbert C. Jackson, op. cit., pp. 37-38.
- ²⁴Krister Stendahl, "Judaism and Christianity: Then and Now," New Theology No. 2, ed., Marty and Peerman, (New York: Macmillan Co., 1965), pp. 157-163.
- ²⁵Herbert C. Jackson, op. cit., p. 44.
- ²⁶Cf. James 1:1, Galatians 6:16, I Peter 2:9, 10.
- ²⁷Cf. The Schofield Reference Bible.
- ²⁸Cf. Ray Summers, Worthy is the Lamb (Nashville, Tenn: Broadman Press, 1951).
- ²⁹Krister Stendahl, op. cit., pp. 157-163.
- ³⁰George Ladd, op. cit., p. 273.
- ³¹Herbert C. Jackson, op. cit., p. 106.
- ³²Will Herberg, "Judaism and Christianity: Their Unity and Difference," Journal of Bible and Religion, XXI, 2, (April, 1953), pp. 70-71.
- ³³George Ladd, op. cit., p. 263.
- ³⁴Carl E. Braaten, The Future of God (New York: Harper and Row), p. 132.
- ³⁵Herbert C. Jackson, op. cit., pp. 47-48.
- ³⁶Reinhold Niebuhr, Pious and Secular America (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), pp. 106-107.
- ³⁷Ibid.
- ³⁸Abraham Heschel, op. cit., p. 173.

³⁹ Edmund Perry, op. cit., pp. 125-126.

⁴⁰ Markus Barth, Israel and the Church (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1969), pp. 61-62.

⁴¹ Eric C. Rust, Towards a Theological Understanding of History (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 245-246.

⁴² Daniel Callahan, ed., The Secular City Debate (New York: Macmillan, 1966), 98f.

⁴³ H. Richard Niebuhr, Radical Monotheism and Western Culture (New York, 1960), p. 52.

⁴⁴ Cf. Newport, op. cit., pp. 84-91.

⁴⁵ Langdon Gilkey, "New Modes of Empirical Theology," in The Future of Empirical Theology, B. E. Meland, ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), pp. 357-361.

⁴⁶ Eric C. Rust, op. cit., pp. 258-259.

⁴⁷ Hans Joachim Schoeps, The Jewish-Christian Argument: A History of Theologies in Conflict (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963), p. 151.

⁴⁸ Cf. G. Beasley-Murray, Jesus and the Future (London: Macmillan, 1954).

⁴⁹ Cf. Jurgen Moltmann, Theology of Hope (Harper and Row, 1967).

⁵⁰ George E. Ladd, op. cit., p. 324.

A JEWISH VIEW OF THE WORLD COMMUNITY

AGUS

I. Introduction

1. The world-community of mankind existed in the beginning of history, according to Genesis. Adam and Eve and the early generations of man were monotheists. Idolatry was introduced in "the generation of Enosh." ^(Maimonides, Introduction to his Code) The first eleven chapters of Genesis are generally considered to be figurative, not literal in ^{intent} interest. Through metaphor and parable they proclaim the ideal unity of mankind and its paradoxical character.

The world-community will also exist at the end of history when "The Lord will be One and His Name One." Since all the social evils were due to deviations from "the way of the Lord," the triumph of monotheism in the end of time will also result in the overcoming of all the ills of society. Prior to the glorious climax, however, there will be no genuine, global society. Without the Fatherhood of God, there can be no human brotherhood. It is the special destiny of Israel to represent throughout the vicissitudes of history the hope of redemption in the future.

2. In the Hebrew Bible, the contrast is drawn between Israel and the rest of humanity. The term, Am Adonai, "people of God" or Kahal Adonai, "congregation of God" is virtually identical with the people of Israel. However, in the teaching of the prophets, we encounter a tension between the empirical people of Israel and the holy community. Only a remnant of Israel will truly return - hence, many Israelites will be excluded. At the same time, some non-Israelites will "associate" themselves with "the people of God." With these reservations, the empirical people of Israel were still ^{viewed as} the heirs of the Promise and the heart of the future Kingdom of God.

In the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, we find that the faithful consist of those who accept the "sure covenant" (Neh. 10,1) and separate themselves from "the uncleanness of the nations of the land," (Ezra 6,21). Daniel speaks of the Kingdom being given eventually "to the saints of the Most High" (Daniel 7,22).

In pre-rabbinic literature, we encounter a wide spectrum of attitudes, ranging from the total rejection of all but a few "elect" to the inclusion of all who shun idolatry and abide by the principles of ethics. The Qumran sectarians maintained that only those who belonged to their own society were "children of light." All others were doomed to destruction. In the "Wisdom of Solomon," the righteous saints are elevated to the status of the "sons of God." The author of the "Psalms of Solomon" was probably a quietistic Pharisee, who looked forward to the imminent arrival of the Messiah. He foresaw "Sanctified nations" surrounding the House of Israel. (17,42). The narrowest and most pessimistic view was probably the one held by the author of IV Ezra. Sirach speaks of every nation being governed by an angelic prince, with Israel, the "first born" in the family of nations, being ^{ruled} governed by the Lord Himself. This widely held view is asserted also by the author of the Book of Jubilees, who in a fit of malice, adds that these national angels were instructed to mislead their human charges. (15, 31)

When we come to Philo, we encounter a bright and generous spirit. He speaks of a category of gerim, sojourners or proselytes, who belong to God, though they are not "sons of the Covenant."

"...the sojourner is one who circumcizes not his uncircumcision, but his desires and sensual pleasures and the other passions of the soul. For in Egypt, the Hebrew nation was not circumcized. ...But what is the mind of the stranger, if not alienation from belief in many gods and familiarity with honoring the One God and Father of all?" (Quaest. in Exod. II, 2. commentary on Exod. 22,21)

In describing every day as a possible holiday dedicated to God, Philo speaks of "the blameless life of righteous men, who follow nature and her ordinances...All who practise wisdom, either in Grecian or barbaric lands, and lead a blameless and irreproachable life...as behooves true 'cosmopolitans'..." (De Specialibus Legibus, II, 12,42)

In his essay on Moses, Philo describes the prophet as addressing a message of repentance to all men. Of those who respond by renouncing idolatry, he writes, "They have shown the godliness of heart which above all leads to friendship and affinity, and we must rejoice with them..." (De Virtutibus, XXIII, 175) In the Testaments of the Twelve Prophets, forgiveness is exalted as an absolute ideal and the redemption of the Gentiles is predicated as a direct consequence of Israel's redemption. (See R. H. Charles' edition, Introduction, pp. 292-295. References on pages 312 and 358) Jewish propaganda for the Gentiles to give up idolatry, sexual offenses and other moral sins, lest they be destroyed by an eschatological catastrophe, is reflected in the Sybilline Oracles. (E. Schürer, "A History of the Jewish People" N.Y. 1891, vol. V. pp. 291-292)

If we take a survey of the world-community from the standpoint of a Hillelite Pharisee in the year 65 c.e., it would be about as follows:

- (A) The righteous Israelites, who are destined for heaven and the resurrection and the world to Come. These include the "righteous proselytes," gere hazedek.
- (B) The "middle people," i.e. Israelites, who are neither saintly nor wicked, whom the Lord graciously forgives. Here, they ~~Hillelites~~ differed from the Shammaites who assert that such people must traverse through hell, even if only for a mement, in order to obtain forgiveness.
- (C) The "wicked" Israelites, poshai yisroel, who may be consigned to hell for a maximum of 12 months.
- (D) The malicious heretics, for whom there is no hope, since they mislead others. The Hillelites did not include the Jewish Christians, much less the Gentile Christians in this category.
- (E) The sectarian groups, Samaritans, Essenes, Zealots, Jewish-Christians, Gnostics, who are judged individually.
- (f) The Gentiles who have taken the first steps on the way to conversion, with various reservations. This is probably the intention of the stories, dramatizing the difference between Hillel and Shammai, Shabbat 30b. Hillel's policy was to promote conversion by proceeding from the love of man, to the practice of Torah, and thence to the love of God. "Love mankind and bring them closer to Torah" (Abot); also, after

stating the Golden Rule to the would be convert, Hillel said, "the rest is commentary; go and learn." Those Gentiles who accepted certain practices, like the Sabbath-laws, were apparently looked upon with favor by Josephus, (Apion, II, 39) but with distinct dislike by the Talmud.

- (G) The "pious among the nations of the world," who share in the World to Come and may even provide the norms of piety, whereby Israel is to be judged. (Test. of Benjamin 10, 10)
- (H) The Gentiles who undertake to abide by the Seven Laws of Noah; these belong to the fellowship of Israel, insofar as ^{the} philanthropic responsibilities ^{of the Jewish community} are concerned, if they make a declaration to this effect before a court of three.
- (I) The Gentiles who continue to practice idolatry, but whose heart is not in it; hence, they are not guilty of idolatry.
- (J) Gentiles who cherish Wisdom ^{and} preoccupy themselves with the demands of their particular faith, providing that faith incorporates the Noachide principles, or who contribute to the acts of civilization; such men stand on the highest levels of holiness. *"like the High Priest."*
- (K) Masses of people, who fall in no particular category, and who are judged individually on the principle that "the Lord does not spoil the reward of any of His creatures."
- (L) The heathen idolators, who are willfully guilty of moral perversions and sins against the laws which the Lord implanted in creation.

These twelve categories include virtually all the people with whom the Hillelite Pharisees were acquainted. There is a great deal of vagueness in regard to all the Gentiles of categories (F) to (L). Perhaps, this was intentional, since the Jewish Sages did not presume to judge the nations. In contrast to Paul and his disciples, we find in the Talmudic apocalypse that the Lord Himself judges all nations. Rabbi Akiba was rebuked for his suggestion that the Messiah will share in judging the nations.

Of particular interest are the so called "fearers of the Lord" in the New Testament and Greco-Roman literature, (phoboumenoi ton theon or sebomenoi) and the category of a semi-proselyte, ger toshav or ger hashaar. In the Talmud, the category of ger toshav was said to consist of those who in the presence of three Associates, undertook to abide by the Noachide principles. (Aboda Zara 64b.) But, the question is discussed by second century rabbis, in a manner which shows that they were debating only a theoretical issue. The status of one who was baptized, without undergoing circumcision, or circumcized without being baptized, was debated by rabbis at the beginning of the second century. (Yebamot 46a.) The assumption in the Talmud appears to be that the status of ger toshav applied only when the Jubilee year was observed. Hence, it existed only before the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel. (This is the opinion of Rashi, Gittin 36a. The Tossafot disagree.)

Schürer suggests that baptism may have been required even of those who did not undergo full conversion. ("History," 1891 Eng. ed. IV, 323) G. F. Moore argues that there was no valid category of

"semi-proselytes" in rabbinic law. Yet, the widespread phenomenon of "fearers of the Lord" in the Roman world is well attested. Prof. H. A. Wolfson speaks of so called "spiritual proselytes." The local authorities of the various Synagogues in the Diaspora must have acted on their own accord in those areas where the Palestinian rabbis were deliberately vague. Prof. Salo W. Baron concludes, "There is little doubt that Diaspora Jewry went farther than the Palestinian Sages in the reinterpretation of the biblical provisions to fit the exigencies of their own environment." (Salo W. Baron, *J*

"A Social and Religious History of the Jews," vol. I, P. 375, Note 15) We note also the category in the Talmud of "attached converts," gerim gerurim, or "converts en masse," as Moore defines it. Rashi's interpretation that they are self-converted converts, who ^{had} ~~were~~ not ^{been} accepted by a Jewish court, appears to be more correct. (Avoda Zara 3b.) That it was indeed a supreme mizvah to bring people "under the wings of the Shechinah" can scarcely be disputed. Well-known is the teaching that the Israelites were exiled in order that converts might be added unto them. (Pesahim 87b.) The sacrifices of unconverted Gentiles were accepted in the Holy Temple, while those of Jews who have offered oblations to idols, or who have violated the Sabbath in public, were not accepted. (Shabbat 69b.)

In theory, the Jews clung to the vision of the unity of mankind in time to come. While they were accused of "hatred of the gods" and "hatred of the human race," they demonstrated in Rome under the slogan, "behold, there in One God for all of us, One Father created us."

To be sure, there were times, when contemporary hostilities produced some bitter outbursts of hatred and contempt. But, on the whole, such lapses in faith and love, were rare. While some Jews withdrew into a shell, shutting out of sight the world that was so harsh to them, others kept alive the outgoing, universalist orientation of prophetic Judaism.

In the second part of this essay, I wish to outline a systematic view of the world-community. Such a comprehensive overview necessarily outruns the fragmentary and often contradictory sources at our disposal, since with rare exceptions, our rabbinic and medieval authorities hesitated to embark on the bold ventures of systematization. However, it is fully in accord with the thrust of the major trends in Jewish thought.

II

God loves all men; yet, in all generations, there are those who may be designated "people of God," in a special and meaningful way. I do not refer to the exalted role of an ish-elohim, a prophet like Elijah or Elisha, but to the more widespread and limited meaning that Abraham had in mind when he explained his fear that Yireath Elohim, the fear of God, might be lacking in Egypt. In the large company of "people of God," there would be embraced all who advance the various casues that are calculated to bring into being the Kingdom of Heaven, malchut Shomaim. It comprises therefore in the last resort an ^{invisible} ~~in-~~ ^{invisible} ~~in-~~ visible company of men and women, whose genuine worth only God can tell. But, it would also include organizations and historic communities, insofar as these groups are truly dedicated to the task of

~~the task of~~ forming the vanguard of mankind's advance toward the perfection of the messianic age. This general description in itself is far too simplistic to serve a useful purpose; indeed, it is loaded with many booby-traps, as an examination of the optimistic philosophies of the past will amply demonstrate. But, if this postulate is translated into the categories of scriptural faith, it acquires concreteness, relevance and guiding principles.

It is in three ways that the Divine Power enters into the human world, namely-Creation, Revelation and Redemption. In the biblical view, the history of mankind which begins with an act of Divine creation, will culminate in the attainment of complete redemption, this process being directed and accelerated through the gifts of revelations. In creation, God's Power is manifested; in revelation His Will; in redemption, the Divine thrust to help man transcend his own personality and the pattern of values in ^{his} social order. Each of these phases of divine activity is continuous. Of creation, ^{the} Prayer Book describes God as "renewing in His Goodness daily the works of creation"; of revelation, we learn of God as ordaining fresh laws daily; He is addressed ^{in prayer} as "the Redeemer," in the present sense, performing wonders "every day, morning, evenings and afternoons." In Jewish theology, this threefold interpretation of the essence of faith was adumbrated in the teaching that there were three essential principles of faith - belief in God, in Torah, and in Providence (J. Albo and S. Duran). Franz Rosenzweig speaks of the three currents of metaphysical reality - Creation, Revelation, Redemption, with creation taking place between God and the world, revelation between God

and man, and redemption between man and the world. This brilliant schenatization is certainly helpful, but we must remember that every Divine impulse partakes of all three categories. God's Will is revealed in creation as well as in revelation, and to perceive His Will is to take the decisive step on the highway of redemption. Yet, these phases of the Divine are sufficiently distinctive for us to be able to discuss them separately and to analyze their implications for the concept of the nuclear community of "people of God."

We take up the doctrine of revelation first, since it provides a clue to the twofold nature of God's activity - His universality and particularity. In the sphere of revelation, His Will was manifested in a general way through the gifts of intelligence and conscience which He has implanted in the hearts of all men. We have referred previously to the Noachide principles. A more inclusive characterization of universal revelation would be the category of wisdom, hochmah. And in ancient times, wisdom included ethical and even religious values. Aristotle and Plato insisted on a distinction between shrewdness, or cleverness, and genuine wisdom. And the book of Proverbs asserts, "the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord." In contemporary terms, we would say an existential commitment to ethical values or an intuitive perception of their validity is the first principle of wisdom. Still, even with these limitations, the category of wisdom is a universal possession of mankind.

In Judaism, wisdom was regarded as a divine gift, akin to the guidance and fervor of prophecy. Wisdom dwells with God; it is the principle of creation. (Proverbs 8;22-31) Sirach extols it as the indwelling harmony that holds all things in thrall. Philo maintains that it is an illusion for man to imagine that he himself is the source of his thoughts. All noble thoughts flew from God, and man's part consists in rendering his mind receptive to Divine inspiration. For this reason, the Hellenistic Jews believed that Pythagoros, Plato and Aristotle must have been disciples of the Hebrew prophets. In the Talmud, the Sage is regarded as the latter-day successor of the prophet. The thought is even projected that a sage, hacham, is better than a prophet.

The Talmudic sages recognized that wisdom is a universal category, while Torah is the special possession of the Jewish people. On seeing a Gentile sage, a Jew is obligated to thank the Lord for His sharing His wisdom with a creature of flesh and blood. The true Sage learns from all men. On the other hand, Torah is not found among the nations. Reacting against the claims of the early Christians that they alone understood the true meaning of the Pentateuch, some of the Sages ^{insisted on} ~~asserted~~ the unity of Israel and Torah with hyperbolic rhetoric - to wit, Israel and the Torah are wedded, and a Gentile who studies Torah is committing adultery, as it were.

What is the relation of Torah to Wisdom? - While in the several streams of Jewish thought, this relationship was conceived in different

ways, the conviction is well-nigh universal that Torah and wisdom cannot be mutually contradictory. While Torah is trans-rational, deriving from Divine inspiration, it is never anti-rational. Indeed, Torah itself is "a lower representation of the wisdom that is above." Hence, the ideal scholar should be learned in all forms of wisdom as well as in Torah. The members of the Sanhedrin, we are told, were supposed to be familiar with "the seventy languages," and even with the arts of witchcraft.

In medieval Jewish philosophy, the rationalists, beginning with Saadia, maintained that Torah and speculative wisdom were virtually identical. Torah presents us with conclusions, which reason would reach only through a long and arduous effort. For Maimonides, all passages in Torah which do not accord with the dictates of reason must be interpreted figuratively. He believed in creatio ex nihilo, because this question ^{could} cannot be determined by reason; and when the scales are balanced, we have to allow the nissus for perfection within us to tip the scales in favor of the doctrine of creation - a doctrine "which makes Torah possible."

A neo-platonist, like Gabirol, did indeed set will above reason. A romanticist like Judah Halevi maintained that Torah brings the Israelite to a state of responsiveness to the "Divine Quality" that is far superior to any level of insight available to philosophers. But, even Halevi insisted that God could not command us to believe aught that is contrary to reason. The Qabbalists did affirm the existence of a realm of Divine Being, where all was paradoxical -

infinity and finitude were commingled, limits were reached and not reached, Powers were divided and undivided - the principle of "the excluded middle" being honored in the breach almost consistently. That supernal realm was conveyed to chosen souls by means of revelation, and it could be conveyed from master to disciple only through the magic of personal charisma, "like one who lights a candle by a candle, without the first candle being diminished in the slightest."

Yet, even Nahmanides, one of the greatest luminaries of Qabbalah, asserted that man must not believe anything that is contrary to reason. In summing up his explanation why Jews could not accept the Christian faith, he pointed to the irrationality of Christian theology, as he saw it.

"The core of the true dispute among us is not the concept of the Messiah...but the crux of the issue and the reason for the argument between Jews and Christians is the fact that you impute to the Deity things which are exceedingly repugnant...For what you state, and this is the essence of your faith, reason cannot accept, nature does not permit, and the prophets never implied. Also, the belief in miracles cannot be extended to cover such a phenomenon... The thought of a Jew and a man cannot tolerate such a belief, hence you argue for naught and your words are wasted, for this is the essence of our disputes." (Sefêr Havikuah Lehoramban, 12)

Nahmanides had in mind the popular conception of Incarnation in the Church of his day; yet, he also lays down a general principle that "the thought of a Jew and man" set limits to the content of faith.

In a book written by another participant in a disputation that took place a century and a half later, the author agrees that two different religions may coexist at one time, and be equally true. (J. Albo, "Book of Principles," transl. by J. Husik, J.P.S. 1946, vol. 1, chap. 25) Yet, he refuses to accord this concession to Christianity, on the ground that its teachings contradict the clear principles of reason. (Ibid, volume III, ch. 25)

In the Age of Enlightenment, Moses Mendelssohn identified Judaism with "the religion of reason" and in a well-known letter he suggested that convergence between Judaism and Christianity would be possible only after the Christian faith had been reinterpreted along rationalistic lines. Today, we know that there is much more to religion than reason can fathom.

As Pascal put it, The heart has its reasons that are too big for the mind, while the logic of the mind is too small for the heart.

Yet, it remains true that Torah and wisdom must advance hand in hand. Even a non-philosophical Talmudist, like Eliyah Gaon of Vilna, had asserted "that Torah and wisdom derive from one source, and for every measure of wisdom that we lack, we miss ten measures of Torah." God comes at us from several different directions at once, and we must take account of every form of revelation in our effort to seek His nearness. This synthetic adventure is possible because neither the body of revelation we possess nor the insights of wisdom available to us are closed and complete. To the modern mind, history is a very present reality. We see revelation as being an ongoing quest, as well as a possession. We seek "the nearness of God," but we can

move ahead only so far. Our goal is to understand the Absolute and feel His Presence in our bones, as it were, but we cannot possess the Absolute.

What is the relevance of these reflections to our vision of the world-community? - It is the distinction between the terms, "people of God" and "people of the Covenant." In the Talmud, a faithful Israelite is designated as a "son of the Covenant" (ben berit). While the recipients of wisdom share in Divine Guidance, they do not necessarily belong to the people of the Covenant. Through the special obligations that a historic people or a newly constituted ecclesia assumes, it establishes private signs and symbols that become charged with holy significance for their members. People need houses as well as the great outdoors in order to feel at home in the universe; when a house is built, the outside universe is shut out, but only for certain times and seasons. And it is ^{an act of Divine revelation} ~~a reform of wisdom~~ that prompts us to build homes of the spirit for our collective existence.

In the biblical period, Covenants were made by patriarchs and kings, in the Name of God and for His sake. Joshua renewed the Covenant, so did kings Hezekiah and Josiah, and Ezra instituted the "sure Covenant." The account of Ezra's reforms does not speak of a fresh theophany; yet, there was a clear awareness that Ezra was a second Moses, as it were. In the Talmudic period, whatever legislation the Sages enacted, the people were supposed to regard as a Divine commandment. So, the reading of the Megillah on Purim and the lighting of candles on Hanukkah are preceded by a benediction in which we thank God "for hallowing us by His Commandments and enjoining us" to perform these rites. Similarly, all benedictions recited prior to tasting

food were formulated by the Sages; yet, we are told that any one who partakes of food, without reciting the prescribed benediction, "robs the Holy One, blessed be He, and the congregation of Israel." The sages allowed that "the pious among the nations shared in the World to Come," but they insisted that new proselytes could not set conditions or eliminate some items from the Covenant.

Now, the Covenant-principle can be generalized. An ecclesia, or any historic community, that is dedicated to God is a covenant-community, but it must not preempt the designation, "people of God," which belongs properly to an invisible company. According to the tannaitic Sages, to love God means "to make His Name beloved among men." Any ^{organized or historic} group that is dedicated to this end is a covenanted community.

Instructive for our purpose is the comment of an eighteenth century rabbi, Jacob Emden, who was a contemporary of Moses Mendelssohn, but who was so remote from the mood of the Enlightenment that he doubted whether the pious Maimonides could have composed so skeptical a work as the "Guide of the Perplexed." Commenting on the statement of the second century Palestinian Sage, Rabbi Yohanan the Shoemaker, "every community that is for the sake of heaven is destined to endure, and every community that is not for the sake of heaven will not endure" (Abot 4,14), Rabbi Emden wrote as follows:

"Certainly the Sage did not concern himself with communities that are not related to us, but with those new faiths and sects that derived from us... Indeed, when we take account of the cults they [the Christians] supplanted, which worshipped stocks and stones and did not know God as the Absolute Power, administering reward and punishment in the hereafter, their [the Christian] church may truly be called an 'ecclesia

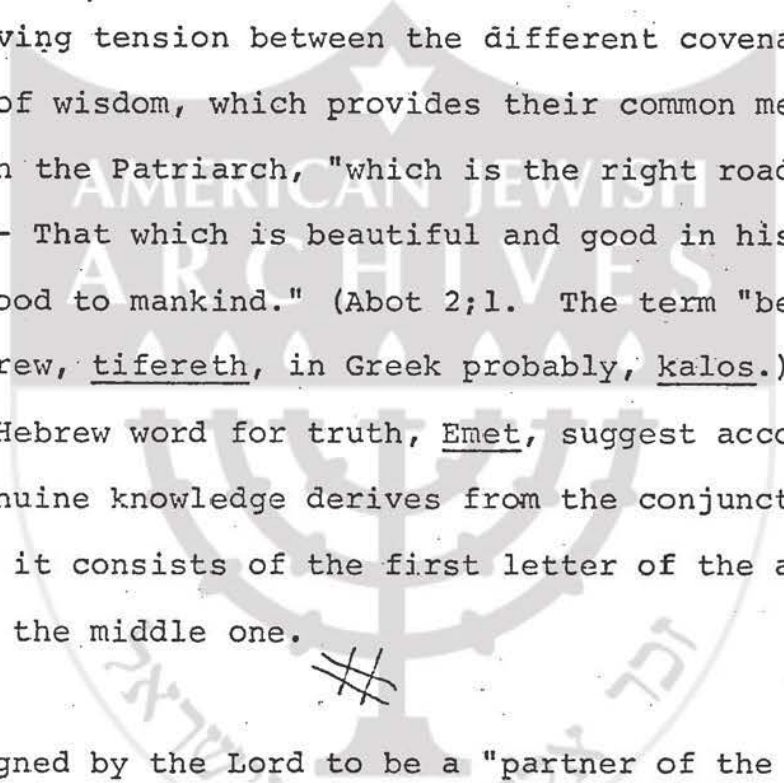
for the sake of heaven.' For they proclaim God to distant nations... They glorify the Lord, God of Israel and His Torah, even among people who have never heard about Him. Therefore, their good intentions cannot be in vain. The Compassionate seeks the heart... Furthermore, Christian scholars are known for their dedication to research... By their studies in biblical history, many of them have added to its glory..." (Rabbi Jacob Emden, "Etz Abot," published in 1756, commentary on the Ethics of the Fathers)

In this judgment, Emden ranks the Christian polity as a divine institution. Its capacity to endure and its role in history demonstrate that it is indeed "a community for the sake of heaven." Yet, Emden would have been horrified at the suggestion that the establishment of the Christian polity had annulled the Covenant of the Jewish people. For Jews, to forsake their own covenant is an act of apostasy; but, they are not the only "people of God;" other historic communities, as well as individuals, share in this honor and in its concomitant responsibilities.

Emden's judgment of the Christian church ties in with Gamliel's opinion, at the trial of Peter and John (Acts 5;38,39) and the view of the Pharisees at the trial of Paul (Acts 23,9) as well as Maimonides' judgment of the redemptive rôle played by Christianity and Islam in the history of the world. (Hilchot Melochim, 10;14, Constantinople ed.)

In sum, insofar as revelation is a divine activity, it comes to us in three ways - primarily, through our own covenanted community, secondarily through the the general revelation of human wisdom and thirdly as a challenge and a spur to reflection, through the work

of other covenanted communities. We live within our own historic covenant, but we learn from the other two sources as well as from our own. In each case, our insights unfold in the course of history. It is particularly in the nature of wisdom to evolve and expand. It may also go off into the abyss of confusion and chaos. We have to maintain the living tension between the different covenanted communities and the sphere of wisdom, which provides their common meeting ground. Said Rabbi Judah the Patriarch, "which is the right road that a man should choose? - That which is beautiful and good in his own eyes and beautiful and good to mankind." (Abot 2;1. The term "beautiful and good" is in Hebrew, tifereth, in Greek probably, kalos.) The very letters of the Hebrew word for truth, Emet, suggest according to the Talmud, that genuine knowledge derives from the conjunction of several viewpoints, for it consists of the first letter of the alphabet, the last letter and the middle one.



Man was designed by the Lord to be a "partner of the Holy One, blessed be He, in the works of creation." His industry and inventiveness are God-given powers, for the promotion of the settlement of the earth, that it might be a paradise, not a wasteland. In contrast to the Greek legend concerning Prometheus and the fire he stole from the gods, the Talmud ascribes the discovery of fire to a special act of Divine favor. Abraham is represented in the Book of Jubilees as an inventor of the plough. The secular art of medicine was praised by Sirach as being fully in keeping with the Will of God. It is a sin to idle away one's time and refrain from doing one's part in "the

settlement of the world," (yishuva shel olam). For this reason, gamblers are not considered worthy of serving as witnesses in a law-court. The talmudic sages were in many cases artisans, and they taught that the Shechinah dwells only where good and loving craftsmanship is at work. In modern parlance, we should say, religion and culture go hand in hand.

In this area, as in revelation, the polarity of pluralism prevails. There is the particularistic culture of the Israelites, and an emergent, universal culture. The Sages were acquainted with Hellenistic and Roman cultures, which laid claim to universalism. Some of the tannaitic Sages were willing to acknowledge Rome, as a Power enthroned by God, in order to introduce the arts of civilization and lawful order to the world. Those who disputed this judgment questioned the motives of the Roman governors, not the worth of their achievements. A third century rabbi who visited the imperial city marvelled at the wonderful care which the Romans lavished on their marble statues, but he criticized their order of priorities when he saw the hunger and nakedness of the poor in that metropolis.

The range and character of universal culture was set over against the particular Hebrew culture that was so intimately interwoven with the Jewish faith. The "settlement of the land of Israel" ^(Yishuv Ha-aretz) was a supreme Command in Judaism, and the rabbis enacted many laws in order to promote that goal. So intimate was the bond between the Holy Land and the Torah that some scholars refused to acknowledge the universal dimension of the Jewish religion. They asserted that the ethnocentric embrace of Hebrew culture prevented Judaism from becoming a world-

religion. Actually, as we have seen, Judaism was an expansionist faith in the Hellenistic and early Roman period. But, concern with humanity as a whole did not diminish Jewish eagerness for the preservation and cultivation of their own national culture-their language, their land, their historical memories and associations. In fact, rightly or wrongly, they imagined that for the sake of humanity and universal culture, they are obligated to preserve their own cultural distinctiveness. A particular religion should be associated with a particular culture in an intimate, organic way, but it should at the same time cultivate an openness and empathy for the cultures of other people and the vision of a universal culture.

To be sure, there were times when the yearning for Zion reached fantastic proportions, as in the philosophy of Judah Halevi, who maintained that the Holy Land possessed a theurgic potency, which would be revealed in a revival of prophecy if a faithful Israel ~~is~~ were once again settled in it. But, even Halevi remained true to the vision of a united mankind. He compared Israel among the nations to the heart in a living person; through the revitalization of the heart, all other organs will regain their vigor.

Two questions arise in relation to the interaction of religion and culture. Should religions combat the rise of diverse ethnic cultures for the sake of a universal society, and if ethnic cultures are inescapable, should religions stand apart from them and subject them to criticism, or should they enter the secular world with a holy enthusiasm so as to sacralize the secular?

The first question was fiercely debated in western Europe in the Nineteenth century. The founders of Reform Judaism insisted on eliminating the nationalistic residues in the Jewish religion, in order to render it worthy of serving in the vanguard of the world-religions of the future. So, they reduced the role of Hebrew in the liturgy, eliminated references to Zion, declared the dietary laws to be obsolete, and generally represented Judaism ^{as} on the religion of reason and humanity. From Abraham Geiger to Leo Baeck, the Reform movement claimed that Jewry must preserve its faith as the nuclear religion of the future society of mankind. But history has a way of betraying those who cling tightly to its skirts. Today, classical Reform has lost its appeal to the Jewish mind. Modern Zionism affirms the worth of Hebrew culture, as well as of the Jewish religion. Yet, Zionism does not call for a return to the ghetto, or to a retreat from the humanist ideal. On the contrary, it is imbued with the faith that the revival of Hebrew life and culture in the land of Israel will contribute to the reinvigoration of western culture, which draws its inspiration from the Holy Scriptures. The universal ideal of a global society must be conceived in pluralistic terms, as an association of many and diverse ethnic cultures, all sharing in an emergent universal culture. The universal and the particular are not opposites but the two poles of one reality. In every generation, it is necessary to counter the absolutist claims of the proponents of each pole and to find the right balance between them.

As to the second question, concerning the interaction of religion and culture, we have seen in recent years the pendulum swing from Barth's "wholly Other" to Cox's "Secular City." Extremists draw attention, since they fall in with the alternation of popular sentiment. But, actually it is obvious that to be effective religion must be intimately involved with the living culture of the moment and, at the same time, transcend it and subject its trends to relentless criticism. Religion performs the double function of celebrating the status quo and fueling the drive to transform it. It sanctifies the great ideals of society, yet if it has not lost ^{its} ~~lost its~~ own vision of human destiny, it cannot but uphold standards which loom far beyond the grasp of men at any one time.

The intimate association of Judaism with the rebirth of Israel contains elements of danger as well as of strength. The danger consists in the extreme difficulty of the religious component to assert its universalist and objective judgments in the areas where the secular interests of the state are involved. When a particular faith is organically bound up with a particular ethnic group and a political state, it is just as likely that religious values will be strangled by political interests as it is that politics and culture will be ennobled by the momentum of faith. On the other hand, when a faith is totally dissociated from culture and politics, it is just as probable that the faith will be pure, "unspotted of the world," as it is that it will be ineffectual in directing national policy.

For this reason, the Jewish faith-culture relationship, which is intimate and organic, and the Protestant faith-culture posture, which is loose and indirect, should be juxtaposed and kept in a state of mutual challenge and tension. As in the realm of revelation, so in that of

creation, God works through us, yet not through us alone, but also through the challenge to us of our neighbors' culture and that of the emergent society of mankind.

It is in the realm of redemption, that the recognition of mutual need is greatest in both Judaism and Christianity. So, Maimonides allowed that both Judaism and Christianity were "preparing the way" for the coming of the Messiah. In the Nineteenth century, Formstecher, Rosenzweig and Kohler declared that the global destiny of Judaism was being fulfilled through the efforts of the Christians. Their scheme was based on the analogy between the sun and its rays - the sun is Judaism, the all-permeating rays are Christianity. Geiger clung to Halevi's analogy of the heart in a living organism, since he believed that the Jews had a special genius for religion. Kohler spoke of the Jewish faith as providing the standards as well as the source of progress toward a universal faith and a redeemed society. We have to transcend the residues of bitter rivalry and sheer narcissism in the philosophies of the Nineteenth century and return to fundamentals.

In the first place, we recognize that we do not know and cannot presume to know the course of redemption. The Talmudic sages excoriated those who "calculate the end" and those who "press the end." Maimonides adds wisely that in these matters we shall know what the prophets meant only after the events of the Eschaton shall have taken place. And Jesus, too, affirmed that no one knows the time of the End of Days.

In the second place, we have to transcend the rhetoric which foisted upon us mountains of misunderstanding. It is said that for Christians, the world is already redeemed, while for Jews, it is unredeemed. This is a specious juxtaposition. We might say with equal justification that for Christians, the world is in a "fallen" and corrupt state, while for Jews, the world is "very good." Actually, the tension in Judaism between an unfinished universe and a radiant vision of redemption was retained in the Christian philosophy of history, as presented in Augustine's "City of God," though Augustine rejected the chiliastic belief. A similar philosophy of history was contained in both faiths. To be sure, Judaism and Christianity project different categories for the judgment of the course of history, but the categories are mutually supplementary at times, mutually challenging at times, and the variations within both faiths are so vast as to render meaningless the ancient controversies about the "fulfillment" of Scriptural verses.

Every creative act of God and every theophany is also redemptive. So, in many rabbinic passages, the Messiah was seen as another Moses, or another Adam. To many Christians, "the second coming" of Jesus was anticipated with the same ardor that the Jews displayed in regard to the Messiah. And in the major trends of Judaism, "the hope of Israel" is inseparable from the redemption of mankind. To a rationalist, like Maimonides, this result will come about through the normal developments of history, without any break in the laws of nature; to a mystic, like Nahmanides, the End will be achieved through a miraculous intervention in the course of history. To the truly religious person, the boundary between the natural and the supernatural disappears. In

any case, during the messianic age all redeemed mankind will form one universal society and "the covenant-people" will merge within the all-embracing "people of God." But, before the final consummation is attained, the diverse covenanted bodies must advance under their separate banners. Yet, they move toward the same goal, "when the Lord will be One, and His Name One." And as they advance through their own diverse paths, they must keep their minds and hearts open so they can learn from one another. For the course of human history is studded with theophanies that are creative, revelatory and redemptive. The Deuteronomist, in our massoretic version, calls upon the Israelites to discover their own true being by studying the careers of all nations and all epochs. And the Qabbalists assumed that the reason the Israelites were exiled was that they might gather the "holy sparks" that are scattered among all the nations and thereby hasten the course of redemption. This indeed is the task of all covenanted communities, for all of us are exiles, and all of us need to gather the "holy sparks," wherever they are found.

The action of God in redeeming mankind, transpires in three dimensions - in release from suffering, in the overcoming of sin, in the attainment of a new scale of values. The pictorial representation of the messianic age in Judaism appears to stress the first more than the second, and the third dimension is in some versions reserved for the World to Come. Actually, the messianic vision of Judaism is complex and many-splendored, and the conquest of sin is central in

all versions. If the Israelites repent truly, the Messiah will come and a "renewal of Torah" will take place. The doctrine of the Second Coming in Protestant thought also emphasizes repentance and "rebirth."

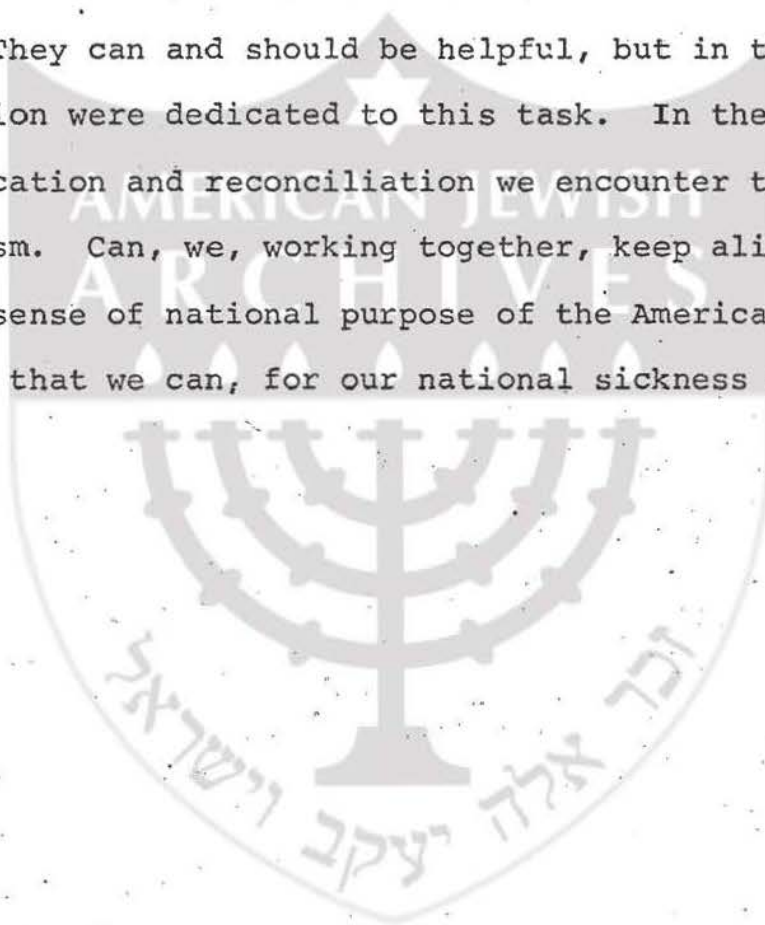
A century or so ago, Friedrich Nietzsche articulated the inchoate feelings of his day by his vision of a progressive overcoming of the values of man by those of superman. He envisioned a transvaluation of all values, and he appealed to restless youth to take up the work of God in creating a nobler humanity, since, as he put it, "God is dead." His call sounded plausible to a generation shocked by Darwinian theories. But it led to the "youth-movement" at the turn of the century and then to Nazism. Today, we hear similar calls for new values, also similar declarations of the irrelevance of so called "God-talk." But, values are intrinsically non-disposeable. What we do need is a keener grasp of values and their applications in our complex times. New values grow out of the inner impetus of old values, not by their dissolution. In the realm of nature, the plants of this season grow out of the organic matter that derives from the rotted bodies of previous years. But, in the realm of spirit, we can transcend the wisdom of the past only if we understand it from within first. Every new advance presupposes the assimilation of ancient insights; else, our progress is illusory, like walking up on a descending escalator.

In our contemporary setting, the three phases of redemption are still very current. For most people the three quests of redemption are secularized. Sin is simply failure, and values are sought in a retreat to privatism, or in various forms of negativism. As to suffering, moderns pin their hopes on the progress of science. However, science cannot cure the discontent that derives from interpersonal relations. We may be able to still the pangs of physical hunger, but poverty as relative deprivation is becoming more and more unbearable. For many people, the term sin has lost its theological significance, but if they are at all aware of social problems, they cannot but acknowledge that the malaise of our times is moral-spiritual. The smoldering volcanoes of hate in our urban centers and the bitter disaffection of our youth are fueled by a general feeling of loss of direction as well as by specific causes like the Vietnam war, unemployment and racism. And this absence of a sense of purpose is most disconcerting to us, as religious teachers, since it indicates the measure of our failure. Yet, each religious denomination can easily exculpate itself on the ground that its impact on the education of our youth is extremely marginal. In a society where church and state are separated, and properly so, can the several agencies of faith work together in providing a national ethos that is adequate to our times? - I disagree most sharply with those who claim that we need a "theology of revolution," but equally, we cannot be content with the traditional role of unyielding conservatism, saying with Alexander Pope, "whatever is, is right."

In the maintenance and creation new values, the pluralism of the redemptive work of God must be our basic axiom. As in the spheres of revelation and creation, the divine impact hits us from diverse and opposite sides. The Chariot of Ezekiel was lifted up by a wind that came from four directions at once. So, we have to cherish the basic values in our heritage, even while we listen hard to the new and strange music that assaults our ears. And our own way of life, wonderful as it is, may well not be the only way in which divine values are brought into society. Can a pluralistic ecumenism keep us from the sin of self-righteousness? It was this besetting evil of piety that constituted the main theme of the critique that Jesus levelled at the religious establishment of his day. The Sages of the Talmud agreed that the Pharisaic order, with all its greatness, was frequently guilty of false piety. This does not mean that Pharisaism was itself evil. On the contrary, it represents the institutional framework of a historical faith. But, every concrete body casts a shadow, when it stands before one source of light. The shadows disappear, though not altogether, when several lamps are lit at different points in the room.

Speaking from the vantage point of Judaism, I can say that the perennial problem in Jewish history was to keep the balance between messianism and pseudo-messianism. The Protestant movements in the Sixteenth century faced a similar problem. It is up to the several religious traditions of America to generate that mentality that will keep the equilibrium between a galloping utopianism and a sterile stand-patism in our domestic as well as foreign affairs. "Without

vision, a people perishes," said Isaiah. In a democratic nation, free from the lash of ideological commissars, who is to scatter the seeds of spirit that will one day blossom in the flowers of ideals? Can the press, the radio, T.V., do this task alone? Can the schools do it alone? - They can and should be helpful, but in the past the forces of religion were dedicated to this task. In the domain of national rededication and reconciliation we encounter the ultimate test of ecumenism. Can, we, working together, keep alive the inner values and the sense of national purpose of the American nation? - I have no doubt that we can, for our national sickness resulted from



the breakdown in the creaking agencies of social transmission, not from the obsolescence of the values themselves.

The challenge of our youth confronts us in three areas - in the ideals of personal life, in the moral temper of the community and in the vision of national purpose. With all the unlovely outbursts of radicalism in recent years, we have to recognize a desperate groping for national integrity, for the genuine values of love and communalism. Perhaps, their strongest conviction ^{of our radical youth} is negativistic - somehow, we, the elders, have not been true to our own ideals. And this feeling is likely to persist. Even if we should end the war in Vietnam, establish equity in race relations, feed the hungry and end unemployment, we shall still have a vast problem of rebuilding the sentiment of dedication, of family loyalty, of pride in work and a sense of sharing in the greatness of the nation. And these qualities our nation possessed in far greater measure in the days when a larger percentage of its people lived at the level now called poverty.

In terms of personal values, the so called "Protestant Ethic" needs to be broadened and deepened, not abandoned. As Max Weber recognized, the Protestant Ethic was also the Jewish ethic, but instead of being directed solely toward personal success, we need to direct it toward national well-being, especially since the four-day workweek may become a reality. We need to glamorize the humanist values of study, appreciation of art and music, and the cultivation of productive talents. Voluntary days of work, in improving the environment can be planned by the religious agencies in order to build a sense of national pride. In particular, all agencies of religion face the problem of providing alternative measures of success and achievement.

To be good and true in the sight of God is far more important than to amass worldly goods. Is this no longer true, because it has so long been commonplace? In one of the first books to reflect the disaffection of the young, "Frannie and Zooey," J. D. Salinger showed how a brilliant young actress was talked out of a nervous breakdown by the suggestion that an emissary of God might appear at any time, in the shape of a "fat old lady" to judge her performance. Inequalities in achievement will always mark a free society, and without a sense of spiritual values, massive tides of bitterness may well overwhelm our cities.

Personal values need to be sustained by the bonds of fellowship. What the so called "secular city" needs most is that intricate network of voluntary organizations, which has enriched the lives of small-town America. *And those interrelated institutions were generated by the several covenanted communities.* If the unchurched and the unsynagogued constitute today in many cities a seething mass of faceless individuals, some new social structures need to be devised by those who are church and synagogued to reawaken their sense of personal worth. When Harvey Cox rhapsodizes over the joys of anonymity in the big city, he writes as an intellectual surfeited with public acclaim. He forgets that the biblical Adam demonstrated his humanity when he was able to name all living things. The attraction of communal living for the young is in part at least a frantic escape from loneliness, alienation and anonymity. There is need of an interfaith effort along experimental lines to encourage healthy forms of cooperative communities.

Finally, in respect of the world-community as a whole, we need to think of our collective mission, as members of the greatest industrial nation in the world. The problems are immense, but so are the spiritual rewards. Our national purpose in this space-age can be nothing less than to encourage the emergence of a world-community, viable in its population, with help for the backward peoples, and with security dependent ever more preponderately on international agencies.

To achieve these ends, all of us that call ourselves "the people of God" must learn to labor together, shoulder to shoulder.

The last mishnah of the six tractates deals with the function of Elijah the Prophet. In a general way, all the Sages agreed that it was his function "to prepare the way" for the coming of the Messiah. But, how does he go about his work? - Said one rabbi, he separates the true from the false; said another, he rectifies the evils and injustices of the past. But, the Sages, after due deliberation, concluded-"it is not his function to make clean or unclean, to repel or to bring near those who were repelled, but to make peace in the world." This is our task.

1.

"A Baptist Perspective of Judaism"

by Joseph R. Estes

It has been said of Baptists and Jews that whenever there are three of them, one can find at least four opinions. I take this way to point out the obvious fact that I, as a Baptist, cannot presume to speak for all Baptists, perhaps not even for anyone but myself. A second obvious fact, more painfully obvious to the Jews present, is the limitation of my knowledge of Judaism in its present-day expression. It has been my privilege to know many Jews personally, and to count some of them as close friends. However, my knowledge of their religious life is largely derived from my readings in Judaism. On rare occasions, only, have I worshiped in synagogues and engaged in prayer, etc., with Jewish believers. Occasionally, Jewish friends of mine have attended Baptist worship which I have led. One occasion recently stands out in my mind, when the local Jewish congregation of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, including the rabbi and officers of the synagogue, shared in a worship and dialogue service which I led in the First Baptist Church there. It was an occasion of rejoicing on my part and by the Baptists present. I believe, also, that the Jewish congregation were pleased.

This brings to mind one characteristic of the Jews which has been impressed upon me. They are given to spontaneous expressions of appreciation to those who exhibit a good-will and desire for understanding of them. No one, it seems to me, has more capacity for intensive friendship than a Jew. The expressions of such friendship ^{are many times} extravagant, effusive and hyperbolic. If this characteristic is not a peculiar quality of Jewishness, it has none the less been my general experience of the Jews in my acquaintance. Among the most loyal and unselfish friends I have are Jews and I could covet such ~~and~~ qualities among my Baptist friends.

There is, of course, an ulterior motive in my mentioning the quality of friendship I have enjoyed with Jews. It is designed to elicit from you (without sacrifici-

cing honesty and candor) the most generous charity possible toward my attempt to give a "Baptist Perspective of Judaism". My paper, as you will see, is somewhat in the form of a confessional. It is, therefore, less erudite, and thus less confidently dogmatic, than it is tentative and, perhaps provocative. It really represents thoughts with which I am still struggling.

In this paper, I wish to give my perspective of Judaism under the headings of 1. Judaism and the Jewish Identity, 2. Judaism and the State of Israel, and 3. Judaism and the Christian Faith.

I. Judaism and the Jewish Identity

A clue to the significance of the people called Jews is given in a bit of history recorded by Karl Barth (Dogmatics in Outline, Philosophical Library, New York, n.d., p.75). Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, was more than a little doubtful about the existence of God. As head of the "ideal Hegelian state", he saw the political and social value of the state religion, but whether he was a real believer in God remains in doubt. Frederick had a court physician by the name of Zimmermann, a Swiss of Christian persuasion, whom he enjoyed engaging in debate regarding religion. The story goes that the king^{once} said to his physician, "Zimmermann, can you give me a single proof of the existence of God?" The Physician replied, "Your Majesty, the Jews!" No doubt the rational arguments for the existence of God have afforded fortification for those who already believe. However, that they offer no bonafide proofs must be admitted. Instead of pointing to such sophisticated data, the physician cited an indisputable historical fact: The existence of the people of Israel, the folk today called the Jews. There they are, for all the world to see. Barth continues: "Hundreds of little nations in the Near East have disappeared, all other Semitic tribes of that time have dissolved and disappeared in the huge sea of nations; and this ^{one} tiny nation has maintained itself."

To an outsider, the survival of the Jews is nothing less than phenomenal. Has there ever been a people who had as little apparent reason to exist as a separate and identi-

able social group as the Jews? Their history is one long train of suffering. Persecuted, despised and hated, they have been singled out ^{for slaughter} on many occasions, the latest and most vicious being Hitler's "final solution". Scattered among the nations of the earth they have acquired a variety of cultures, languages, and styles of life. They are divided among the many political philosophies which have been espoused by men. They have had precious little political power and only occasionally possessed their own land and had political independence. Beginning as a loose confederation of tribes which moved into a land that was originally settled by other peoples, they were able to establish a monarchy, but the Davidic kingdom had only brief prosperity and security in the midst of larger, stronger nations. For a thousand years, at least, they existed largely as a vassal nation, with the hope burning within that the "kingdom of God" would come in a realistic, historical sense. Their number was often drastically reduced and no great influx of other peoples replenished the stock. Arthur A. Cohen has said: "The predicament of Judaism stems from an historical irony: it has nobody but born Jews upon whom to depend for sustenance and survival. It has enjoyed no periodic infusions of new peoples and cultures: it has not benefited from the reception of new adherents and the renewal of passion, vigor, and intensity which the convert usually brings to his adopted faith." (The Natural and the Supernatural Jew, McGraw-Hill, N.Y. paperback ed., p. 189.) Although occasional proselytizing efforts were put forth by the Jews (reflected in the New Testament) and a few "converts" to Judaism have been realized in all ages and cultures, the judgement of Cohen seems to be generally true. Add to these facts the assimilationists and one cannot help marvelling that the Jews have continued to exist as a people.

Even the rejection of the Judaic religious practices by the majority of modern Jews ^{sometimes} has been more "accidental" than real, it seems to me. (That is, pertaining to externals.) For example, a Jewish friend of mine is a professor of biophysics at Columbia University, and doing research under a Ford Foundation grant. We became acquainted when he and his family moved next door to us in Switzerland, where he came to set up an atomic reactor for IBM in a research laboratory near the Baptist Seminary where I taught. We became friends

and our families shared all the compulsive drive for communion that characterizes Americans abroad. Immediately they let us know that they were atheists and all attempts to bring up religion in our conversations met with snide and uncomplimentary responses. Later, upon our return to the States, my daughter and I had occasion to visit in their home. As always they were more than hospitable. They had us for supper one evening. To my amazement, they had prepared a delightful Kosher meal. When I called attention to it, my friend said, "Yes, it's odd, isn't it, for an atheist to observe Kashrut." Whereupon I asked, "Say, why are you a Jew?" He replied, "Oh, I just happened to be born to Jewish parents. But you know I don't believe all that stuff." I replied, "Yes, but you can't really escape it, can you?", and I related to him the case of Frederick and his physician! Whether my conclusion is to my Jewish friend a credible one or a non sequiter, the fact of Jewish existence is, it seems to me, a permanent and inescapable reality. The Dasein of the Jew is, if possible, more vivid and real than any, and all sociological and psychological pressures, both within and without the Jewish community, conspire to prevent escape. Samuel Sandmel has said of the "goy chasers" that "such people would gladly leave us, if only they could. Often they can, but Hitler's definition of a Jew, namely, a person who has one Jewish grandparent, tends to close off escape from the Jewish community." (We Jews and You Christians, p.57.) To press the point, one thinks of Heinrich Himmler's judgment that "a Jew is any body I call a Jew", or the popular, irreducible definition that a Jew is a person called a Jew by someone else. Such reductionism, however, cannot be taken so seriously as to make the definition of a Jew merely arbitrary. It simply does not take seriously either the inner meaning or the historical continuity of Jewry. Even Hitler's definition reduces Jewishness to a merely biological phenomenon. In other words, we would have Jewishness without Judaism, and, personally, I cannot see how it is possible.

Even where general secularization of the Jews has resulted, a certain, though difficult to define, quality has prevented the complete assimilation of the Jewish community into its environmental culture, like a drop of water in the ocean. Cohen, for example, speaks of the total Americanization of the American Jews. "In the last fifty years, the uninformed, the religiously illiterate, and the socially assimilated have succeeded in

affecting, if not shaping, the religion offered by the synagogue. ... The Jew has become, in matters Jewish, doggedly and uncritically American." (Op.cit. p. 191.) He contends that the Jewish contribution to American life and culture is rarely marked "with anything identifiably Jewish". (p.190) This general assimilation does not result in the disappearance of the Jewish community, although he doubts that the surviving community "will retain the independence of spirit necessary to persevere". But Cohen concludes that in the United States, and perhaps also in Israel, an unprecedented occurrence is seen in Jewish history. "In centuries past Jewish communities assimilated and were forgotten. In our days, Jewish communities assimilate but do not disappear." (p.192) All explanations, he says, can be reduced to one: "the American environment and the American tradition of democratic freedom have made it possible for the Jew to become American without ceasing to be a Jew." (p.193) "Many Jews divested themselves of that which they considered most noticeable, provocative, and embarrassing, namely, their religion. It is discovered now, fifty years or more after the process of divestment had commenced, that America never wished the Jew to sacrifice his Judaism...America was tolerant of the Jew; the Jew was conspicuously intolerant of himself. He did more than the environment demanded, he paid a higher price than was asked." (p.194).

It must also be noted that this Americanization of Jewish religion--or, if you prefer, its secularization--is paralleled by the same phenomenon in major religious groups, i.e. Protestantism and Catholicism. "It is only too evident," says Will Herberg, that the religiousness characteristic of America today is very often a religiousness without religion, a religiousness with almost any kind of content or none, a way of sociability or 'belonging' rather than a way of reorienting life to God." (Protestant-Catholic-Jew, Doubleday Anchor Book, New York, 1960, p.260). This means on the one hand, that "no taint of foreignness any longer adheres to the three great American 'faiths'," and, on the other hand, "a distinct loss of the sense of religious uniqueness and universality: each of the three 'faiths', insofar as the mass of its adherents are concerned, tends to regard itself as merely an alternative and variant form of being religious in the American way." (Herberg, Ibid., p.262) (emphasis mine) One remembers the judgment of Bishop Steph-

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en Neill that the religious temperament in America today is Vedantist. Malachi Martin, in his recently published volume, The Encounter, contends that the three dominant Western religious faiths are obsolete and destined to fade entirely from the scene. In any case, it is fairly obvious that the American culture-religion, which has so shaped ^{the} Jewish, Protestant and Catholic communities here, may at best be conceived as a "common ground" upon which all three are based (ala Arnold Toynbee) or a kind of "super religion" embracing them. (W. Herberg, op.cit., p.263.)

We might observe that this judgment is based on the sociologists' data, on the views of the "mass of adherents" of the religions and their practices, rather than upon the theologians and cultic leaders of the communities. As a Baptist, and a member of an intensely missionary denomination, I find less of this general disposition in my own communion, either among the mass of adherents or the denominational leaders and theologians. But the question I would raise is whether the Jewish identity can really be maintained for long if a culture-religion permeates the Jewish community and if, concurrently, the essential religious quality of Judaism, in some form, is not maintained in qualitative distinction from the American culture. Is not the Jewish identity essentially defined by the faith of Israel, rather than simply by sociological, biological, ethnic, ^{general} or even political categories? Can the thoroughly secularized Jew ~~really be called a Jew~~, really be called a Jew in the essential sense, no matter what the Talmud says? Whatever the scientific historians may say about the Biblical records, the overwhelming testimony of the accounts is that the people of Israel owed their existence to the divine intervention of the Lord God and that their continual existence as a people was contingent upon the covenant faith. Was it not the faith of Israel expressed in the cult of Judaism--in many forms and cultural molds--which truly bound the Jews together throughout the world so that the tremendous forces seeking to destroy them have never succeeded? Or, to borrow Arthur Cohen's terms, can the "Natural Jew" really exist apart from the vocation of the "Supernatural Jew?"

What I am trying to say, is that I believe the existence of the Jews is testimony to God's acts in history and the the word of Deutero-Isaiah that Israelites of old were to be "Jehovah's Witnesses" (Isa. 43:10;44:8) may properly be applied to contemporary Jews to the extent that the covenant faith is preserved in the Jewish worship and cult. That contemporary Jewish leaders are agonizing over the question of the Jews being the "chosen people of God", and the whole catena of ideas of national and racial superiority traditionally associated therewith, is borne out by the AJC. publication, The Condition of EM Jewish Belief. It isn't necessary to recite the various interpretations of election, and rejections of the idea, which are found in that volume--you doubtless know them all--but the fact that the question is so important to contemporary Jews moves me to believe that Jewish identity is bound to it. Apart from the living faith of the synagogue, enshrined in cultic practices, and sincerely embraced by Jewish believers, I hold the Jewish identity to be an anomaly, destined for extinction in a post-Hitler, post-Israel, secular triumphalism. Will Herberg cites a Jewish sociologist concerning the Jewish people: "A social group with clearly marked boundaries exists but the source of the energies that hold (it) separate, and of the ties that bind it together, has become completely mysterious." (Op.cit.,p.198) This may be true for the sociologist. But for the believer in revelational theology, the source of Jewish identity and unity remains the same as that which Hebrew Scripture declares to be the author of Israel's formation at the Exodus and Sinai. It is the Lord God "Who made known His ways unto Moses, and His acts unto the children of Israel." When the Hebrew Scriptures, the Book of the Talmud, the wisdom of the Jewish sages, the observance of Passover, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Hannukah, circumcision, the Bar-Mitzvah, and all the aspects of Judaism, are given a merely secular and social ~~ESSENTIAL~~ connotation, Jewish identity may well be lost. Even the Jewish superior capacity for civic virtue, to which Reinhold Niebuhr called our attention, will cease to be the Hebrew prophetic passion for social justice under the righteous Lord and degenerate into mere survival tactics of a minority group. (R.Niebuhr, Pious and Secular America, Chas. Scribners' Sons, New York, 1958, pp89-95.) It is for this reason that

I consider Mordecai M. Kaplan's secular emphases in Judaism as a Civilization to deal with expendable, non-Jewish factors, and his important section in "God: The Development of the Jewish Religion" to deal with indispensable Jewish factors. I do not consider Judaism to be a religion only." (Kaplan, Op.cit., Schocken Books, New York, p.x) but I hold that the culture of the Jews is inexplicable and expendable apart from the religious-dimension. Further, I would say that the essentially Jewish religious dimension is not the product of a native Jewish "genius for religion" but, like Israel of old, the result of being gripped by the living Lord of history, the inescapable inbreak of the God of all life and creation. Many of the practices of the religious cultus have been gleaned from surrounding cultures and transformed by faith in the Lord God. The cultus has obviously, gone through a considerable evolution in the thousands of years since the covenant people emerged. In other words, it is not the religious cultus, per se, which is the ground of Jewish identity, but the revelation of the Lord God to which the cultus points, more or less accurately, which is the indispensable. Therefore, I hold "Israel" and "Judaism to be essentially theological categories. Israel and the Jews are the people of God in so far as they are the people of God. Otherwise, the concept of "people" may be defined in purely ethnic, social, political and territorial terms. It has been a source of encouragement to me that Milton Himmelfarb asserted that Franz Rosenzweig is the "single greatest influence in the religious thought of North American Jewry." (The Condition of Jewish Belief, p.2) and that Rosenzweig's The Star of Redemption has recently been made available in English (Holt, Reinhart and Winston). Rosenzweig, you will remember, was "converted" to Judaism during the High Holy Days of 1913.

Before that he had been a philosopher of Hegelian bent, depending on the national apprehension of truth rooted in Bewusstsein überhaupt. As such, he reflected the cultural assimilation of much of nineteenth and early twentieth century German Jewry. He was certainly a gebildete Persönlichkeit, but he could hardly be called "Jewish" in the essential sense. Subsequent to his "conversion", Rosenzweig devoted his energies to the recovery of the essential content of Judaism among his people. It gives me little comfort, however, to see few signs of a general impact of Rosenzweig among American Jews. For I believe that it is the genuine experience of the Tabod Yahweh which makes the Jews the people of God.

II. Judaism and the State of Israel.

In the scholars' conference in August, 1969, in Louisville, Rabbi Tannenbaum dealt with the meaning of Israel by citing the two related facts which have the profoundest significance in the minds of contemporary Jews: the Nazi holocaust and the State of Israel. No Christian may ignore the significance of the fact that for the first time in 2000 years an independent Jewish state exists among the family of nations. Personally, I find the prophetic role of Theodor Herzl in the founding of this state to be fantastic. You already know that Herzl recorded in his Diary on Sept. 3, 1897, following the First Zionist Congress in Basel, "At Basel I founded the Jewish State...In five years perhaps, and certainly in fifty years, everyone will perceive it." (The Diaries of Theodor Herzl, ed., M. Lowenthal, Grosset & Dunlop, N.Y., Universal Library Edition, 1962, p. 224.) Almost fifty years to the month from that prediction - in 1947 - the United Nations Organization gave sanction to the State of Israel. To any candid observer, the coming into being of this State is remarkable, and Herzl's prediction, in the face of apparently overwhelming opposition, is uncanny! The modern Zionist Movement in general and the work of Herzl in particular have their impetus in the tragic history of anti-semitism. (I use the term in its popular meaning in the West of hatred for the Jews and all attempts to oppress or destroy them. I am well aware that the Arabs are Semites.) The fact of Jewish separateness in the diaspora, whatever its origins, has given rise to such inhuman treatment of the Jews that Herzl, and others, became convinced that only a separate Jewish state, to which Jews might repair in times of oppression, would suffice to ensure Jewish perpetuity and prosperity. This was given hideous corroboration in the Nazi extermination of six million Jews, a crime in which, to varying degrees, all nations of the West were accomplices. This is the negative, demonic, occasion for the creation of the modern State of Israel. Ironically, but,

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from the standpoint of social psychology, understandably, the State of Israel has not brought an immediate end to anti-Jewish sentiments or actions, as the Six Day War in 1967 bears witness. The positive occasion for the creation of this State, however, is the ever-present yearning of the Jews for the Eretz Israel. Since the days of the Maccabees, the Jews have never lost the hope of possessing the land of their fathers. Each year, as Jews celebrated the Passover amidst the nations of the earth, a part of the service read, "...Next year in Jerusalem." However loyal they were, and are, to the nations in which they dwelt and had their citizenship, the faithful Jews were reminded in the Seder of this "other" loyalty. This loyalty achieved political objectivity with the creation of the State of Israel in May 10, 1948, and since then Jews throughout the world have shown, in various ways, their ecstatic loyalty to the state. As a Christian, I found it exhilarating to fly into Tel Aviv and have the cheers of the Jews on board resound in my ears as the plane touched down.

We had just arrived in the lobby of the Hotel Judea Gardens in Jerusalem when we were accosted by an elderly Jew from Detroit. "Did you just arrive from Tel Avid?" he asked. He and his wife were awaiting the arrival of their son from America, and though they had been in Israel for some time, was having difficulty with the language. Their excitement was obvious and the anticipation of sharing the joy with their son almost overwhelmed them. Later I saw them walking with their son in the garden, talking excitedly about the wonders of the land. At one point, the son rushed to the edge of a rose garden, scooped up a handful of dirt, and returned with it proudly displayed. Said the mother, "That's it, Son. Take that back to America with you and it will remind you of Eretz Israel." The scene was reenacted many times during our brief stay in Israel. Small packets of the soil are on sale in every shop and hotel lobby in Israel. Many thousands of Jews have pursued aliyah, a going up, to the land of their fathers, though the likelihood of most American Jews establishing permanent residences there is remote. It does raise serious questions, however, as to the meaning of Jewish existence in the diaspora.

There is the possibility that the whole may be given merely secular meaning. Mr. Michael Praggaim an official in the Division of Ecclesiastical Affairs of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, explained the State of Israel as the "normalizing" of the Jews in the world. Now they, like all the nations of the earth, have a political home land. Whereas not all, probably not even most, Jews in the world will return to the land of their fathers, they will continue to look to it as their "mother country". In this case, the attachment to the old country might conceivably be diminished with every passing generation in the diaspora. In fact, one American Jew, Mr. Harry Golden, expressed to^m_^ the belief that precisely this would be the case with

American Jews, and with it would come an absorption of Jews into American culture comparable to that of all other ethnic groups. The one thing which militates against that, in my opinion, is the existence of the reference to the Land of Israel in the cultus of Judaism, the pilgrim festival of Sukkoth, Passover, and Shavuoth. If, then, the attachment to the Land is bound up with the organs of Judaism, involving "the whole of worshiping Jewry in the reenactment of past experiences of redemption" in "the scene of the Jews' historic origins...in the Promised Land, and yearning together for some future Messianic redemption which in some mysterious, providential way will be bound up with the future of the Promised Land," (Tanenbaum, op.cit., p.8.) the establishment of the State of Israel cannot, at least in the mind of the believing Jew, have a merely secular significance. But also, the diaspora Jew who does not follow aliyah cannot give to the data of his religion a purely literalistic meaning with reference to the Land. The references to Jerusalem, Zion, and the Land in his liturgies must carry a spiritual-symbolic meaning as well.

When it comes to the religious interpretation of the State of Israel, both by Christian and Jewish interpreters, I find myself becoming uncomfortable. The Christian Fundamentalist finds the establishment of the State to be a literal fulfillment of the Hebrew prophecies. Billy Graham's film, His Land, is the most beautiful contemporary exposition of this Thesis. It really makes me squirm when all of the prophets of the Exile in the Hebrew canon are taken out of their historical sitz in Leben and pressed into the service of the modern Sate of Israel. And when my good friend, Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum appears to do the same, notwithstanding his obvious erudition in matters of Biblical criticism, I am really uncomfortable! My discomfort is due, in part, to the suspicion that these interpretations may be correct! But I think my discomfort stems largely from the notion that God is, after all, forced into final solutions of the human and Jewish question in this world, in our history, and is thus primarily concerned with real estate. I believe that the problem of anti-semitism more than justifies the creation of and perpetuation of the Jewish State. However, not even this is a final solution to anti-semitism, as the continuing travail of the State of Israel proves. But I cannot believe that the signifi-

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cance of the faith of Judaism and, with it, the meaning of Jewish identity, is to be pressed into the service of a secular state.

The kingdom of God, in its essential meaning, I believe, cannot be made co-terminus with any earthly political realm. The State of Israel and the Diaspora both testify to this in my mind. Again, I find Arthur A. Cohen to be helpful. The "supernatural vocation" of the Jew he finds expressed in Exile. He says, "The Exile, as I understand it, is not an accident of history, remedied by security within the Diaspora or national fulfillment in the State of Israel. It is not only an historical predicament but a theological category. The Exile is the historical coefficient of being unredeemed. ...The purpose of the Jew is to make all history alive to its incompleteness." (op. cit., pp. 6-7) Now, if a purely political solution, either in the State of Israel or in the Diaspora, is to be offered for Jewish existence and perpetuity, it seems to me to militate against the "supernatural vocation" of the Jew. And it is precisely this "supernatural vocation" to which I believe the essence of Judaism points. A recent attempt at expressing this theme is the article by Rabbi David Polish in the Christian Century, May 26, 1971, entitled "Religious Meanings in Jewish Secularism." Just one quote: "I do not wish to suggest that the creation of the State of Israel represents the fulfillment of the messianic dream. But I believe that the existence of the State of Israel is an absolute prerequisite to the fulfillment of that hope." (Christian Century, May 26, 1971, p.653.) The first sentence I believe to be true. The second raises questions in my mind. I simply believe that no state, Israel or any other, can finally give "completeness" to history. That completeness is to be found in the transformation of human history which only the eschaton will bring, or as Niebuhr puts it "all human efforts remain ambiguous to the end" and "history will never solve the problem of history." (op. cit. p. 100.)

III. JUDAISM AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

THE USE OF THE TERM "JUDEO-CHRISTIAN" TO APPLY EITHER TO RELIGION OR CULTURE, THOUGH OFTEN INDISCRIMINATE AND SUPERFICIAL, POINTS TO AN INESCAPABLE AND AMBIVALENT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JUDAISM AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH. ON OCCASIONS, I HAVE REFERRED TO JACOB AND ESAU AS SYMBOLIZING THIS RELATIONSHIP (THOUGH OBVIOUSLY THE ANALOGY MUST NOT BE TAKEN LITERALLY NOR ODIOS IDENTIFICATIONS MADE). ROBERT GORDIS SAID ~~XX~~ THE USE OF "JUDEO-CHRISTIAN TRADITION" AS A SHIBBOLETH "BY POLITICIANS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS EXPERTS TO SUGGEST THAT JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY ARE SO SIMILAR IN ALL IMPORTANT RESPECTS AS TO BE ALL BUT IDENTICAL" HAS BEEN COUNTERBALANCED BY THE VIEW WHICH "DENIES IN TOTO ANY INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY." NEITHER OF THESE EXTREMES, HE SAYS, IS USEFUL AND TRUE. (JUDAISM, Vol.20, NO.1, WINTER, 1971, p.3.)

APPARENTLY ONE PURPOSE OF GATHERINGS SUCH AS THIS IS TO EXPLORE THOSE ASPECTS OF CONTINUITY AND THOSE ASPECTS OF EMERGENCE IN THE RELATION OF JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY. I SELECT THE TERMS "CONTINUITY" AND "EMERGENCE" ADVISEDLY. NO DOUBT THERE ARE SOME ASPECTS OF DIS-CONTINUITY AS WELL IN THE RELATIONSHIP, AT LEAST IN THE INSTITUTIONAL AND SOCIAL FORMS OF THE TWO FAITHS. FOR EXAMPLE, A PROFOUND NEW DEPARTURE FROM HEBRAIC THOUGHT HAS BEEN NOTED BY SCHOLARS IN WHAT THEY CALL THE RADICAL HELLENIZATION OF CHRISTIANITY. WHETHER ONE DATES IT WITH THE APOSTLE PAUL OR SOMETIME IN THE POST-APOSTOLIC PERIOD, THIS WOULD CONSTITUTE AN EVIDENCE OF DIS-CONTINUITY BETWEEN ESSENTIAL JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY. IT IS MY CONTENTION THAT THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH DIS-CONTINUITY INFLUENCES THE FAITH AND LIFE OF THE CHURCH DETERMINES THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE CHURCH CEASES TO BE TRULY AND ESSENTIALLY CHRISTIAN. ALTHOUGH NIEBUHR HAS REMINDED US THAT ANTI-SEMITISM IS A GENERAL HUMAN PROBLEM, BUT ONE EXPRESSION OF THE GENERAL HUMAN PRACTICE OF A MAJORITY OPPRESSING A MINORITY (OP.CIT., p.87), THE SPECIFIC "CHRISTIAN" EXPRESSIONS OF ANTI-SEMITISM I BELIEVE TO DERIVE FROM THE DIS-CONTINUITY OF CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND RELIGIOUS FORMS FROM THE ESSENTIALLY HEBRAIC CHARACTER OF THE PRIMITIVE FAITH.

IT MIGHT ALSO BE MENTIONED THAT THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS WERE THE MINORITY RELIGIOUS GROUP IN THE FIRST CENTURY, AT LEAST, AND THAT WHATEVER ANTI-JEWISH SENTIMENTS MAY BE REFLECTED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT (AND GREGORY BAUM, FOR ONE, SAYS THERE ARE NONE) MAY BE AS MUCH THE RESULT OF A MINORITY PSYCHOSIS AS OF THE THEOLOGICAL QUESTION OF THE MEANING OF CHRIST AND JEWISH REJECTION OF HIS MESSIAHSHIP. THE EXPULSION OF CHRISTIANS FROM THE SYNAGOGUE, FOR WHATEVER REASON, AS FORMALIZED AT THE COUNCIL OF JAMNIA IN 90 A.D., GAVE FURTHER SOCIAL IMPETUS TO ANTI-JEWISH SENTIMENTS BY CHRISTIANS. AND

WHEN THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY BECAME, FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES, AN "UNDERGROUND" MOVEMENT AT THE SAME TIME THAT NORMATIVE JUDAISM WAS A RELIGIO LIGITA IN THE ROMAN CULTURE, IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE, THOUGH REGRETABLE, THAT SOME CHRISTIAN APOLOGISTS SHOULD EXPRESS ANTI-JEWISH AS WELL AS ANTI-ROMAN SENTIMENTS AT TIMES.

SO FAR AS THE CONTINUITY OF JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY IS CONCERNED, NOTE SHOULD BE MADE OF THE OBVIOUS FACT WHICH IS TOO OFTEN FORGOTTEN BY CHRISTIANS THAT JESUS WAS A FIRST CENTURY JEW, THAT HE WORSHIPED THE GOD OF ISRAEL IN THE THE JEWISH SYNAGOGUES AND TEMPLE OF HIS TIME, THAT HE MINISTERED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY TO HIS OWN PEOPLE, THAT HIS SELF-UNDERSTANDING AS REFLECTED IN THE GOSPELS WAS WOVEN IN THE JEWISH ETHOS, AND THAT HIS TEACHINGS WERE ESSENTIALLY JEWISH. MOREOVER, THE WORSHIP DATA OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH WERE SHAPED BY ALL OF THE JEWISH FESTIVALS AND TEACHINGS. EVERY FEAST AND FESTIVAL OF JUDAISM WAS, AND IS, PROFOUNDLY MEANINGFUL FOR THE CHRISTIAN. FURTHER, THE CHURCH HAS REJECTED THE MARCIONITE TENDENCY TO "DEMONIZE" THE GOD OF THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES AND REJECT HIM IN FAVOR OF THE "CHRISTIAN" GOD OF LOVE. THE CONFLICT BETWEEN "LAW" (NOMOS) AND "GRACE" IN SOME LUTHERAN AND LATER EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY IS, I AM PERSUADED, ROOTED IN A CASUISTIC MISINTERPRETATION OF TORAH, AN OVER-SIMPLIFICATION OF JEWISH RABBINICAL TEACHING, A STEREOTYPE OF THE PHARISEES, IN PARTICULAR, AND A FAILURE TO SEE THE FUNCTIONAL POLARITY AND UNITY BETWEEN LAW AND GOSPEL.

THESE REMARKS REFLECT THE FACT THAT MY THEOLOGICAL TRAINING WAS UNDER PROFESSORS WHO CONSIDERED THE HEBREWS TO BE THE "GOOD GUYS" AND THE HELLENISTS THE "BAD GUYS." OF COURSE, THE "BAD GUYS" DID "WIN" OCCASIONALLY, AS WE HAVE SUGGESTED, BUT THE MAIN STREAM OF CHRISTIAN TEACHING ROOTED IN THAT OF OUR LORD AND HIS APOSTLES, HAS BEEN DEFINITELY JEWISH IN CHARACTER. W.D.DAVIES, TO MENTION ONLY ONE MODERN SCHOLAR AMONG MANY, HAS CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO THIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH. IT SHOULD BE OBSERVED, HOWEVER, THAT JUDAISM ALSO HAD ITS ~~HEBREW~~ HELLENIZERS, BOTH IN THE PRE-CHRISTIAN AND IN THE POST-CHRISTIAN ERAS. PHILO OF ALEXANDRIA IS A PRIME EXAMPLE. IT MIGHT BE SAID THAT BOTH CHRISTIANITY AND JUDAISM MUST BE SAVED FROM HELLENIZATION, OR PAGANIZATION, BY A RECOVERY OF THEIR COMMON HEBREW SOURCES. IT IS, I BELIEVE, AN UNFORTUNATE CONCOMITANT OF THE GENTILE MISSION OF PAUL, AND THE DISPERSION OF THE JEWS, THAT BOTH CHRISTIAN AND JEWISH WORSHIP AND FAITH HAVE TAKEN ON SUCH NON-BIBLICAL CHARACTER. IN THE CASE OF THE CHURCH, WHAT BEGAN AS A JEWISH FAITH-COMMUNITY BECAME LARGELY A GENTILE FAITH-COMMUNITY. THE SO-CALLED JUDAIZER AGAINST WHOM PAUL DIRECTS HIS ATTACK, WHO SAID ONE MUST BECOME A JEW TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO GOD, ARE PARALLED BY THOSE CHRISTIANS TODAY WHO WOULD SAY THAT A JEW MUST BECOME A GENTILE (BY "CONVERSION") IN ORDER TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO GOD. SUCH AN ACCULTURATION OF RELIGIOUS FAITH OBSCURES THE ESSENTIALLY RELIGIOUS QUESTION OF THE ORIGINS OF THE FAITH IN REVELATION.

THE REAL CRUX OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF JUDAISM TO THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IS, OF COURSE, THE ROLE OF JESUS CHRIST IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY. HOWEVER THE PROBLEM OF THE CRUCIFIXION MAY BE DECIDED BY SCHOLARS (AND I TEND TO AGREE WITH DR. SANDNELL THAT THE SCHOLARS' OWN "BENT" LARGELY DETERMINES HIS HANDLING OF THE DATA), IT IS THE THEOLOGICAL MEANING OF THE CROSS, RATHER THAN THE DECISION OF WHO ARE THE HUMAN PERPETRATORS, WHICH IS THE REAL ISSUE. EVEN IF EVERY TEACHING OF JESUS CAN BE EXACTLY PARALLELED IN JEWISH TEACHINGS ELSEWHERE, THE REAL ISSUE IS WHETHER HE REVEALS GOD IN A SPECIAL WAY. IN FACT, THE SPECIFIC ISSUE IS THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. THERON PRICE, PROFESSOR AT FURMAN UNIVERSITY, IN RESPONDING TO A PAPER AT THE JEWISH-BAPTIST CONVERENCE HELD AT WAKE-Forest UNIVERSITY LAST FALL, CALLED ATTENTION TO THIS: HE CONTENDS THAT THE EARLY CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY WAS NOT SO MUCH BENT UPON PROVING THAT JESUS CHRIST WAS MESSIAH AS THEY WERE WITNESSES TO HIS RESURRECTION. NOW, CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY HAS NOT INTERPRETED THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST AS A DEMONSTRATION OF AN INDIVIDUAL VICTORY OVER DEATH AND THUS AS A GUARANTEE OF PERSONAL IMMORTALITY TO INDIVIDUAL BELIEVERS. IT IS UNDERSTOOD TO BE MUCH MORE THAN THAT. BUT IT CERTAINLY IS UNDERSTOOD TO BE AT LEAST THAT. IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT THOSE WHO HAVE SOUGHT MOST VIGOROUSLY TO DESTROY OR RIDICULE THE CHRISTIAN FAITH HAVE FASTENED ON THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST AS THEIR CHIEF POINT OF ATTACK. A NOTABLE EXAMPLE, WHICH IS, IN MY OPINION, ALSO AN EXAMPLE OF PROSTITUTED SCHOLARSHIP, IS HUGH SCHONFIELD'S THE PASSOVER PLOT. MAY I REJOICE, JUST A BIT, THAT THE UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS HAS JUST RECENTLY PUBLISHED A VOLUME ENTITLED, JUDAISM AND IMMORTALITY, BY LEVI A. OLAN, ON WHICH THE QUESTION IS RAISED, "CAN THE MODERN JEW BELIEVE IN AN AFTERLIFE?" MY IMPRESSION IS THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF MODERN JEWS DO NOT BELIEVE IN A PERSONAL AFTERLIFE, DESPITE THE FACT THAT IT IS DEEPLY EMBEDDED IN THEIR RELIGIOUS TRADITION. I FIND IT JUST A BIT IRONIC THAT JEWS WHO GIVE SUCH IMPORTANCE TO THE INDIVIDUAL AND SUCH FREEDOM OF INDIVIDUAL EXPRESSION SHOULD DECIDE THAT GOD SUDDENLY LOSES INTEREST IN THE INDIVIDUAL AS SOON AS HE DIES! CHRISTIAN BELIEF IN THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST, THOUGH OBVIOUSLY COUCHED IN FIRST CENTURY SYMBOLS AND AFFLICTED WITH MUCH SUPERSTITION AND LEGENDRY, MEANS AT LEAST THAT THE GLORY OF GOD IN CHRIST ASSURES US OF THE LIFE TO COME. THIS IS, I BELIEVE, ESSENTIALLY A HEBREW FAITH IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY, HOWEVER THE TERM "BODY" MAY BE DEFINED.

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IN THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST ALSO MEANS TO ME THAT CHRIST IS THE REVEALER OF THE LIFE OF GOD. IT IS THIS WHICH MOVED EARLY CHRISTIANS TO CONFESS HIM AS LORD. NOT EVERY SCHOLAR CONSIDERS THIS TO BE A HELLENISTIC IMPOSITION UPON THE JEWISH CHRISTIAN MENTALITY. ONE SCHOLAR, AMONG MANY, WHO HAS HELPED ME SEE THIS AS THE CONSUMMATION

OF HEBREW PROPHETIC TEACHING ON THE REVELATION OF GOD IS GEORGE A. F. KNIGHT IN HIS FROM MOSES TO PAUL. IT IS CERTAINLY TRUE THAT GREEK CHRISTIANITY IN THE FIRST THREE CENTURIES WERE LED INTO PATTERNS OF THOUGHT REGARDING THE DEITY AND HUMANITY OF CHRIST WHICH WERE ALIEN TO THE BIBLICAL TEACHINGS. THESE HAVE LARGELY AFFLICTED ALL CHRISTOLOGIES TO THIS DAY. HOWEVER, I BELIEVE THAT A TRULY JEWISH APPROACH TO CHRIST IS POSSIBLE. I FURTHER BELIEVE THAT IT IS THIS FAITH WHICH EMERGED FROM THE HEART OF FIRST CENTURY JUDAISM. THIS EMERGENCE MAY NOT BE ACCEPTED BY JEWS, BUT I REGARD IT AS AN EMERGENCE AND NOT A DIS-CONTINUITY. AN EMERGENCE I DEFINE AS A LEGITIMATE, PROPER, AND TRUE DEVELOPMENT FROM A PRIOR REALITY, BEING AN EXTENSION OF ITS LIFE AND ESSENCE AND NOT A DEPARTURE FROM IT.

FINALLY, I WOULD DEFINE THE EMERGENCE OF CHRISTIANITY FROM JUDAISM TO MEAN THE EMBRACING OF THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH IN THE COVENANT OF GOD WITH ISRAEL. IN SO FAR AS THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IS TRULY CHRISTIAN IT HAS BEEN ONE IN SPIRIT AND WORSHIP OF THE ONE GOD OF ISRAEL. PAUL SPOKE OF GENTILES BEING "GRAFTED INTO THE STOCK OF ISRAEL," BEING MADE PARTAKERS OF THE "COVENANT OF ISRAEL," AND OTHER SUCH TERMS TO DESCRIBE THE ONE-NESS OF CHRISTIAN AND JEW IN THE SERVICE OF GOD. IT IS TRUE, I BELIEVE, THAT JUDAISM HAS NOT BEEN GENERALLY AND CONSISTENTLY MISSIONARY IN THE SENSE OF SEEKING PROSELYTES. HISTORIANS WILL HAVE TO TELL ME IF ADHERENTS ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ OF JUDAISM HAVE EVER HAD A MASS MOVEMENT TO SEEK PROSELYTES. IT IS, HOWEVER, A HISTORICAL FACT THAT THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH HAVE COME TO BELIEVE IN, WORSHIP, AND SERVE THE GOD OF ISRAEL, AND TO PATTERN THEIR LIVES ACCORDING TO HIS TORAH, BECAUSE OF JESUS CHRIST. IT IS BECAUSE OF JESUS CHRIST THAT I BELIEVE IN THE GOD WHO "MADE KNOWN HIS WAYS UNTO MOSES AND HIS ACTS UNTO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL." TO MY JEWISH FRIENDS I WANT TO SAY THAT IT IS YOUR GOD WHO IS MY GOD TOO. IS IT TOO MUCH TO EXPECT THAT THE COVENANT GOD OF ISRAEL WORSHIPED IN JUDAISM AND THE GOD REVEALED TO CHRISTIANS IN JESUS CHRIST SHOULD BE THE FOUNTAIN OF ALL UNITY FOR MANKIND?

THE RELATION OF JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY HAS NOT, I THINK, BEEN MORE PROFOUNDLY CONSIDERED THAN IN THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN FRANZ ROSENZWEIG AND EUGEN ROSENSTOCK-HUESSY, ENTITLED IN ENGLISH EDITION, JUDAISM DESPITE CHRISTIANITY. THE "CONVERSION" OF ROSENZWEIG TO THE FAITH OF JUDAISM HAS ALREADY BEEN MENTIONED. IN RECENT WEEKS I HAVE READ SEVERAL REVIEWS OF ROSENZWEIG'S THE STAR OF REDEMPTION. THOUGH ATTENTION HAS BEEN GIVEN TO HIS SPIRITUAL PILGRIMAGE, NO MENTION WAS MADE OF THE FACT THAT A CHRISTIAN, ROSENSTOCK-HUESSY, WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR ROSENZWEIG'S ABANDONMENT OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL REJECTION OF REVELATION. THE ENCOUNTER OCCURRED ON THE NIGHT OF JULY 7, 1913. THEREAFTER ROSENZWEIG PURPOSED TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN. INSTEAD, ON THE HIGH HOLY DAYS OF 1913, HE