



# THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

*Preserving American Jewish History*

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

Series C: Interreligious Activities. 1952-1992

Box 16, Folder 8, Davis, W. D, 1989.

Duke University

DURHAM  
NORTH CAROLINA  
27706

Received

W.D. & E.L. Davies  
228 Monticello Avenue  
Durham, NC 27707

THE DIVINITY SCHOOL

27 : 12 : 89

Dear Marc,

This letter was returned for  
the reason indicated! I mistook  
'59 for '89.

No keep in touch. I could  
not resist enclosing - variety of  
- ranches? - the above from  
Hyattsville. One reason why  
I have always especially  
valued your friendship is that  
you have always encouraged  
me throughout the years in  
my efforts to interpret  
Christianity to Jews and  
Indians to Christians. You

are in this sense a very special  
 person in my life, because you,  
 almost alone among Jews,  
 apart from the great David  
 Daube, my tutor, have so  
 encouraged me when it was  
 much easier to give up the  
 effort to bridge two so separated  
 worlds & concentrate on my own.  
No Jewish institution has ever  
 encouraged me as you have done  
 & the task has sometimes been  
 a very lonely one: I have felt this.

I would still like your  
 considered & deliberate answer to the  
 question "What is the centre of Judaism?"  
 I am still working on it.

Greetings to you both from  
 us both,

W A

P.S. Jewish institutions need unite as in is my...

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By a chance that I have <sup>this moment</sup> mustered the letter which was returned ~~cannot~~ find it. What I note was that I was relieved to know that <sup>there</sup> ~~it~~ was nothing <sup>to disturb you</sup> in what I had written, especially about Eli Wiesel's article in Midstream, which was not meant pejoratively of him but as a warning of its possible negative impact of which had kept you from writing. At the same time I was very sorry to hear of your illnesses and relieved to know that you were recovering.

I did not know that you had retired but want you to realize that in my experience no Jewish figure has meant more in the interpretation of Judaism to the Gentile community than you. Rooted in Judaism as you unmistakably are. Your warmth of personality and natural courtesy and sensitivity to the points of view of

things have enabled you to gain the  
confidence of the Christian community  
in a very rare, if not unique way.  
I congratulate you at the end of a  
truly magnificent life of service to  
Judaism & to us. I wish there could  
have been a Testament for you: if  
anyone deserves such a title.

I also mentioned that I had  
been thinking of you in connection with  
a meeting where Terry Sanford (Senator &  
former President of Duke) outlined his  
strategy for the area of the Caribbean.  
I wish there could be a similar strategy  
for the Middle East, including Israel.  
It would be important for you to  
meet Sanford I think: he is in Washington.  
I wish we could talk of this at  
length.

Then again I am still working  
on "The Centre of Judaism: What is it?"

I would so value your thoughts.

We do hope you are both in for  
health now & spirit. Do keep in touch  
I would a cutting as I do always to you bit.  
You do it in the letter  
Everton W.J.



# W.D. Davies honored for Biblical scholarship

by K.E. Strayhorn Jr.

W.D. Davies, G.W. Ivey Professor Emeritus in the School of Divinity, has been elected an Honorary Fellow of Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge University, England, in recognition of his contributions to Biblical scholarship.

This honor is the highest a Cambridge college bestows on any of its members, on receiving it, Davies joins the rank of some of the most distinguished British scholars.

There are approximately a half-dozen honorary fellows at Fitzwilliam. Three are Nobel Prize winners and the others have achieved great distinction in their fields.

Davies' main interest has been the interrelationship of early Christianity and Judaism.

During the past half century, Davies and others have challenged the traditional approach to Biblical research. Previously, New Testament scholars, who were primarily trained in classical Greek sources, brought a Greek influence to their studies. Therefore, most major New Testament documents had been chiefly understood as Hellenistic documents, Davies said.

The Hebraic and Judaic tradition has been increasingly recognized as the most immediate matrix of early

Christianity. Scholars increasingly rely on Jewish sources for their research.

Davies played a significant role in initiating and furthering this new approach through his first book, "Paul and Rabbinic Judaism" (London, 1948), called "a watershed, one of the few epoch-making books in modern Pauline studies." This was followed by "The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount" (1964) and "The Gospel and the Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine" (1974).

More recently, along with Louis Finkelstein, president emeritus of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York City, he has been editing the Cambridge History of Judaism from the exile in 587 B.C. to the codification of the Mishnah, around 250 A.D.

The same concern to root early Christianity in Judaism inspired work in The International Critical Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, the first volume of which he has published along with a former Duke student, Dr. D.C. Allison Jr.

In addition to his writing, Davies has been an enthusiastic teacher. Apart from his classroom work at Duke 1950-55 and 1967-81, he taught at Princeton University, Union Theo-

logical Seminary, Columbia and Fordham universities, New York; as Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of California, Berkeley, and at the University of Strasbourg, France. After his retirement in 1981 he became a professor at Texas Christian University in the newly endowed Bradford chair.

He has received honorary degrees from the University of Uppsala, Sweden, the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, the Pacific School of Religion at Berkeley and the University of Wales.

He is a Fellow of the British Academy and recipient of its Burkett Medal in Biblical Studies, a Corresponding Fellow of the University of Uppsala, a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the American Academy of Jewish Research.

He is a past president of the International Society for New Testament Studies and Honorary President of the Society for Biblical Literature in the United States.

Davies also has been a member of the executive council of the World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, and worked with Jews, Christians and Palestinians on an academic and a more popular level,



Biblical scholar W.D. Davies has been elected an honorary fellow at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge University.

regarding Israeli-Palestinian relations. He has always been concerned with bridging the gulf between the academic and non-academic worlds through non-technical works, especially his "Invitation to the New Testament" (1966), which was a ~~Book~~ Book of the Month Club selection, and appearances on CBS-TV.

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THE DIVINITY SCHOOL

TELEPHONE (919) 684-3234

W.D. & E.L. Davies  
228 Monticello Avenue  
Durham, NC 27707

27: xi: '89

My dear Marc,

I have written the strangest possible letter on your behalf to the address you gave for the Templeton Award. May I have no secretarial help and sent it in my own hand: if I can procure a copy (I have asked the Secretary to let me have one) I shall send it on to you. I urged your election in the strangest possible terms and was delighted to be able to do so - because you deserve it, and 'for Auld Lang Syne'. (The letter was sent immediately - about 7-10 days ago.) I have long wanted to be able to talk with you about mutual concerns, especially about the situation in Israel. It seems to me that Judaism faces the kind of crisis it faced in the first century, but I would so benefit from your perspective wisdom. Eirwen & I hope to come to New York <sup>before or</sup> after Christmas. We do so because I would like to have some lengthy time with you when we could talk at leisure. Perhaps your health does not permit this. I do hope that you are now recovered and, with care, able to continue with your work even in retirement. What days would best suit you? I shall have to enquire into the



times of flights & into the air fares. Most cheap fares require at least 7 days notice. Perhaps you could suggest dates? We could see if we can fit them in.

I am unable to go to the American Academy for Jewish Research because the Annual Meeting is just a day or so before Christmas Day.

This is a hurried note just to let you know that I have written the letter to Dr J. Zempleton. Let us hope that the award will be yours - the prize for the Jewish people.

Everest joins me in warmest remembrances to you & Mrs Jannettaum (who she remembers that we met in Jerusalem at the Tushkevitch).

Till our meeting,  
As always,  
H. A.

P.S. Please pardon the handwriting: my hand now rebels against the pen!



# Buke University

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75. By a stroke first I have mistaken the letter which was returned <sup>this morning</sup> for that I wrote was that I was relieved to know that <sup>there</sup> was nothing in what I had written, especially about Sh'reem's article in Red Sh'reem, which was not meant personally I think but as a warning of its possible negative impact & which had kept you from writing. At the same time I was very sorry to hear of your illness and relieved to know that you were recovering.

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Dear reply to --

THE DIVINITY SCHOOL

27 1x 59

Dear Dave,

This letter was returned for the reason indicated! I must not keep in touch. I could not resist enclosing - namely 77 envelopes? - the answer from Abigail's son. One reason why

I have always especially valued your friendship is that you have always encouraged me throughout the years in my efforts to interpret Christianity to Jews and Muslims & Christians. You

4.  
This have enabled you to gain the  
confidence of the Christian community  
in a very rare, if not unique way.  
I congratulate you at the end of a  
rich, independent life of service to  
Judaism & to us. I wish there could  
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I also mentioned that I had  
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I wish there could be a similar strategy  
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It would be important for you to  
meet Sanford I think: he is in Washington.  
I wish we could talk of this at  
length.

Then again I am still working  
on The Century of Judaism in America.  
I would so value your thoughts:  
we do hope you are back in good  
health now & still. Do keep in touch  
I assure a century as you - to me & to the world.

are in this sense a very special  
person in my life, because you,  
almost alone among Jews,  
apart from the great David

Daube, my tutor, have so  
encouraged me when it was  
much easier to give up the  
effort to bridge two so separated  
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No Jewish institution has ever  
encouraged me as you have done  
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