MS-763: Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman Collection, 1930-2004.
Series B: Correspondence, 1942-1995.

Box	Folder
3	1

Slonimsky, Henry. 1942-1971.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the American Jewish Archives website.

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S/

375 West End Av
NYC July 26, 42

JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
WEST SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET
NEAR CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK

Hebert, you are in my thoughts very often
- every other day at us lay - for no good
reason, which means I suppose for a
reason deeper than the surface. I read
your letter with great pleasure, & I have
nothing to tell you except that I think of you,
which I am sure holds for you, too,
since you have not written
without Chanadi's prompting & this it
would not touch the fact that I am in
your thoughts. - Item, some schoolmasterly
advice: get as much done on Old Vayikra
Rabba as you can: it's past so much
out of the way. I may use it as text in
Rudrash next year - & don't you want me
to? I also have been cogitating a course
in Ethics, very unconventional, - based
on the Law & the high view of human nature,

man a creature of inexpugnable self-interest, amour propre & vanity, & make the receptacle & participant in a totally new realm of being, along arising in the spirit above the level of nature. La Rochefoucauld & (let us say) Kant. To be topped off with principles of Jewish Ethics.

I have sat for a portrait & they say it is very Eye-like, though my wife misses the dreamer & thinker, the scholar & leader, & all the other things one might see in us.

Problem: will Stephen accept it?

Problem II: where must ties hang?

(Are there any horses in your neighborhood, any sailboats? Any cheese & wine? any books with laughter & tears together?

I feel bad about the war, so bad I can't tell you. The enemy is far ahead of us & well on his way. Too dark a thought to think.

Kindest thoughts - always - to Elaine (Can she ever live down the Tennyson reminiscence? Ever) Yours H.J.

5/

JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
WEST SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET
NEAR CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK

375 West End Ave
August 5th '43

Dearest Hebert – Thanks for your two loved letters. There is something precious in friendship & love, – any word of it, any mark of it, lingers & stays like a rich perfume. I am an introvert & would never write if I did not make myself "step me of it" & the thought that the "other party" would never know of lingering fragrance unless informed. And so thanks, brother, and thanks, Elaine. The first note, the good-bye letter, was so like you, Hebert. You are incapable of lying & may you never learn different. There are all kinds of lying, very seductive kinds, grand speeches & such like: may you never learn anything that will touch your basic incapacity to lie. "Telegram style" is the way Ibsen once described his letter-writing: basic incapacity for grand eloquence, & shall I say even for eloquence? And yet, you will be touched to

for eloquence. But can't eloquence be by indirection, by silences, by sudden going down to depths? As for the second letter, with Mr Isaacson comparing me with Brandeis, & you aiding & abetting him: – never let me hear that again. That just disturbs everything, & you wouldn't want to destroy it all? – I shall miss you, miss you & Gonacher, almost the only incentives to Cohen's class. I shall miss Claire, where youth & realness were an antidote to age & the repetitiousness of life. I am hoping out a course for all first year men on Greek Philosophy: to read & explain all the major works of 3 men: Plato, Aristotle & Plotinus. Perhaps to be followed by the same kind of thing in Modern Philosophy. A History of Philosophy to weld into some kind of homogeneity the helter-skelter we get in our entering classes. Mordecai will be as usual. But it is King Darking in me that the Maximum doesn't pay quite; Eugene maybe, but not the Finks. Tell me: is that your feeling? But what shall I put in its place? There is above all the physical difficulty of text books. Supposing I wanted to read a bunch of interesting ethical Texts: where get the books? – I should however be talking to you of yourself. And I know there is no use talking because it is all written in the stars

2)

JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
WEST SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET
NEAR CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK

Jas mile do what jou can do, & it is preposterous & presumptuous for me to give advice. Be yourself be jour best self — & that's what jou will be anyhow. I am sorry for Kinsey, but we must all be judged by our works — inexorably! Are doctors & lawyers spared if they can't "deliver the goods"? But take it easy; jou can afford to stand by. — And don't neglect mind & heart. Keep on "studying" — i.e. keep growing, emotionally & humanly. Do please let me hear from jou often, even if jou have nothing enormous to write about. And my kindest thoughts to Isaacson, but no Brandeis.

My wife is always deeply concerned in jour welfare & begs to be remembered cordially to both of jou. As ever cordially & faithfully

Abba

Dear Mary
we were glad to hear
from you. Received
proof - read & sent
our corrections
back.

JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
WEST SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET
NEAR CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK

375 West End Ave
Sept: 23, 48

Dear Herbert — The New Year is coming in, time for remembrance & greeting. I think of you often, more than you suppose. I miss you greatly. I miss you in the Student Body, — a person of character, a person I could respect, a person that made me think better of the Institute & of the Rabbinate. If we had more of that kind, we could indeed be better. Well, o.k., as now you are in the swim. Don't let the routine ever take the fine edge off your character. Give my love to Elaine (she will have to make room for it). Give tenderest regards to Mr Isaacson. Let us hear from you. Ever & ever, yours

JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
WEST SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET
NEAR CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK
23

September 27, 1943

Mr. Samuel Rose, Executive Secretary
Temple Emanuel
16th and Pearl Streets
Denver, Colorado

Dear Mr. Rose:

It is really very kind of you to think of me and to take the time and trouble to send me the material concerning your religious services. Anything about Herbert Friedman is of great interest to me, and therefore now Denver and the Jewish community there and yourself, as Executive Secretary, come within the orbit, if you will allow me to say so, of my interest and concern. Not that that means very much cosmically or on any other grand scale, but I thought I would tell you anyhow.

You could not please me more than by telling me of Herbert's good work. The simple truth of the matter is that there are not enough men of character in the rabbinate. I suppose I would not want to be quoted as having said so but the fact remains. Herbert Friedman is a person of character. He will never let you down. He will never put you to shame. You will always be able to rely on him to do the honorable and courageous thing. What, in comparison to that, are any superficial brilliancies? In the tight spot and in the dark hour such as may possibly come (let us hope it won't) the sterling qualities of courage and honorableness will be the only things to save us.

Don't think I am making a speech. I merely want to thank you for your letter and to express the hope that you will write again.

Very faithfully yours,

H. Slonimsky

H. Slonimsky, Dean

HS:HR

Communication urge

JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
WEST SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET
NEAR CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK

375 West End Ave
Dec 17, 43

Dear Herbert, dear Elaine – I can't write
a letter of several weeks ago has been in my thoughts
these many days. I miss you terribly, Herbert, namely
in the student body. Some of the boys give me the
shivers; I can't lecture to them, my presage up what-
ever Mitteilungsdrang I have. To you ~~Lee~~, I
miss the moral support of such like as yours only.
Of course there are some left, but I wish I
could feel happier about the lot as a whole. I
think often of you. Francisco tells me you have the
best job of any graduate of the Institute (better than
Berman-Chicago & Bernstein-Rochester) – assuming
of course that Feinberg (B.O. - Brushoff) will go elsewhere. But
whatever it is, I feel you are getting what you
ought to get. Tomorrow (Friday) morning is a
kind of opening session; I introduce Halkin to
the boys, & on Tuesday Klinsky in the same manner.
I am planning a new course: Plato-Aristotle-
Plotinus – pure Greek delight for one term. I might

to feel chipper, but I don't. The pure delight of summer & vacation, of otium cum dignitate, is gone, & I have to look at Kirschbaum & Meyer Greenberg & Amos Gunsberg, & listen to them, & look at them. However, this will bore you, & myself, to please forget it; it is just the unwillingness to get back into harness. — What you say about coming to Denver: it sounds thousand-and-one-night-ish, but Scheherezade may speak truth. Denver is 2/3 across the Continent; is the Great Divide somewhere along here, the great מבול of watersheds, rivers flowing eastward to one sea & westward to the other? Why not? Will they listen to a Manichean? Will they listen to the atheist's mass? (a Balzac title, but no other association occurs for the moment): how is evolves from is, & all the drama involved? You know: "if he slay me, I will not trust in him" becomes "though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." These are apocopated hints to me I love: answer to the riddle, & dilution, in the next letter, or application. Love & ever yours

A. Heschel

Kind regards to Mr Isaacson & to your very gentlemanly executive secretary who writes to me. Amen.

JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
WEST SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET
NEAR CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK

375 West End Av

Nov: 26, 43

Dearest Hebert - Thanks for your long letter. It is good to get such letters, - ample reward for any & all time or effort a Teacher may expend. But it takes two to make a team, & I wish there were more students of your calibre & your time. You know the old definition of a college :- Mark Hopkins at one end of a log & the right kind of boy at the other end. That's it. I often wonder about you & regret the 2000 odd miles between us. I regret not having you around, for personal comfort & moral re-assurance. I suppose also another year here would have done you good too. We are doing quite well with our new men. Halkin for one is excellent. I too have picked up in the old style. John Tepper

is very good. Already, the new man in Berlin is, I am told, doing very well. But once you've had to go, you will have to complete your education yourself, & you can do it, but you have to be serious about it & set aside hours for it every day & plan your work. Your idea about finishing the dissertation for the MHL is an excellent idea. Get it out of the way. I will do everything I can to help. Just throw it in my lap. I'll throw it back of course, but then we'll get exercise in throwing the ball. It will be like old times, having you back again in January. We'll go to McSorley's if we can. Love & Claim. Remember me to Mr Isaacson & your Executive secretary.

Love & ever yours

Alexander

JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
WEST SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET
NEAR CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK

375 West End Ave
Feb: 4, 44

Dear Herbert, פלה ב"ה, ג' ר' ו' ק' ר' —

I am returning the application blank with my signature. I am proud to be your sponsor. Keep straight & strong, & keep growing; & keep me in your affections. Remember me to Mr Isaacs; & if he is back tell him from me that in spite of his alleged 60 years there is firmness & substance in his face & bearing that lumps it with the alleged youth of his chronological juniors; & tell him it was a great pleasure to meet him, & I only regret I couldn't drink a glass of champagne with him & pledge his health ad multos annos. Love to Claire. Love to your whole congregation. Love James H. S.

JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
WEST SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET
NEAR CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK

Feb 10th - 48

Dear Herbert - It is always good to hear from you, I am sorry it has to be of an animus. Joel Zion is a quiet able boy; well groomed, good appearance, American in style, has specialized in education, & seems to be a thoughtful educated boy all around; I think he will also make a thoughtful quiet speaker. I fancy he could help run your school (though you too should retain hold & not put give over); I think he could help out creditably with the preaching. He is not flamboyant or grasping ambitious; I think you can rely in trying him out. He hasn't your vigorous personality & I think he would fit in as supplementary colleague. One never knows anything in advance for certain, do we all

have to take risks.

I would give 75 cents just now, or seventy-five dollars for that matter, to see your face just now & hear your voice, but goddamn it you have to be in the Rockies & I in this cold room thinking of tomorrow's Midrash & Maimonides. The hell with it all, down with duty & let's have a little fun, some warm-breasted women & good cheer & wine. I'm ready to show this to your board. The hell with them. Love to Claire.

Yours

D. S.

Ace would share my sentiments - if he were around; though he has given careful thought to fortune: he is engaged to be married. The way of all flesh.

Dear Elaine, I would rather look at you and your Baby's picture than all the Madonnas in the world. Ever with love Minnie

JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
WEST SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET
NEAR CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK 23, N.Y.

375 West End Ave
New York 24, Feb 16, 49

Dear Herbert, dear Elaine: The photograph came today & no more welcome gift could have come at any time. We are both of us overwhelmed. I have never seen such a photograph. As for Elaine she is beautiful, really beautiful for the first time, the soul shining through her eyes, I kiss her fingertips, such a face will be loved as soon as seen. I can now see that she is Richard Schwartz's true sister. As for the little bastard I congratulate all four parents, he easily wins life's Prize all, & indeed I doubt whether there is any other baby who could do as much. That cranium, those enormous daimonic eyes (a fair foil to his mother's love-lorn eyes), that left hand clinched in a fist & the right hand clamoring to grab: that's a well-born baby, as Shakespeare said (in the opening lines

of Lear) "there was good sport at his making," whatever else in the way of heartbreak may have come along with it. But what price glory? A price is set on all gorgeous things, we get nothing for nothing. This is a magnificent child & really worthy of his new parents. My wife says he looks like Herbert. I don't know who is to feel complimented most. But both of you have something to live for. All good graces & lives attend you. — Now as for your generous letter. I am quite content to have the lecture called off; for though I have tried my best to grace the occasion, I must tell you frankly that as I approach the end I feel I know nothing about anything. The lectures this year have been going wonderfully, a miracle each time, & I feel I am giving something in the way of new insights & opening up new horizons; nevertheless when I revert to the quiet haven of the inner life, it is to the tense of silent wonder at the Sardonic Weltgeist who amuses us & himself with constant double delight & with mocking disdain as well. Kind regards to the dear Sims! Let us hear from you soon. Love H.J.

JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
WEST SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET
NEAR CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK

375 West End Ave
Monday June 17-

Dear Herbert - I am shocked (& sad) the news, though deeply sorry to lose you. My love will always be with you. I have relayed the news to Minnie & Sol, & if you have not already written to Frances you must do so at once. I am glad I wrote that last letter to Ross. There are certain short details affecting you which you must clear with me. I am disabled today, a victim of dental aggression: 4 cc of novocaine plus headache plus jagged mouth.

Our President thought to claim a rare families - the Sisterhood-Patriarchy.

W. J.

JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
WEST SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET
NEAR CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK 23, N.Y.

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

375 Westend Ave
New York 24, June 19, 49

Dear Hebert: What has happened
to Claire? We are both of us anxious
to hear. You said she was as big as a
battleship: Nu? Give her our love &
let us hear from you.

We expect to go to Betty Woods
for the summer this weekend. It will
be nice to see you there. But there is
also the possibility of my going out West
this summer, just to Muskegon Michigan.
& if you are in Denver & your laundry
mix-up still stands, to Denver too.

Ever & ever affectionately

Hillel

S

Jewish Institute of Religion

40 WEST 68 STREET, NEW YORK 23, N. Y.

Telephone: TRafalgar 7-4050

375 West End Ave
NY 24, NY, July 12, 49

Dear Herbert, dear Claire, dear friends -

Irresponsible of me to have allowed your letter with the announcement of the birth of your son to wait to say to you an answer. We were really overjoyed with the news, & especially my wife with a woman's concern for Claire's condition. Now you have a Daniel, a Daniel really care of judgment: two children at once & such children, but for such parents. Be sure to send us snapshots as soon as you have any. My wife has sent the little lad some appropriate garments from one of our local stores & when the package comes (addressed to your Temple, we have no other address) don't wait to acknowledge it to her. How is Claire, dear mother (to make up for the past), & how is

the proud, the unordinarily proud father? Herbert, there are not many people I like as well as Dan. We are back from the CCAR (two weeks already) & glad to be home. Home is the place to recuperate from vacations. And Herbert, it is not likely that I shall go West as I had planned or thought. Keep us in kindly thoughts & believe us ever affectionately

H. and B. T. S.

S

Jewish Institute of Religion

40 WEST 68 STREET, NEW YORK 23, N. Y.

Telephone: TRafalgar 7-4050

3-0200

Oct 13, 50

Dear Hubert: I enclose a little something of mine in exchange for the two lovely cards you sent me from Safed. If you like this little lyric I can send you another from two years ago (an address at the Summer Institute) which you may not have seen. But you must say you want it, otherwise I won't send it. I am always interested in your two children & would appreciate a snapshot. My kindest thoughts to Claire, to the Joel Zions & Li Mc Isaacson. My wife joins in warmest greetings to you all.

Yr cordially

Abraham

October 17, 1949

Dr. Henry Slonimsky
Jewish Institute of Religion
40 West 68th Street
New York 23, New York

Dear Chief:

My answer about Saul Loeb is a very simple one: He is a fine boy and you may discount 100 percent anything which Shubow said about him. I do not care to put on paper all the details of the fight which Shubow had with Loeb in Berlin, but will simply say that in any showdown between the two of them, I would side unalterably with Loeb. All of this is merely negative, however.

In a more positive sense, I would say that the boy has displayed many fine qualities. He worked very hard as a chaplain's assistant, not only for Jewish military personnel, but also with the hordes of Jewish displaced persons who became our responsibility in that city. I cannot speak for the extent of his learning, but I can vouch for his devotion to Jews and Judaism, his willingness to work hard, and his general decency.

Expect to be in New York the second week of November and beg leave to take you to lunch on the mezzanine of the 72nd Street Automat. Will tell you more of the details then.

Devotedly,

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman

F/s

JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
WEST SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET
NEAR CENTRAL PARK
NEW YORK 23, N.Y.

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

Dear Herbert: Quick, what do you know about a boy called Saul Lock who served as chaplain's assistant in Berlin 3 or 4 years ago & had a boy run-in with Shurow? We admitted him, whereupon we got a horrendous letter from Shurow. But the boy is in Leavs & has other of our boys to speak for him, Breslau, Hazelhurst etc. Now what do you know? Answer this at once.

Love to the whole family and kind regards to the Lockers

Love to you

Oct. 14, 49

H. G.

S/

My wife joins me in all
kindest thoughts- & love, Elaine &
the children

Jewish Institute of Religion
40 WEST 68 STREET, NEW YORK 23, N. Y.
3-0200
Telephone: TRafalgar ~~4-4050~~

Oct 18, 1950

Dear Herbert: It is always good to hear from you; you are the kind of man one can always rely on, thank God. I have had the girl send you my Summer Institute address which you may like or not, it has some irony in it between the lines. But I am essentially for the [illegible], a Teacher by word of mouth. I am enclosing another little thing which happens to be lying around & which many seem adapted from an address I delivered elsewhere. You may like it, others do, I write even slight things with care. But think of the enormous amount of stuff I have composed just as carefully in 30 years of lecturing, even though it is preserved only in notes form. Send me a snapshot of you two kids. Try to put in a good word for me with Elaine. Remember me very cordially to the Joel Zions & again in the Deacon (tho I do not forget friendship

In confidence to you: the situation here is bad. Glueck is out to destroy the school if he could. He hates us, one in particular. I put him in & he is putting me out. I am the retiring completely in 2 years (no teaching whatever). He is not at all the person we took him to be. He is crafty, conceited & mean; a womanish kind of man, neurotic, weeps to gain a point (I mean literally, the sob in the throat & the tear in the eye), has prayers said before & after every Faculty or Committee meeting, like any Baptist or Methodist, but is devious & disingenuous & tricky-ish. He should have been a member of Leste Jaffe's confession. Jesta Laffe is his soul mate, Abie Klausner (the black bug) his elective affinity (although they have quarreled), & Fred Lazarus Jr his great backer. To give up N.Y., to retire to Cincinnati, is the Cattell idea. But to give up N.Y. & hand it over to Finkelstein would be the suicide & bankruptcy of American Liberal Judaism. I think you should know these things as Alumni will have to cast a vote occasionally. Forgive the bother.

Love & even prayers, for the sake of old times & for the things we cherish together,

H-S.

THE HEBREW UNION COLLEGE ... CINCINNATI
JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION ... NEW YORK

40 W. SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET · NEW YORK 23, N. Y.
TRAFALGAR 3-0200

Oct 29, 1950

Dear Herbert: Phil will get him a day a bit ahead of my letter. Worked I wish you can important note only. it is for your eyes alone; I want you to read it but not to leave it lying around. Just destroy it after reading. Dear Herbert, you are one of the manly men in the rabbinate, hardworking unpretentious truth-telling; why aren't there more? Are your kids handsome? How is Elaine? Happy!

Love yours

H.S.

Just received your Institutes of Jewish announcement. Looks good. Don's

say anything except in simplest terms -
what has given down to something that
claims a few others could believe.

Regards to Joel Zion.

S/

Kindest thoughts to Mr. Isaacson

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

Jewish Institute of Religion

40 WEST 68 STREET, NEW YORK 23, N. Y.

Telephone: TRafalgar 3-0200

Feb. 16, 1951

Dear Herbert: I read through the announcement of your 3 talks on "The Gathering Clouds of War" & wish to tell you that you are one of the few men in the Jewish pulpit. The mere wording shows that it is more than words. I like you, Herbert, I like & admire you (2nd p.). You realize the problem, you do what a preacher can do in the matter (but vastly more than the wordmongers). I am sending you what may amuse or interest you, or possibly give you a little nostalgia for the old school, which however is being systematically disintegrated. Herbert, send me some snapshots of your two kids; I never had one of your own child, & the superdaimonic passional eyes of the first child still haunt me. My wife sends her love to you all. Remember me affectionately to Elaine & the Zeins & above all keep me in your own affections

yours ever & ever yours sh Abraham

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
New York School

M.H.L. Examination in Philosophy of Religion
and Jewish Theology

(Oral)

1. What kind of a God can an intelligent man today believe in to square with the facts of experience and to avoid verbalism and insincerity?

2. Discuss William James's view that religion cannot rest on a set of intellectual propositions but must inevitably be an expression of man's deepest "will" or his "passional" nature. Have we then the right to believe what we need and what helps us most? Discuss the justification and dangers of such a view.

3. Discuss the thesis that if the "problem of evil" rules out an omnipotent God, the "problem of good" rules out atheism.

4. Discuss Emerson's lines

"What is excellent,
As God lives, is permanent"

in the light of the school doctrine of "conservation of values." What ground have we for believing this doctrine to be true?

5. Can God be the author of evil? If he is not, who is the God of the rest of the world? You recall an ancient doctrine held by certain rabbis of "Two Powers" (Shte Reshuyot): what can you say in defence or in explanation of this division of forces?

6. Discuss the theology implied in the Prophet's utterance "On that day God shall be One and His name shall be One"? On what day? And till then, is God and his name not One? And who is to make Him One?

7. How would you define dogma and what would you say is the irreducible minimum of Jewish dogmatic beliefs?

8. What can you say in defence of the idea of Chosenness?

9. Does the Adon Olam embody a Jewish conception of the Godhead? the Kedusha?

10. Could you construct the outlinesof a Jewish Theology out of the Kaddish, the Ahavah Rabbah, the Alenu? And could you indicate the basic concepts employed?

March 1951

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
New York School

M.H.L. Examination in Medieval Jewish Philosophy and Theology

(Written)

In Medieval Jewish Philosophy we confine ourselves to the two texts we have studied, the Cuzari and the Moreh Nebukim. Page references are to the editions we used in class: Zifroni's Cuzari (Tel Aviv 1948) and Ibn-Shmuel Kaufman's Moreh (Jerusalem 1946).

Students should be prepared to answer questions in connection with the following general themes as indicated and formulated in the text references subjoined.

In the Cuzari:

1. Doctrine of Chosenness. Book I, Paragraph 95, Hebrew text p. 46-49.

2. Willing acceptance of suffering. Book I, Paragraph 113-115, Hebrew p. 62-64 (to line 4 from top).

3. Israel the heart among the nations, with explicit reference to Isaiah 53. Book II, Paragraph 34-44, Hebrew p. 101-104.

4. The dying seed which transmutes the surrounding loam into its own higher life (the ultimate absorption of Christianity and Islam into a single higher religion). Book IV, Paragraph 23, Hebrew 251-252 (to line 9 from top).

5. In the Moreh:

1. To contrast the two God-conceptions contained respectively in Jeremiah 31:2 and the Moreh Book I, Paragraph 57-58 (Hebrew text p. 112-117); to indicate the relative validity of a God of love and of God as the Ineffable Ground or Source for which any emotion would be an anthropomorphism and blasphemy.

2. To discuss Maimuni's solution of the problem of evil and its inadequacy. Moreh Book III, Paragraph 118 (Hebrew p. 431-433) and III, 51 (Hebrew p. 585-587).

3. To discuss Maimuni's conception of the good life, or the true worship, as consisting in knowledge and contemplation rather than in conduct and struggle Book III, Paragraph 51 (Hebrew p. 579-580). Contrast with this, Maimuni's final statement on the subject Book III, Paragraph 54 (Hebrew p. 596 to end of book) and indicate whether it is a return to the traditional Jewish view.

The student should finally be prepared to discuss the relative consistency of each of these systems with Judaism, and to state why one orthe other is closer to actual Jewish religious feeling and practice.

March 1951

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
New York School

M.H.L. Examination in Midrash and Jewish Theology

(Written)

1. Explain the Petiha or Proem and give an example. What is the underlying assumption in the confrontation of verses from different sections of the Bible?

2. The Kaddish is the prayer originally recited at the close of a Midrashic discourse. What is the special relevance to the basic function of the Midrash?

3. Consider the following Midrashim (pagination according to the standard edition "Ktav" used in class):

   a) Shir R. p. 27a (4 lines from bottom) to p. 27b (7 lines from top). "For I am love-sick."

   b) Lev. R. Parasha 29, p.78b (10 lines from top to end of page). Jacob's Dream.

   c) Gen. R. Par.1, p. 1a (lines 7-13). Torah as blue-print.

   d) Lev. R. Par. 7, p.19b (lines 5-10 from top). The broken vessel.

   e) Gen. R. Par.39, p.78a (line 7 from bottom). Abraham's trials.

   f) Shir R. to 1:13, p.21b (lines 7-12 from top). Myrrh.

   g) Gen R. Par. 32, p.63a (lines 6 to 24). Potter, flax-beater, cows.

4. Comment on these Midrashim with a view to formulating certain basic thoughts which seem to constitute a kind of theology or philosophy of history: that the realization of "Torah" is the goal of creation; that this process is inevitably a tragic one because of the division of forces in the world; that Midrash is consolation or life-therapeutic in Israel's tragic-heroic career; that the ideal "Israel" must ultimately win over "Edom"; that the basic law of the spiritual life seems to be the paradox that the good and the strong must expend themselves and bear the burdens of the weak and the sinful.

March 1951

5/

Jewish Institute of Religion

40 WEST 68 STREET, NEW YORK 23, N. Y.

Telephone: TRafalgar ~~7-4050~~ 3-0206

375 West End Ave
Sunday April 1, 51

Dear Herbert – I must not delay in thank you for your letter & for the snapshots of the children. The little girl is marvellous, I have never seen such eyes except in pictures of Goethe, I have looked & looked at them, I could adore her. I wonder how she will grow up, will she ever be more miraculous than now, leaning her head on the box or half-hidden behind a door & sitting with her little brother? She is much closer to the stirring - she comes from now than she can be when she enters more & more into this world. Lovely strange child, clearly a chosen person in her birth and in the parents the miraculously received. The boy is a dear affable little monkey, full of fun & mischief like a monkey, very lovable & very intelligent

looking. You are very fortunate & they are too.

The Israeli trip plan looks tempting but I am too old. Sleep & food upset me & I am afraid of getting sick. I would have jumped at that 30 years ago, but there it is:- I have only a few years to go (I am 67 now) & want to be careful.

Kindest thoughts to the mother of the brood, the ex-time actress, Elaine & be properly unambiguous. My wife sends warmest greetings. Kind regards to the Joel Zeins. You are always in my affections & I want nothing better than to be in yours. Yours ever faithfully

J D Salinger

Kind regards to Mr Isaacson

Dear Herbert
dearly
don't want
following
purchase

THE HEBREW UNION COLLEGE ... CINCINNATI
JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION ... NEW YORK

40 W. SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET · NEW YORK 23, N. Y.
TRAFALGAR 3-0200

375 West End Ave
NY 24, Thursday Nov. 8 '51

Dear Herbert: This is to thank you for the lovely gift of the photographs. My wife & I were both greatly taken with these pictures of your two children, and I for one am so captivated with the picture of the two together that I think I shall have it about on my desk permanently. What a study in contrast: the boy by far the more normal - healthy, sturdy, straightforward, looking out on life steadily & able to confront & meet & master it; the girl (begin with the chin upward) startled into wonder & slight fear, the immense eyes full of amazed visions, & ominous, the big cranium with promise of genius, the whole head the most marvellous little goddess I can remember ever seeing. Fate has marked her for his special own; & I remain in awe for that fate.

We saw next to nothing of you & there are few whom we really wanted to see as much as you. Re Milwaukee, you will have to decide for yourself; I suppose our convictions & completely irrelevant overtones about Germans being unfair to Rocky Mountains and Silver Dollars swayed my opinion in talking to you. I guess you had better come closer East. I have an idea you will end up in Temple Emanuel N.Y.

I notice from your Bulletin that you are speaking to your people about the marvellous House of Living Judaism with its inscription for the benefit of the Fifth Avenue Goyim etc. Dear Herbert, House of living Judaism sounds like a Bargain Basement slogan. After all it is an office building for the collection of money & other administrative purposes. To print a reminder to the Goyim on the wall to love their Jewish neighbors as they love themselves is a mark of deep decline in moral tact & self-respect on our part. I like Maurice Eisendrath because he is a real & not an unctuous louse, but I hated his compelling the audience to rise that Friday evening & repeat some shit & molasses verse.

Love from us all.

Affectionate greetings to wife & children. kind regards to Sam.

OFFICE OF THE
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT

Jewish Institute of Religion

40 WEST 68 STREET, NEW YORK 23, N. Y.

3-0200

Telephone: TRafalgar ~~7-4050~~

375 Westland Ave, Rochester 7, N.Y.
Dec. 6, 51

Dear Herbert: It was good to hear from you, it always is. I am glad to hear that you are trying for Milwaukee. I hope very much you will get it, it is a stepping stone towards the East, & there is nothing essentially that you could not be a fitting candidate for. There is no reason why you should not aim at the highest jobs in the profession. I should also be glad to have you nearer home, for even with flying transportation Denver is a little too far off. I shall be glad to meet your young friend Davidson, though I must tell you that procedures have changed most radically with regard to admissions. All of us used to interview new candidates, now nobody but Dr. Glueck who then turns them over to Dr Frankl for psychiatric & psychoanalytic screening by some specialist in Rorschach tests.

Tepper told me that recently Olinsky (who was acting as dean
[illegible]) am still officially dean) quite innocently had
a preliminary talk with a new candidate & Dr Gluecka
rebuked him. This year our school got seven new men
(originally 8 but one dropped out) whilst the HUC got 23.
When the matter became known it led to the Newman letter
you speak of. Dr Gluecka wrote Dr Newman that they really
had only 9 new students, the other 14 being only special
students because of inadequate knowledge of Hebrew. He forgot
to mention that these 14 are resident on the campus
have been given draft deferment i.e. certified to the U.S.
Govt. as rabbinical students & will after a year's teach-
ing be admitted as regular students next year. Next year
therefore they will start with 14 at Cincinnati before pro-
ceeding to the regular batch they get every year. When
they have 25 and we 5, Dr Gluecka won't have to close
the N.Y. school, it will close of itself. The teaching staff
as you know is kept undermanned: Tchernowitz has never
been replaced, Halkin's place taken by a young instructor
& I am to go at the end of the year & not to be replaced!
Atlas who is here for one term each year now no longer
wants to come permanently to N.Y. (as he did) because he is afraid for
the future. Now you come with this news about the feeling
in the student body in Cincinnati concerning better
future placement for men who come to Cincinnati. It is
a completely justified feeling. You should write what you
told me to Dr Newman, you should do it at once. The supreme need is a powerful school in N.Y. & insane & unedifying
as it sounds they want to give up N.Y. Even Stern, Jews H.S.

Jewish Institute of Religion
40 WEST 68 STREET, NEW YORK 23, N. Y.

Telephone: TRafalgar 7-4050

375 West End Ave
NY 24, Sept 21, 52

Dear Herbert, dear Coach friend:

Thanks for the photo. Thanks even more for the words. I will confess to you I am getting lonely & overlooked, so that words like yours are very precious. I am working out in a vacuum & haven't hit my stride. After all it is not easy to change one's entire technique at 60. And after all, Meister Eckhart & Jakob Boehme may be very wonderful, but what is Hecuba to me or I to Hecuba? However I must keep at it & all of you are cooking

to me for some "Word," & has one
I let you down?

Don't forget me or drop me
from your affection.

I often think of your children
& follow each distinctive type as
it slowly grows, the girl & the boy. I
know them better than you suspect.

Was it the girl who ruefully
informed her mother that a patch
in Tokches hurts so you can't sit
down?

Herbert, if you can spare me a
few more of those pictures & if it
is not too much trouble could you
send them?

How is the matriarch? The lady
who stopped rowing at college because
it didn't make for streamlining.

My wife sends affectionate greetings
to both of you. Ever yours

J Ackerley

Jewish Institute of Religion

40 WEST 68 STREET, NEW YORK 23, N. Y.

3-0200

Telephone: TRafalgar ~~7-4050~~

375 West End Ave
NY 24, April 19, '52

Dear Herbert: I was sorry to have missed you, it is always a pleasure to see you. I am sorry you missed the latkes, you enjoyed them so thoroughly last year. How is Elaine & how are the children & how is the new job? You are thoroughly right about the need for Liturgical music, it is the only way to give a new dimension of depth to our over-rationalized Reform religious services. Music is the natural language of religious emotion & it is the quickening dew which the liberal wing of our religion sorely needs.

Herbert, about 2 weeks ago Judge Levine came to the house & offered me the honorary degree at the next Commencement, presumably as a send-off on my retirement. I declined the honor with thanks. Next time you come let us know, so we can have you over. All kind regards

To Elaine + your wonderful children from both of us.

Yours ever

H.L.

Jewish Institute of Religion

40 WEST 68 STREET, NEW YORK 23, N. Y.

Telephone: TRAFALGAR 4-4050

375 West End Ave
May 24

Herbert, is there any chance of seeing you before I go to the Conference?

How are you doing? How is the family?

All kinds of things to you & yours

H. G.

May 30, 52

Herbert, I would give anything to talk to you.

375 West End Ave, June 4, '52

Dear Herbert: You are a darling & want to come, but I am afraid it is no go, there aren't enough men who want the N.Y. school to go on & not enough statesmanship in the H.U.C. Alumni to see that it is a vital necessity for the future of American liberal judaism. So why should I eat my heart out about it? The school is being dismantled, I have been put out by a man I put in ("a fair exchange is no robbery"), & who cares? Maybe it is a secret dispensation of Providence to take away what little sense the reactionary Cincinnati outfit has left, & to leave the immense resources of N.Y. Jewry to the more legitimate & less moribund bearers of Judaism. I mean to plain English: let the old time Reform crowd (who like the Bourbons have learned nothing & forgotten nothing) commit suicide, or sink into an obscure minority-conventicle with headquarters somewhere in the northwestern part of Ohio. Kindest thoughts to you family.

Faithfully & affectionately yours

H. S.

Herbert: share this with Phil Bernstein, Jack Rudin & such few others as you can trust, & destroy. Don't leave it out of your hands!

To retire me at a time when the school is so badly undermanned & stripped of teachers, & in such a perilous position, & to allege as reason a mandatory ruling which we never had (& which the Seminary never got) & which in any case is not sacrosanct & to which Yeshiva himself made one exception, is simply grotesque.

Apart from my person, my 28 years' identification with the very life of the school (as faculty, alumni & present student body uniformly testify), — the present & immediate future of the school receives such a body blow by this act that the intention is obvious: personal venom on me & a desire to scuttle the school.

It can't be that he wants to save money: for he is spending it like a drunken sailor in the present budget, giving himself a raise to

2) $22500 as well as to his Assistant, his Expense Account, & naming 20 new men as full professors at Top Salary of $9700 :— to how can my salary amount to much in such a situation?

It can't be that he is forced by the pressing need of retiring other no-good men immediately: for Bettan won't be 68 till 1957, & in five years everything can change & even such a sacrosanct rule might be abrogated.

It is just hatred of the one man who dared to oppose him & hatred of the school which he secretly planned to dismantle & render innocuous.

The question now is what will become of the N.Y. school. He dare not do openly & abruptly what they all (Lester Jaffe, Fred Lazarus, Julian Morgenstern) originally planned despite the solemn promises, the lump in the throat, the fear in Nelson's eye, about conserving the N.Y. school. For he finds that he

3) Could carry out all his stupendous designs. Thus he planned originally to raise eight or twelve million dollars (& didn't raise as many nickles); he planned to liquidate the entire Union by the mere sovereign gesture of writing 200 letters to the chief congregations of the land, but the Union itself had other plans; he planned many other things before retiring in five years after having set everything in order, but it turned out differently.

And now the N.Y. school is a problem for him, how to placate public opinion & how the hell to get rid of it anyhow. The school now is at its lowest ebb in point of morale & in point of effective teaching power. Besides two full professors & one instructor all the rest are part-time help. The College on the other hand will have next year (consult the official Budget) nine full professors (at $9700), three

4) Associate Professors (at $4500), heads of several institutions, visiting lecturers etc.

By coming out repeatedly for the strict old time Reform viewpoint, Hebrew has definitely cut the school loose in the eyes of the N.Y. public from the original intention of its founder to welcome & to serve all phases of Judaism equally, & has alienated whatever goodwill & what potential support had been built up in 25 years & was available for the future.

This is the realistic situation which we must now face. Two schools, both strictly Reform, & both duplicating each other & merely running parallel to each other, are unnecessary. One of them is bound to go.

Unless there is a genuine bona fide merger, with students attending both schools; or unless one school

5] according to the changed historical situation, looks to serve [illegible] 5]
and not the theology of Fred Lazarus & Lessing Rosenwald: — there is no need & room for two schools, for the one remains, an obsolescent conventicle, in a little Jatterns corner in the southwestern part of Ohio, & the other a dilapidated & dismantled shell on a by-street in N.Y.C.

This calls for high statesmanship, Sirs, as much for the thoughtful alumni of the HUC, as for the convinced partisans of the great idea which had, namely, of a school open to all minds of doctrine & a refuge for all free spirits who have abjured the letter & still love the spirit of the genuine old Judaism. But in Glueck you have a man astute & unctuous, capable of weeping yes and weeping no, & he is utterly unfit to handle the present situation. If you do not take over he will deal an irreparable blow to the future of wholesome American Judaism. He must not be allowed to continue as Boychik Dictator with delusions of grandeur. He must at least be made to accept a strong supple-

6) mentary governing committee to deal with major issues of budget & policy. & he must be asked to go. The fools who put him in for life must be asked to step down.

All I can tell you is this: if & when a school like that which We've had in mind (& only dimly realized by the Institute) should be pushed to the wall, or abolished outright, the nature of the situation is such that it will be re-founded. All it needs is a brownstone house & $50 000 a year (= the present cost of the Presidential office, $22500 for N.Y., $1000 for Bluestein, $7000 for Expense Account, and $9700 for a Professor of Bible, remembering that Morgenstern taught & N.Y. is merely a Genius Executive). The N.Y. area is so enormous in spiritual & material possibilities, & the need for a free centre is so great, that such a school is inevitable.

Caveant consules.

Yours ever

H. S.

Two small personal matters: Eleuch gives out that I am to be retired at $6000.

7) That is incorrect. I am to be retired at $4500. In March 1955, i.e. almost three years from now, I am to get $919 from the Rabbinical Pension Board, & of these $919 I myself have paid in 25% of the premiums, the Union 16%, & the school the remaining 61%. Three years of my time of life mean much more than of yours. I may live or not, in any case I shall be 3 years closer to my demise. I shall therefore be getting $4500 till March 1955, and after that, from the school, $560 additional (61% of $919).

Secondly I do not want any of my friends to press Gluecks for small favors. I should have been glad to remain on the old conditions. He should have been glad & proud to have had me under any conditions, even for only one hour a week. But now I don't want any favorites from him. I shall Frighten my bell, we shall live on 40% of what I was getting & I shall try to begin it with. Let me see what "plain living & high thinking" can mean.

THE HEBREW UNION COLLEGE ... CINCINNATI
JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION ... NEW YORK

40 W. SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET · NEW YORK 23, N. Y.
TRAFALGAR 3-0200

Sept 15, 53

Herbert, beloved ידיד נפשי: Your letter came as I was thinking of you. I think often of you in a kind of silent communion; still & all it would help if I emerged from the silence & addressed written words to a man in Milwaukee. Your letter is precious to me & I shared it to wife & one & two intimates.

I am at work, even if it is cumulative in an additive but by bit philological research way. Surely the hidden god will not allow all my concern & effort to end in disarray, but like the Psalmist's account of the hidden weaving of a child in the womb he will let my thoughts coalesce eventually into an organic growth.

I am at work on the God-idea, a God-idea that will be plausible & acceptable to a world in travail & to man truly at

the parting of the ways. Between a god who is an all-in-all (the mystic's sublime assurance) but who is no comfort in our daily struggle; & the god who is visible only in man's effort & is the shadow of his heroic heart: — how be just to both just demands? I am deeply committed to the man-god, & that will be my book; but in the watches of the night I am overcome by overtones of fear concerning possible hybris. While there is this polarity, this pull away from each other & this fascination for each other, I will & still stake my all on the central position of man in the economy of the universe (& on the conspicuous protagonism of the Jew).

What a pair of fleet wings have done to me, & I think to the school as well, if he had permitted (I will not say encouraged) a single course by me on this subject, so as to serve as core & nucleus for the definitive formulation & writing of my thoughts.

Herbert, this is the season between Rosh ha-shanah & Yom kippur. Let us give each other good thoughts. My wife & I send loving wishes to you & Jane. Send me a picture of your kids. Give my regards to H. S.!

THE HEBREW UNION COLLEGE ... CINCINNATI
JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION ... NEW YORK

answered 27 Dec

40 W. SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET · NEW YORK 23, N. Y.
TRAFALGAR 3-0200

Thursday Dec 20

Dear Herbert: I wish hasten to congratulate you on your election to Milwaukee. May you go from strength to strength. The next move should be to Emanuel New York.

I wish you were here for other reasons - the fate of the school is now more or less decided & your voice would carry great weight.

We hope that you kids can Hanuka gift a few days ago to the temple address. Affectionate regards from her & me to all of yr

M. J.

S-4

Jan 2, 1954

Excerpts from Recent Letter of Dr. Slonimsky

It would be idle to say I am very happy. Without a classroom to lecture to, at least once a week, I am out of my element like a fish out of water, and it is bad for my work too, though I am never idle and am busy collecting material for a large work. I have been told I ought to collect stray essays and lectures of mine, but it is almost physically impossible for me to go back to old or aging entities, living a peaceful, dusty somnolent life in desk drawers or vanilla paper envelopes, and to become like Antolycus in Shakespeare "a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles." However, I may yet be goaded on to do some thinking, though I had much rather be "Aut Caesar Aut Nihil" and print nothing unless it is really something.

I see from various announcements (and also personal invitation) that the Alumni (among them our own chief alumni) are giving a grand banquet to Dr. Nelson Glueck. I would appear utterly silly in my own eyes to appear at a banquet for a man who has ruined the last phase of my life and who is out to ruin the school of which I helped to make him president; and the thought of a banquet for myself would not have entered my thoughts in my wildest dreams. But if banquets are to be given by our Alumni where is the banquet for me? There is not a man living or dead who has so labored to keep the Institute alive as myself, and no one knows, only God knows (as they say on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier) what I did morning, noon and night, with trustees, with students, with faculty, to keep the school going between the years 1929-1945, and what impress I have left on the souls of our men scattered from the Atlantic to the Pacific. I am shoved to the wall and forgotten.

Just to add to the gaiety of nations, let me tell you this thing since it occurred only a day or two ago. One of the conditions in the settlement of my retirement allowance was that in addition to the $4800.00 pension, the school would continue to pay its annual share of $630.00 on my Rabbinical Pension Board annuity contract, which matures in 1955. There are two other shares in payment, myself and the Rabbinical Pension Board itself. This is the last year for payment, January 10th and March 10th, and we get the notices a week or two in advance. Imagine my surprise on getting a notice to pay both the school's share and my own; that is, apparently someone has informed the Rabbinical Pension Board that the College-Institute will not pay its share of the premiums, although there is an express statement in the terms of the settlement, (minutes of the New York Administrative Committee January 16, 1951) that "the College-Institute will pay the annual premium of $630.00 each year until Dean Slonimsky's policy will reach maturity." As I said there is only this one year to pay for, the sum involved for the school is $630.00, and the monthly income I will get (if the premiums are paid this year) will be ten dollars a month from January 10th, 1955 on and $66.65 a month from March 10th, 1955, altogether $76.65 a month, that is a little better than $900.00 a year, toward which I myself will have contributed 25%, the Rabbinical Pension Board 14%, and the school 61%. The contract was entered into in 1945, five years before the merger took place.

And talking of money, you guys who are in the big money do not know what it is to try to live on $4800.00 a year. First of all, there is the withholding tax, so that I actually get $4080.00 a year, or $340.20 a month. Next year, , and if Dr. Glueck consents to pay the $630.00 premium this year, I will get $900.00 in addition (if I live). Now consider that my monthly rent is $145.00, that ordinary household expenses do not come to less than $75.00 a week or $320.00 a month: so figure out if I do not have to eat up all my savings just barely to get along.

Forgive all this palaver, but I had to get it off my chest.

5-4

375 West End Ave
New York 24, Jan 2, 54

Dear Herbert, dear Claire, dear friends: Your heart-warming letter of late November has remained unanswered all these days because I thought I would be able to include with my answer the printed lecture on Prayer which I delivered at South Orange for Herbert Weiner. But for any number of reasons there has been a delay in the printing & Heaven knows when it will be ready. Meanwhile your warm lovely words have been with me & near me all this time & I take the occasion of a new year to send a word of greeting to you both, & to your wonderful children, & to tell you I can never forget your kindness & friendship. It would be idle to say I am very happy. Without a classroom & lectures to, at least once a week, I am out of my element like a fish out of water, & it

is bad for my work too, though I am never idle & am busy collecting material for a large work. I have been told I ought to collect my essays & lectures & memoirs but it is almost physically impossible for me to go back to old or dying entities, living a peaceful dusty reminiscent life in desk-drawers or manilla paper envelopes & to become like Autolycus in Shakespeare "a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles." However I may yet be goaded on to do some printing, though I had much rather be "Aut Caesar aut nihil" and print nothing unless it is really something.

I see from various announcements (& also personal invitation) that the Alumni (among them am one chief Alumnus) are giving a grand banquet to Dr Nelson Glueck. I would appear utterly silly in my own eyes to appear at a banquet for a man who has ruined the last phase of my life & who is out to ruin the School of which I helped to make him President; & the banquet of a banquet for myself would not have

2) entered my thoughts in my wildest dreams
But if banquets are to be given by an
Alumni where is the banquet for me?
There is not a man living or dead who
has so labored to keep the Institution alive
as myself, and no one knows, only
God knows (as they say on the Tomb of
the unknown soldier), what I did nursing
now & night, with trustees, with
students, with Faculty, to keep the
school going between the years 1929-
1945, & what imprints I have left on
the souls of men scattered from
the Atlantic to the Pacific. I am
shoved to the wall & forgotten.

Just to add to the gaiety of nations
let me tell you this thing since it
occurred only a day or two ago. One
of the conditions in the settlement of
my retirement allowance was that in
addition to the $4000 pension the school
would continue to pay its annual
share of $630 on my Rabbinical pension
which matures in 1955. There are two

other shares, in payment, myself & the Rabbinical Pension Board itself. This is the last year for payment, Jan 10th and March 10th - and we get the notices a year & two in advance. Imagine my surprise on getting a notice to pay both the school's share & my own; that is, apparently some one has informed the Rabbinical Pension Board that the College - Institute will not pay its share of the premiums, although there is an express statement in the terms of the settlement (minutes of the N.Y. Administrative Committee Jan 16, 1951) that "the College - Institute will pay the annual premium of $630 each year until Dan Slonimsky's policy will reach maturity." As I said there is only this one year to pay for, the sum involved for the school is $630, and the monthly income I will get (if the premiums are paid this year) will be $10.- a month from Jan 10, 1953 on, and $66.65 a month from March 10, 1953 altogether $76.65 a month, that is a little over $900 a year, towards which I myself

3) will have contributed 25% to the Retirement Pension Board 14%, & the School 61%. The contract was entered into in 1945, five years before the merger took place.

And talking of money, I am sure who are in the big money do not know what it is to live on $4800 a year. First of all, there is the withholding Tax so that I actually get $4080 a year or $340.20 a month. Next year, perhaps $331.00 & if Dr Gluck consents to pay the $630 premium this year, I will get $900 in addition (if I live). Now consider that my rent is $145 monthly that ordinary household expenses do not come to less than $75 a week or $320 a month: so figure out if I don't have to eat up all my savings first, to get along.

Forgive all this palaver but I had to get it off my chest.

Warmest loving greetings to the whole Friedman clan.

Love always JWS.

S-4

Jan 4 '54

Excerpts from Letter of Dr. Slonimsky

I feel I ought to correct something in my last letter, namely about the Rabbinic Pension Board annuity contract. It appears, from what the Secretary tells me, that they are gleichschalting the Institute with the College in the matter of retirement allowance as in all other things; the Institute had an arrangement with the Rabbinic Pension Board which the College had its own system. So they have taken the Institute teachers off the Rabbinic Pension Board plan, and without as much as informing me Mr. Maxwell Lyons, the Asst. Secretary or Business Manager of the College, gave a blanket order to the Rabbinic Pension Board to that effect, and that of course includes me. But it happens that I am a quite special case, since my status in that respect was fixed by special action of our Board when I was retired, and I have a legal claim to the fulfilment of their part of the contract by our Board. Forgive all this boloney, but I had to give you the sequel since I gave you the first part. I don't know how my matter will be settled and I really don't give a damn: it's the method and the animus that hurts.

S-4

375 West End Ave
NY 24, Jan 4, 54

Dear Herbert: I feel I ought to correct something in my last letter, namely about the Rabbinic Pension Board annuity contract. It appears, from what the Secretary tells me, that they are gleichschalting the Institute with the College in the matter of retirement allowance as in all other things; the Institute had an arrangement with the Rabbinic Pension Board which the College had its own system. So they have taken the Institute Teachers off the Rabbinic Pension Board plan, and without as much as informing me (W Maxwell Cohn, the Asst. Secretary & Business Manager of the College, gave a blanket order to the Rabbinic Pension Board to that effect, & that of course included me. But it happens that I am in a quite special case, since my status in that respect was fixed by special action of our Board when I was retired, and I have a legal claim to the fulfilment of their part of the contract by our Board. Forgive

all this bolonay, but I had 2 give you the sequel since I gave you the first part. I don't know how my matter will be settled & I really don't give a damn: it's the method & the animus that hurts.

We saw "From here 2 Eternity" tonight; I am not much of a movie goer & I forgot 15 minutes after I leave, but this army thing somehow moved me. On Sunday there was a very impressive reportorial panel under Ed Murrow on the Television, which left me very sad. Did you see & hear it?

Dear Herbert don't forget me. That prayer lecture will eventually get printed. And maybe I shall be lucky & have the wits 2 produce something rounded & flower-like in the way of a religious philosophy. How are your marvellous children? The big-eyed stranger and your own coins' product?

Love & cheer (including my wife & sons)

H. J.

THE HEBREW UNION COLLEGE ... CINCINNATI
JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION ... NEW YORK

40 W. SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET · NEW YORK 23, N. Y.
TRAFALGAR 3-0200

S-4

Jan 8, 54

Dear Herbert: I am writing
hurriedly, in the interests of fairness,
to tell you that my matter has
been arranged in the friendliest
possible manner by Richard Bluestein
(who is the one man I can deal with
from Cincinnati).

Cordially

Alfred

S-4

THE HEBREW UNION COLLEGE ... CINCINNATI
JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION ... NEW YORK

40 W. SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET · NEW YORK 23, N. Y.
TRAFALGAR 3-0200

Wednesday Jan 13, 54

Dear Albert: Just to acknowledge your letter of the 13th & to finish up with this foolish business of mine with which I plagued you. I am sorry about the whole thing & you of course acted in perfect kindness, so let us forget it. Glueck is a man I find it difficult to deal with, hence I want to avoid any possible friction with him. Let it go.

I think I shall be able to send you the Prager lecture in printed form in the not too distant future.

I was delighted to hear of your success in the fund-raising.

I hope everything is going well with all the individuals in your family & I hope we shall have pleasant things to tell each other about ourselves.

Affectionately yours

H. S.

Jewish Institute of Religion
40 WEST 68 STREET, NEW YORK 23, N. Y.

Telephone: TRafalgar 7-4050

375 West End Ave
March 31, 54

Dear Herbert: I would have written sooner, immediately on getting your sermon about the danger hanging over our heads, but I wanted to wait to send you the first copy of my little talk. As for your address I am thrilled by the act of a brave man. Courage is the greatest of virtues & the rarest. What are gifts of any kind in comparison to the gift of heroism? The brave man is the manifest godhead. I am not kidding. I salute you with respect & homage. Do not weaken, do not falter.

I hope you will like my little talk but you must tell me the truth. Nothing else matters for real people.

I am planning a whole series of talks for the fall winter & spring on contemporary

religious philosophy - Whitehead, Bergson, Sartre, James, Fechner & related gödlike heresies in Judaism.

How are your children? How is your own image of Journey? & how is the marvellous [illegible] & Hoyt (that's from Homer & means the big-eyed goddess - I mean the strange girl who came first) - & how is the latest arrival?

How is the matriarch?

My wife sends affectionate thoughts. Herbert, keep me in your heart.

A. J.

THE HEBREW UNION COLLEGE ... CINCINNATI
JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION ... NEW YORK

40 W. SIXTY-EIGHTH STREET · NEW YORK 23, N. Y.
TRAFALGAR 3-0200

April 26, 54

Dear Albert: Are you dead, asleep or in a coma? Do you answer letters & acknowledge gifts? I wrote to you a very nice letter a month or two ago & sent you a little contribution on prayer! Can't you say something?

Faithfully & cordially

Jo Rosenberg

OFFICE OF THE
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT

Jewish Institute of Religion

40 WEST 68 STREET, NEW YORK 23, N. Y.

Telephone: TRafalgar 7-4050

cor 78th & West End

370 West End Ave
Wed July 7, 54

Dear Herbert – It was an enormous relief to get your letter. I wish you would not wear-kill yourself with work. Can you relax & recuperate? How are your children, of whom I think often, & how is the Matriarch? Our unlisted home phone number is Trafalgar 7-1765 – please note & keep it yourself.

God bless you, Brother.

Love ever

H. J.

Remember me to your mother & Elaine's mother, also to her brother (the Yale anthropologist).

S-4

Jewish Institute of Religion

40 WEST 68 STREET, NEW YORK 23, N. Y.

OFFICE OF THE
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT

Telephone: ~~TRafalgar~~ 7-4050

375 West End Ave
NY 24, Sept 24, 54

Herbert, a word of greeting from
the eve of ראש השנה and with you a
good week. What have you decided
about journey? Sorry I could not get
to see you before you left for home.

I am at work on my lectures for Hebrew
Union.

Do you know I am a member of the Board
of Governors of the HUC-JIR. It doesn't mean
anything except the mere presence of my
name. They should be glad to have it as I was

it, mildly, but still. I am in the group of those whose term expires Dec. 1954. It is in the gift of President Moshe Eisenstadt. If & when he & you should ever see each other & the subject should come up, you might tell him. Not my important; but I am the one conspicuous remnant of the old glory that once was.

My love to your family. Love to you. We leave Duisburg - Dinner last night, but I had trouble following the Hebrew. Fleuch looked tired and anemic. I know you love your Torah, and honor & love are the best things in the world.

My wife always joins in kindest thoughts.

Yours, J.H.J.

Slonimsky

THE TEMPLE

Isaiah Israel

1100 HYDE PARK BOULEVARD • CHICAGO 15, ILLINOIS

STUDY OF THE RABBI

November 1, 1954

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman
Temple Emanu-El B'nai Jeshurun
2419 East Kenwood Boulevard
Milwaukee 11, Wisconsin

Dear Herbert:

Maurice Eisendrath told me last week that he had trouble getting Nelson Glueck to agree to the reappointment of Dr. Slonimsky to the Board of Governors because good old Henry had been absent ten times and the rule disqualifying members permits only three absences. After some persuasion, Nelson agreed to talk to Dr. Slonimsky and ask him to stay on the Board. Knowing Henry as we do, it is not impossible that he will refuse. Maurice thought that you ought to write to Henry and tell him not to refuse an appointment if it is offered to him. It would be well to say nothing about the absences, etc.

I hope everything is well in your parts. Here I am going mishugah. With best wishes to Elaine, in which my own Elaine joins me,

Yours,

Morton

Morton M. Berman

MMB:ptg

Round Robin

375 West End Ave
New York 24, Oct. 27, 57

Dear Horace, dear Herbert and Herbert, dear brother Morrie, dear Zelda, dear Elaine, dear Shirley and beloved sister-Lily:

With a heart full of thanks I wish to thank you all for the wonderful party you gave me last night. No greater love hath any man than this, that he is united with others in a larger mind & heart in which they all share.

As for myself & my deserts the Psalmist has spoken for me, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thee."

The human beings who were there; the good cheer in food & drink (which is really embodied spirit — "he who tastes a crust of bread tastes of the sun & stars" as old Paracelsus said); & above all the fellowship in appreciation & understanding made it perfect.

Another word as an old Ethics teacher,

2) since I cannot refrain from philosophizing. The older American style of entertainment was also the often "conspicuous waste." Here was an example of a patrician & noble way of spending money. What the past master in the science of the virtues, old Aristotle, called megaloprepeia (for which we have a single English word but only the phrase "a gentleman's munificence"), — here it was exemplified.

I feel deeply touched & honored to be the recipient of so much affection & honor, & I send you all my love. We hope to have you a'll as guests for dinner very shortly at our home.

Love & ever fr. impelled

H. Ellenson

My wife will add a word to make the letter complete. Here surely כלה ונאה כלה ונאה, the last is the best. But before that a Pateremptum very much to the point: the tweed sports jacket will get good wear I warrant you; & the air conditioner will be a constant reminder that not all needs wise reasoning or moderation.

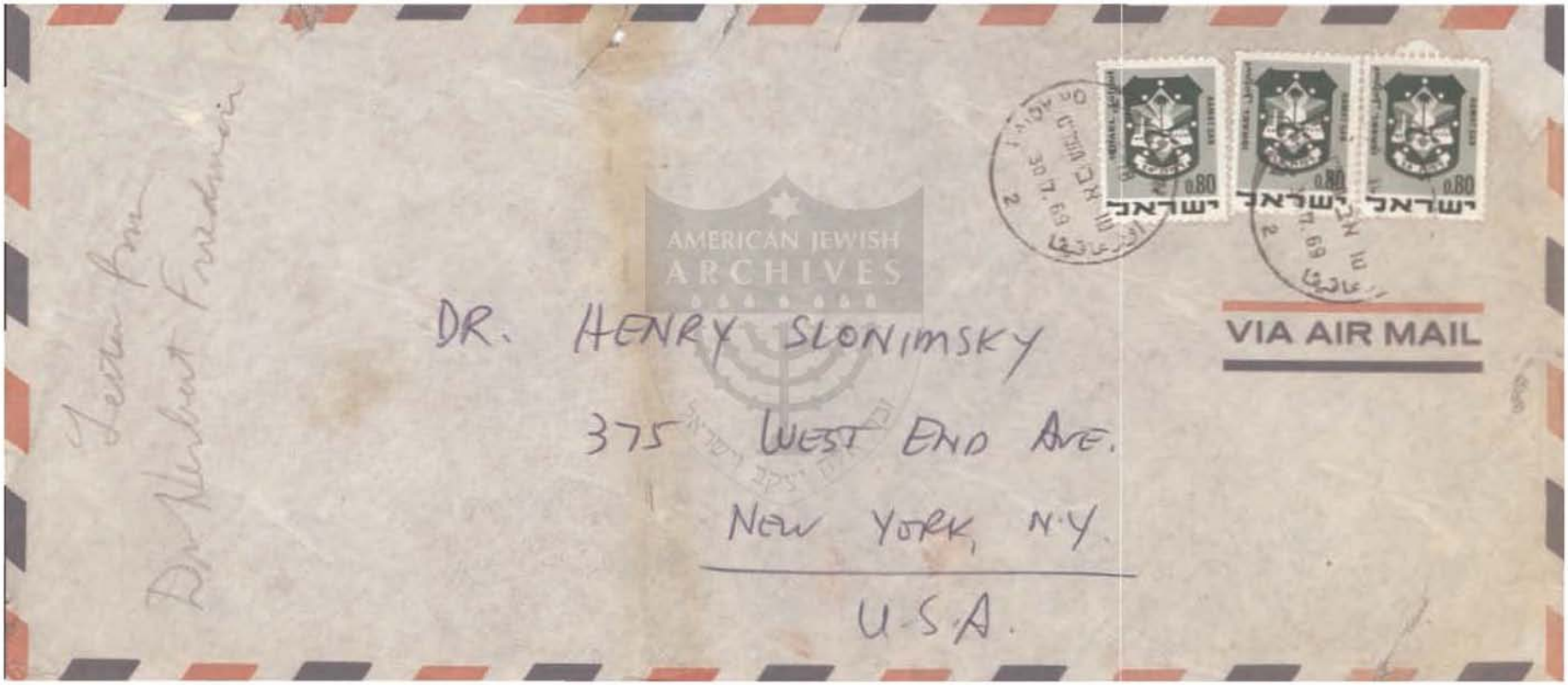
May I add "for me too" to what Harry has expressed so

feelingly, and to repeat "he is a fine, gamy, treacherous lad" and neither you nor I would want him to be otherwise

With my thanks to all of you

Ever fondly

Minnie Gleninsky


Letter from
Dr Norbert Friedenwald
DR. HENRY SLONIMSKY
375 WEST END AVE.
NEW YORK, N.Y.
U.S.A.
VIA AIR MAIL
ישראל
0.80
AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

H. FRIEDMAN
HOTEL SEMADAR
CAESAREA, ISRAEL

SUITE 2900
1290 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10019

30 July 69

Dear Doctr Slonimsky —

Here is a voice from the blue or the void but actually from Caesarea — the town of the revolt of 66, the town of the slaying of Akiva, the town of the best Roman fancy-houses in the Empire — and now the town where Casals plays in the restored amphitheater, where the local inhabitants swim in the sheltered cove and with mask and snorkel look down into the fantastically clear blue water to see the outline below of the docks and quays on which the Tenth Legion disembarked. I write from this town because we are building a house here — in lovely white brick with many balconies overlooking the sea and the ancient aqueduct which brought water from the Carmel to this town.

How many times over the years I asked you to come — and now I add one final plea. Will you come to stay in our house? The beds will be comfortable and you cannot use the excuse that you are a poor traveller. You will live here sybaritically (one even uses Roman words in this neighborhood).

But don't come yet. The house is 90

days behind schedule now and will be another 90 before completion. That isn't bad, however, in a country at war. The damn carpenter was pulled off the job to spend his 40 days in the reserves. and next week the brick-layer goes; and וכו׳ וכו׳ the little Kemenite tile-layer goes. etc etc, and my timing goes down the drain. So- what the hell- we are all inconvenienced right now - but it doesn't matter.

My wife is here - as are the two small boys, and the big boy. The other day, when the big one and I were at Sharm-e-Sheikh, he suddenly asked for you. He remembers you with great affection. He wanted me to tell him all over again (The way children, even 20-year olds, like to hear favorite stories repeated) the influence you have had on my life and thought. I told him, at length, again. Somehow it made him very happy.

The two girls are in the States - the big one now teaching at a Children's Day Care Center in Philadelphia - and the small one at camp in Conn. Next summer the small one comes here.

I'm working hard - organizing, teaching, trying to inspire, developing future leaders, planning as to

future expenditures in the area, especially, of higher education. It's still very satisfying, albeit tough. Every time I feel sorry for myself for working so hard, I think of all my friends who are generals in the army, and then I work even harder.

We are really at war, you know. The cease-fire is completely inoperative - there is shelling along the borders every day - there are air strikes daily - there are terrorist occurrences in the cities at all times. The daily paper carries the pictures and biographies of the dead. We will have to live this way for a long time.

In between, as it were, the planes from Vienna and Marseilles bring us our weekly arrivals of new Jews (over 200 each week - that's a lot of people for whom to build houses and find food) and I go often to the airport to meet them. It is exciting to see - especially the Russians and Rumanians. The Poles, poor devils, are coming in shock, not out of choice, because they are being thrown out, and have only one more month. Gomulka has announced that all those who are out by Sept. 1, OK - after that no exits allowed. So they are running in the face of a renewed violent Polish anti-semitism.

But war or no the question of the existence of the state is executed apparently two or three times weekly — and it appears that we shall not be deterred. If this sounds like a speech, the trouble is that it can't be helped — because the main thrust of this damn country is still idealistic.

One last note — the other day I took the boy to the southern wall, where Mazar is digging. Some fantastic finds are emerging — huge supports for a bridge which led from the upper city to the Temple Mount — 16 meters wide — along which the King's chariots went to the temple area. large section of steps, down below, between the supports — many other finds, including a mikva.

Oh well — I don't want to fatigue you — but think of you often — and suddenly felt the urge to write. Please give my best to Mrs. Slonimsky — and I hope you are keeping well and occupied.

As ever,

Herbert Friedman


VIA AIR MAIL
MILWAUKEE
FEB 1
1953
WIS.
Dr. Herbert
Friedman
Dr. Henry Slonimsky
375 West End Avenue
New York, New York

February 5, 1953

Dr. Joseph Schwartz
United Jewish Appeal
165 West 46th Street
New York, New York

Dear Joe:

I wish I could begin to tell you the amount of thought I have given to the proposal which you and Eddie placed before me some weeks ago. I have thought about practically nothing else during this entire time.

First of all, let me thank you very humbly and very sincerely for the confidence you manifested in submitting to me the invitation you did. I have grave doubts about my capacity to undertake a position of such overwhelming importance and I am not a little flattered that you should have judged me in a measure far beyond that which I am willing to admit myself. The fact that I have felt constrained to answer in the negative is perhaps an indication that I have less confidence in myself than you seem to have in me, and perhaps my other reasons for saying no are only rationalizations. At any rate, I shall always be grateful to you, both of whom I respect immensely, for the implied confidence.

I think you both know me well enough to believe that the work of the United Jewish Appeal is as close to my heart as anything could possibly be. The reasons you advanced urging me to accept this position, and the reasons I advanced later to myself, are all extremely valid and cogent. There is nothing more important than aiding the people of Israel world-wide and strengthening the State of Israel in its new sovereignty. There is a great difference in being involved at the core of contemporary Jewish history rather than simply helping on the periphery of the problem, as a volunteer. There is the pressing moral problem of answering to one's conscience in these days of turmoil. There is the whole philosophical problem of how one can best perform a measure of service to the total Jewish need. I don't

have to stress the fact to you that all of these, and other considerations, pulled me most strongly in the direction of answering your call in the affirmative.

After putting all of these factors on the scale, I found that there was only one item which counterbalanced. This was the fact that I feel a genuine sense of calling in the rabbinate. Just because my Judaism is so much a matter of heart and soul to me, as well as head, I forced myself to face realistically the question of whether I would inevitably be drawn out of the practicing rabbinate if I were to succumb to the temptation of accepting your invitation. I think it is realistic to say that after tasting the rarified atmosphere of service on a national and international level, one would find it extremely difficult to return to the less dramatic and more mundane affairs which face the ordinary rabbi in the practice of his profession. I think it is almost too much to expect that after doing a stint of service as Executive Head of the UJA I would ever be able to return to the profession.

This is the one fact which gave me pause. Without wanting to sound maudlin in any way whatsoever, the concept of strengthening the soul of the Jew is, in a certain sense, as important to me as saving his body. Unfortunately, I think there are too few rabbis in America today who are genuinely happy in the performance of their duties. For whatever variety of reasons, men have become disillusioned, upset, frustrated, and all of this results in a lessening of their ability to preach and teach the life-ideals of Judaism to their people. I don't want to sound as though I am preaching a sermon, but our heritage is so gorgeous and the capacity of our tradition to contribute to the world's welfare is so enormous, that I feel I must spend my life attempting to teach this heritage and this tradition to our people, so that they may adjust to it happily and proudly and so that they may implement it in the course of their lives.

I really believe this. The love for Judaism, the desire to teach it, the passionate will to preserve it for the future, are the factors which sent me into this

profession in the first instance. My enthusiasm hasn't diminished. Perhaps it will. Perhaps I will suffer the same frustrations and disillusionments which have made better men than myself go into a tailspin. But as yet that hasn't happened to me. And so I can still continue in my idealistic way, teaching and preaching, inspiring and prodding, so that at least in the one community in which I happen to serve, there might be trained a future generation of knowledgeable and proud Jews.

I want to say one last thing, Joe and Eddie. These long range and altruistic objectives cause me to feel that I can do my best service for the Jewish people as a rabbi. These objectives, however, are certainly subject to all kinds of re-evaluation under the pressure of historic imperatives. If the international situation of our people were to degenerate into another Hitler-like blood-letting, then I am frank to say that I would revise my thinking. Because without Jewish bodies there can be no Jewish souls. And the saving of life transcends all else. Should we find that we are entering another such period, and should the events of the next few months show us that all hands must be summoned in a general quarters alarm, then I would be quick, I think, to get off this high stool of long range thinking, and chuck the ideal for the actual. So I would say that my "no" is based upon the present time and circumstance.

I hope my reasoning sounds as valid to you as it appears to me. And I hope you will not think the less of me for refusing your challenge. Each follows his own star.

With deep and affectionate thanks for your friendship.

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman

HAF/ms

HERBERT A. FRIEDMAN
1290 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019

26 June 67

Dear Dr. and Mrs. Slonimsky —

Your gift has reached me — and I am overwhelmed by its generosity.

Actually, I could say the same. This time, about great segments of this community, we will raise much more than was achieved in 1948, which has always been considered the height.

The outpouring was phenomenal, but so was the risk and danger. Love for Israel is more deeply ingrained in the hearts of our people than we realize.

I have never worked harder in my life — but it has never been more worthwhile.

On leave for Israel again tomorrow — meanwhile my deepest regard —

Herbert

Dr. + Mrs. H. Slonimsky

375 West End Ave.

New York, N.Y.

11/25/70

HERBERT A. FRIEDMAN
1290 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019

21 Nov 70

Dear Mrs. Slonimsky—

We returned from Israel last night, and today, while going through the accumulated papers, found the notice of the Dean's passing.

You know how I felt about him—he was the man who shaped me. He was one of the two dominating personalities in my life. The other was Stephen Wise. He gave me a whole philosophy—what I believe came from him. He had more influence on me than my own father.

Please accept my deepest sympathy, prefaced in the full knowledge of what you meant to him, and what his death must mean to you.

Herbert Friedman

RABBI HERBERT A. FRIEDMAN
TEMPLE EMANU-EL B'NE JESHURUN
2419 E. KENWOOD BLVD.
MILWAUKEE 11, WISCONSIN

19 March 53

Dear chief -

If these letters are not sufficient proof of the anxiety with which we await a volume of your personal philosophy, I can adduce nothing more conclusive.

Why should these people scattered in time and space all be so eager to pick up crumbs from my table - if it weren't that there are no shiurayim of the Zaddik available?

We need your voice - we hunger for your word - how about it?

Elaine joins me in sending love

Herbert

LAW OFFICES
BENJAMIN LUDLOW
2710 GIRARD TRUST BUILDING
PHILADELPHIA 2, PA.
RI 6-1416

February 19, 1953

Dear Dr. Friedman:

Lionel T. Schlesinger, Esquire, Secretary of Congregation Beth Israel of Atlantic City has sent me a copy of "THE TEMPLE BULLETIN" of February 11 in which reference is made to your sermon to be delivered tomorrow evening on Dr. Henry Slonimsky.

If you have a written text from which you deliver your sermon, and a copy of it is available I should like to have it. If you have only your own copy and will lend it to me for a few days, I shall make a copy and return the original to you.

Henry Slonimsky was a high school classmate of Mr. Schlesinger and myself more than fifty years ago. His intellectual and spiritual growth since that time has been outstanding.

From your sermon I should like to make excerpts to be presented to our Class survivors when they meet in June.

Do not trouble personally to bother with my request but hand it to your secretary, thus saving your time.

BL:E

Yours sincerely,

Benjamin Ludlow

Dr. Herbert A. Friedman
2419 E. Kenwood Boulevard
Milwaukee 11, Wisconsin

cc: Mr. Schlesinger

Congregation Beth Israel

MARTIN M. WEITZ.
RABBI

906 PACIFIC AVENUE
ATLANTIC CITY. N. J.

PHONE 5-3042

LIONEL T. SCHLESINGER.
SECRETARY

18 February 1953

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman,
Congregation Emanu-El B'ne Jeshurun,
Milwaukee 11 Wisconsin.

My dear Rabbi Friedman:

I read, with much interest, your announcement in your bulletin of February 11, your intended sermon on the coming Friday evening, on "The Growing God of Henry Slonimsky". If possible, I would like a copy of your lecture, as Henry Slonimsky was my classmate for four years, at Central High School in Philadelphia, and was always a brilliant student. We knew him as Harry. After high school, or college, I do not recall the exact time, he changed his name to Sloan (his brother is Judge Maurice Sloan of the Common Pleas Court of Philadelphia), and then later changed again to Slonimsky. He attends our class reunions and we all follow his career closely, and we would like the copy of your sermon for our class archives.

With cordial regards, in which Rabbi Weitz joins,

I am

Very sincerely

Lionel T. Schlesinger

Secretary

THE CHICAGO FEDERATION OF THE

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

72 EAST ELEVENTH STREET · CHICAGO 5, ILLINOIS · PHONE WABASH 2-7445

C1

February 27, 1953

Dear Herb:

I noticed in your Temple Bulletin several weeks ago that you were planning to give a sermon about the Growing God of Dr. Slonimsky. I wanted to go up to Milwaukee to hear ~~his~~ Noah's sermon but was not able to get away from the Union Institute during the last week-end. I would appreciate it very much if you would send me a copy of the sermon, since Dr. Slonimsky is one of my favorite teachers.

Give my best regards to Sol.

Sincerely yours,

Gerald Raiskin

Rabbi Herbert Friedman
2419 E. Kenwood Blvd.
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

GR:fp
Encl.

Congregation Emanu-El B'ne Jeshurun

2419 E. KENWOOD BOULEVARD
MILWAUKEE 11, WISCONSIN

Dr. Henry Slonimsky
375 West End Ave.
New York, N.Y.

KING DAVID HOTEL
JERUSALEM

מלון המלך דוד
ירושלים

20 Jan 71

Dear Mrs. Slonimsky –

I have been travelling almost constantly in the United States, and between the U.S. and Israel, especially at this time when we are approaching the end of the cease-fire (5 Feb) and once again the threat of war is looming. I do not think anything will happen now, in these immediate weeks – but I do think that in the course of the next few months Egyptian-Russian frustration will build up to the point where they will start the war of attrition once again. We must be prepared to defend what is so precious.

Word reached me of Paul Sternberg's letter containing your contribution which is handsome, even magnificent. Bless you for it. Given with love and concern, it represents the strongest Jewish devotion. You want no thanks from me, but you have them anyhow.

You asked what to do with my son Dan's letter to the Dean. I consulted Dan and he said he would be very grateful if you could mail it back to him at 916 Yale Station, New Haven, Conn.

If I stay in New York long enough to keep my head from spinning, I shall call and make an appointment to see you, so that I can express in person my feelings.

Sincerely,
Herbert Friedman

TELEGR.-ADDRESS: KINDOTEL JERUSALEM
Please address all Communications to the Manager נא להפנות את כל המכתבים למנהל

UNITED JEWISH APPEAL

ON BEHALF OF UNITED ISRAEL APPEAL, JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE, NEW YORK ASSOCIATION FOR NEW AMERICANS

165 WEST 46 STREET, N. Y. 36, N. Y. PLAZA 7-1500 CABLE ADDRESS: UJAPPEAL, NEW YORK

July 19, 1955

Dr. Henry Slonimsky
375 West End Avenue
New York, N.Y.

Dear Dr. Slonimsky:

You will, of course, appreciate that it would be rather difficult for me to write to every individual who contributes funds to the United Jewish Appeal, but it is a very great pleasure indeed to write this note to you.

Rabbi Friedman has presented to the United Jewish Appeal the check which you gave him the other evening. This was such a generous gesture on your part in honor of Rabbi Friedman that this opportunity is taken to express to you my own personal appreciation as well as the thanks of all the officers of the United Jewish Appeal.

Kind regards.

Cordially,

Wm Rosenwald

Off-print from

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE ANNUAL

VOLUME XXVII 1956

For Herbert Friedman
with appreciative greetings
M. Weinreb

THE PHILOSOPHY IMPLICIT IN THE MIDRASH

HENRY SLONIMSKY

Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion, New York

I

WHAT Agada or Midrash is the Midrash itself states. In a conspicuous utterance concerning its use and function it characterizes itself as Benedictions and Consolations, ברכות ונחמות. Primarily then, and in its inner core and essence, it is consolation, that is, a feeding of the life-impulse when harassed and threatened by tragic circumstance. Tragic circumstance was the special environment, unexampled suffering the special historic lot, of the Jew. And to guard against despair because of the unremitting enemy from without, and against the temptation to despair because of doubt and weakening faith from within, the Jewish genius prepared for itself, alongside of the code of law which governed its daily living, a great wellspring of assurance and re-assurance, of comfort and ground for faith. That is what the Agada aims to be alongside of the Halakah, the "faith" alongside the "works," which in the Christian world may be contrasted but which here are the twin sources of Jewish being and the twin pillars on which it equally rests.

There are two versions of our initial text and they offer interesting variants which throw light upon each other. In the older version it reads as follows. "In the former days when people had change in their pockets (i. e. when things were leisurely) they liked to listen to some word from Mishnah and Talmud; but now that money is gone, *and especially since we are sick because of the ruling power*, וביותר שאנו חולים מן המלכות, people want to hear something *from the Bible and from Agada*" (Pesikta 101b). The later version, occurring in a later Midrash and possibly after the situation had hardened, has the same text running as follows. "In the past people had some change in their pocket and a man liked to listen to Mishnah and Halakah and Talmud; but now that money is gone, *and especially since we are sick through the oppression*, וביותר שאנו חולים מן השעבוד, nobody wants to hear anything but *words of Benediction and Consolation*" (Cant. R., ed. Wilna, Romm, 15a, Col. 2). The sickness remains the same, through persecution by the מלכות or categorically through *the* oppression, it is in fact

perennial; and the healing or therapeutic is in the one case designated as Bible and Agada and in the other as Blessings and Consolations: clearly then the two sets of terms are synonymous.

Consolation however usually carries with it a mere sense of soothing, a mood or tone of feeling without hard body or substance. That is quite definitely not the case here. The consolation and healing offered by Agada to the Jewish people on its hard road is solidly grounded in a powerful pattern of thought and intellect, a world-view and philosophy it might almost be said if these terms were not so academic, in any case a set of themes and imagery and ideas forged in the crucible of a unique and terrible experience and suffused throughout by earnest thinking.

The Midrash is fully aware of the greatness of this its undertaking. It does not play modest. "Dost thou wish to know him who spake and by whose word the world came into being? Study Agada: for through such study thou canst get to understand the Holy One blessed be He and to follow in his ways" (Sifré 85a). These utterances are not peripheral or casual. The first is ascribed to Levi and Yizhak, two central figures in the creation of Agada. And the second so self-conscious statement which we have just quoted stems from the Sifré, one of the oldest and most basic of the Midrashim.

Now the name for the science and study of God and his ways, is Theology, also Philosophy. Is the Midrash then a Theology and Philosophy? We must remember that these terms are Greek in origin and that the categories of thought which they represent are creations of the Greek genius. In a sense these terms are too ponderous and too pedantic. For while there is the most authentic and mature kind of thinking on all the main topics of life present there, on God and man, on time and event, on suffering and the future, it is present in an atmosphere or medium of freedom and unconstraint, not as a set of propositions to be soberly argued in the schools; but rather as themes and images to guide and influence the listener in all the workings of his mind, and still to retain the fluidity of a story, as of the myths to which Plato resorts when his themes outdistance his concepts. In this way speculations which would have been frowned upon or forbidden if set forth as sober creed in Halakic fashion obtain breathing space and an opportunity for emergence; and the audacities without which there is no greatness of thinking achieve room and possibility of expression. It is a subtle device since it succeeds in capturing freedom and substance of thinking without being tied to the numbered paragraphs of a treatise. With this important reservation or qualification one can say that the Midrash is a repository of a

Jewish Theology and of a Jewish Philosophy of History, formidable as these terms may sound, and strange labels as they may be for the living tenderness of Jewish experience.

Always we are to bear in mind that the origin of Jewish speculation is not leisurely intellectual curiosity. There is a difference between Greek and Jew. "All men desire by nature to know," the opening words of Aristotle's Metaphysics, are the words which naturally occur to Aristotle in accounting for the origin of philosophy. Wonder is the emotion, and raising a question is the corresponding intellectual act, whereby philosophy arises, according to the Platonic Socrates (in the Theaetetus 155 d, which Aristotle takes over, Metaph. 982 b). But for Israel it is an acute experience of suffering and of an agonizing perplexity which releases thought. Israel is in the unique position of regarding itself as the chosen people, the beloved of God, and at the same time knowing itself as the most afflicted people: — how resolve that awesome paradox? What thoughts must it frame about God since obviously the received God-idea is rendered untenable? What kind of a God would they in actual fact fashion under the stress? What God, what no-God, what half-God, what man-God, what all-God? How is man to behave? What is the future and is there a future? And what ground is there for faith?

And why the initial affliction? "Sufferance is the badge of all our tribe," *souffrance*, suffering, — the greatest of poets has made his one Jewish character testify. No truer word was spoken, it was spoken with the clairvoyance and penetration of genius. Suffering is involved in the very character of the career on which Israel was launched, is indeed the badge of Israel whenever true to his course. That career is seen to be inevitably tragic. For the core of Jewish belief is that Israel must bear the Torah from God to the world. But the world is unwilling and resists all three, God, Torah, and Israel, and the protagonist who does the actual bearing must also bear the brunt of the suffering. The whole drama is paradigmatic: it is a prelude or prefiguring or archetype of what must take place henceforth everywhere and by all men of good will if a new and higher order is to emerge as reality. The Torah stands for goodness, for the visions and ideals and values, or light of God in which we see light. God, besides being this light and vision which we behold, is also such power, such real actual power in the universe, as is committed and has already been marshalled for the victory of the good; this power is at present still pitifully small, and that fact entails the drama. The power must be increased, the ideal must be translated into the real; and the active agent in this crucial event is man, who is thus destined for tragic heroism by the very

nature of his situation. Israel, of course, stands for the ideal Israel, and is paradigmatic of the good and brave man anywhere. That the best man must suffer the most, must assume the burdens and sorrows of the world, constitutes the most awesome phenomenon and paradox of the whole spiritual life. God in the full meaning of the term is seen to stand at the end, not at the beginning. "On that day he shall be one and his name shall be one." *He must be made one*, and man is the agent in whose hands it is left to make or to mar that supreme integration.

To regard God as perfect in power, as he is in vision, at the very beginning, is the most disastrous of superstitions. The "monistic superstition," as William James calls it, has worked havoc, and the most momentous decision which mankind has to make is to re-learn on that score. God and man are a polarity. They are both heroes in the same drama. They need each other, they grow together, but they also suffer together. Hence they need consolation, Benedictions and Consolations. That the Midrash is designed to supply. The Midrash is a vast post-Biblical Bible written on the margin of the Bible to account for the sufferings of God and man in their efforts to reclaim and uplift an unfinished and emerging world. It furnishes the faith which by generating strength helps to create the object of its faith. Its eyes are on the future, on the realized kingdom of God. Hence its proper closing prayer is the Kaddish, which was composed for the schools, not for the Synagogue, and has nothing to do with its later use for the dead. The Kaddish is the briefest formulation of Jewish theology, and it properly terminated every Agadic discourse as the doxology which summed up the very soul of the Agada.

That the Torah will be made real in the end, and that all men will accept it in the end, that there is a far-off goal towards which all history converges, and that time and event are no mere welter or chaos but a meaningful process, and that the protagonist in that progress is a tragic-heroic figure, wounded and smitten but undismayed: that is the theology and the philosophy of history implicit in Midrash and Bible.

Man needs re-assurance on double grounds. He must be saved from despairing that there is meaning in history. He must be saved from despairing over the fact that the good must suffer.

The classic Midrash always concludes with some reminder of the certainty of the Messianic goal, hence very properly the Kaddish is its crown and consummation. The grammar itself is theological. The Ithpaal of the opening words יתגדל ויתקדש connotes gradual process of achievement. "May his great name get to be magnified and sanc-

tified," that is, more and more, in increasing measure. "In the world which he hath created according to his will," that is, in a world of time and effort and growth. Then the climax, "May he establish his Kingdom," וימליך מלכותיה, corresponding to "Thy Kingdom come" taken over into the Lord's Prayer in Christianity. And thereupon the concluding words, unexampled in patience and faith, in heroism and pathos: "during your life and your days . . . . speedily and at a near time." For they knew and we know that it is agonizingly remote. But the course is set and to give up because of delay is despair, and despair is the cardinal sin in a fighting man's religion, it is the cardinal sin in Judaism, for it spells the defeat of God. צפית לישועה, did you continue to hope for salvation, is one of the questions asked of every Jew at the Judgment Seat, according to one of the great rabbis (Sabbath 31a).

II

Before we proceed to the details of our task there must be a disclaimer at the threshold, namely, as if Agada excluded or lowered Halakah. There is a wickedness of human nature which leads man to think that he cannot praise one thing without denouncing another. That there can be and indeed on occasion must be, within a given context of two related but contrasting elements, a cult and cultivation of both, a mutual supplementation, a perception that they secretly intercommunicate and feed each other, though on the surface they may seem to antagonize and negate each other, is the higher and more adult view, the mark of the genuinely integral and matured mind. But "all things excellent are as rare as they are difficult" we have been told by a Jewish thinker; and אלו ואלו דברי אלהים חיים of the old Rabbis is far more than a homily of easy tolerance, it is a deep and difficult lesson concerning reality which mankind will have to teach itself because it is so rare by reason of its excellence.

A wickedness of human nature, we have said, an almost inevitable temptation to stress one element at the expense of another. We see it exemplified at every turn in the history of religions and of our religion. True, in the Bible, i. e. of course in the Old Testament, the ideal of an equilibrium between Agada and Halakah, as embodying the two great concerns of the religious mind, is most nearly attained. Taking Agada as the summary designation for Prophets and Psalms, and Halakah to stand for the codes, which for all their brevity and bareness are the backbone of the whole system, we may say that the Halakah is a product of the Agada: the Agada feeds Halakah in the sense that

the codes are a precipitate and crystallization of Prophets and the Prophetic mind early and late; and that in turn the Prophets rest upon the laws of righteous living for their support, and when these laws have hardened or when they persist in their more primitive phase they tend to be dissolved again into an "Agada" from which they emerge re-fashioned.

But apart from this supreme example of equilibrium in the Hebrew Bible, which however must remain an unstable equilibrium as in any living organism, the rest is a story of a shift from one extreme to another. Jesus and Paul are antinomians. The Protestant Reformation professes itself a revolt of the living faith against the dead works of the Roman Church. With us Hasidism is a similar stress of the soul and spirit, of ecstatic enthusiasm, against the rigidity and dryness of Rabbinic rationalism and routine Mitzwot. And to top them all, Reform Judaism in its first classic phase was a rejection of the whole ritual and pattern of orthodoxy in favor of a few grandiloquent Agadot such as "the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man."

There is no doubt that codes and patterns tend to harden and to become purely external motions of hands and lips, inspiring recurrent rebellion of the heart and spirit. But there is equally no doubt of the opposite. The most glorious spirit in the world will evaporate into thin air and even into self-righteous gush if not given honesty and reality by a hard discipline of doing and behavior, of observance and performance. This is a basic matter of physiology and psychology. You cannot have a living organism without a skeletal framework, or a building without a scaffolding, and you cannot have a pure life of the spirit without issuance into hands and legs, without articulation and organization of the medium in which it is to work. That medium is the body and time.

In general there is no great feeling without the discipline of high burdens. We can earn our emotions too cheaply. We are never quite willing to pay for them. Hence the danger of all high "Agada," i. e. of music and poetry and prophetic exhortation and ecstasy, which furnish men emotions they have no right to unless they have lived and worked to merit them. Agada is rightly a reward and a זכות for those who have shouldered Halakah.

We must learn to see both sides of both demands, to take the fat with the lean, the danger with the profit. The trouble is that value and danger are distributed unevenly: where the value is apparent the danger is hidden, and conversely where the danger is apparent the value is hidden. In the case of the codes the danger is obvious, namely externalization; but the need and service, though deeper-lying, are

utterly indispensable. In the case of the prophecy and poetry the need and service are obvious, for the spirit is goal and essence of the whole set-up; but the danger, though deeper-lying, is deadly. Your organism will die down as your spirit grows less; but your spirit will vanish unless you capture and harness it. You are caught between two necessities equally imperative. It may be a tragedy that pure spirit in man cannot subsist without body, as it certainly is a tragedy when body loses its informing and quickening soul.

Consider, as a classic instance of the intertwining of Halakah and Agada, the rite of circumcision. The supreme Prophet of the Hebrew Bible, Jeremiah, one of the great spiritual seers of all time, demands a circumcision of the heart, i. e. he envisages the replacement and spiritualization of a ritual act which has its beginnings in a dim barbaric past. "Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem" (Jer. 4.4). "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. . . . I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it" (Jer. 31.31–33). And in Deuteronomy, that great re-statement of the Law under the influence of the Prophets (for the scholars regard it as a product of the Jeremianic School, and it would be a fine example of the purging of Halakah by Agada), the simple injunction "Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart" (Deut. 10.16).

All this is superb, but the wisdom of the Jewish genius matches it with grim humor in the daily grace after meals. This prayer enumerates God's various benefactions to Israel, land, redemption from bondage in Egypt, gift of Torah, gift of life and food, and conspicuous in their very midst is the sign and seal of circumcision. "We thank thee O Lord our God because thou didst give as an heritage unto our fathers . . . . as well as for the covenant which thou hast sealed in our flesh. . . ." ועל בריתך שחתמת בבשרנו.

Now which of these two demands shall we go by? Shall it be the circumcision of the heart as the far-off goal of all men and of all aspiration, dropping by the wayside the hard and ineffaceable discipline of the flesh, without which however we collapse and the demand of the heart evaporates? Or shall we retain the discipline of the flesh, knowing full well that the flesh may be weak when the spirit is willing, but also knowing that the flesh is the only vehicle of the spirit if the spirit wishes to abide? Heart is heart, but as the latest and therefore frailest of all human developments it has only the strength of an aspiration; and flesh is only flesh but, if you cut into it, it serves as

an everpresent reminder. This is one of many instances in which the Jewish genius shows its poise and power by doing justice to two equally imperative but alternating and jealous claims. The circumcision of the heart is the goal for mankind and for the Jew; and for the Jew the circumcision of the flesh in addition is part of the slow schooling and the inexorable reminder of his special role in the advent of the kingdom of the heart.

The greatest Agadist of our time, Bialik, has written the most powerful defence of Halakah in modern Hebrew letters. He, not only our greatest poet, but also the indefatigable collector and anthologist of the Agada, and its subtle and percipient interpreter, has nevertheless also perceived the danger of the undue emphasis of the merely Agadic, i. e. of the supposedly spiritual, when standing alone and without the counterbalancing action of the Halakic mood and frame of mind, which is of course the willingness to assume disciplines and burdens. And it is because of the special temptation of Agada for the modern Jew, and because of the modern Jew's special unwillingness to accept Halakah, that we indulge here in this divagation in defence of Halakah before we return to an exposition of the values and function of Agada.

Let us see again what is the most telling thing that can be said against the Halakic code and mood. Let us start with the most famous utterances, those of Jesus about the Sabbath being made for man, not man for the Sabbath; about things that come out of the mouth rendering unclean and not the things which enter it; or Paul's summary claim for a man who is truly "in Christ" as having lost the very capacity for sin. It sounds gorgeous, but the problem is by no means solved. The real and serious soul does not need the exemption from the law to gain spirit. Those who are exempted or exempt themselves are not thereby possessors of the spirit. It is precisely those who want to make things easy for themselves who welcome the comforting assurance of exemption. Paul and Jesus say things that sound true, but they only flatter us. They point to the dangers of mere observance without pointing to its indispensable function; and to the value of spirit without pointing to its volatility and its high pretentiousness. When was anyone by believing himself truly "in Christ" freed from the capacity for sin? Was it Paul himself? Is not lapse and relapse the law of our life as it was of Paul's? And was Jesus able to dispense with the Sabbath or with the Law generally? Did he not use the Sabbath for worship and preaching, and by his own express assurance the Law for living? Antinomianism in and by itself is everywhere a

self-delusion on the part of those who too easily absolve themselves, those who are impatient with the Nomos but have no Pneuma to match it.

In the case of Reformed Judaism it is wise to remember its origin, the rhythm of its historic course, and its probable future attitude towards the Law. Reformed Judaism is by no means a fixed, static, unchanging religious philosophy. In its beginning (1835–1848) a movement of prophetic fervor, a rebellion against the decrepit and sordid exterior which overlaid the surface of the ancient faith, it was almost perforce a negation of forms and rituals which seemed to have become a dead letter. But negation by itself leads to the emptying of content. It has happened that the extreme of negation was reached when the whole of Judaism was reduced, almost always by laymen who having neither Halakah nor Agada had no right to speak in the name of Judaism, to the single formula of the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. That of course is a pompous hollow phrase since it usually does not imply the slightest difference in the mode of life of those who utter it. But the negations of Reform were almost always less extensive and less deep than appeared. Much more of substantive Judaism was retained than was confessed. And while Halakah will never be allowed its old dominion in Reformed Judaism, there can be no doubt that more and more of it will be re-appropriated as time goes on, for there can be no Judaism without Halakah. The only question is, how much.

Moreover the lines of demarcation and mutual exclusion between Agada and Halakah are by no means as real in the history of religions as they seem on the surface. Catholicism is not all "works"; it is full of the richest kind of "faith" from Augustine to Francis of Assisi. Conversely Protestantism is by no means all "faith"; it very soon hardens into an orthodoxy of reform; and there is nothing within Catholicism quite so depressing as the gloomy and morose mood of Calvinistic Halakah. And that in turn was balanced by Pietism and Mysticism. Obviously then something of both Halakah and Agada must enter into every religion, the only problem being how to obtain and maintain the requisite equilibrium.

To return to our own religion, Rabbinic Judaism is by no means all routine Mitzwot: there is the quiet devotion of Kawwana in the most prosaic weekday service, and on Yom Tov and the High Holydays the atmosphere is instinct with it.

Hasidism is so far from being mere spirituality that Shneor Zalman, its finest mind and its theorist, writes a special enriched redaction of

the Shulhan Aruch. Then Hasidism itself for all its Hitlahavut or Conflagration settles down to a routine, and the routine alas degenerates often into a magic of intercession.

The problem always is to maintain faith and works both together in their vitality and mutual enrichment, for each is an incomplete half. Works tend to become magic, a mere opus operatum; spirit tends to become hollow grandiloquence, fatuous and complacent. Judaism has never failed to insist on the less attractive, the less popular, the prime indispensable of behavior and performance; but it has also the richest kind of enveloping religiosity. *To this latter it has a right* since it has never neglected the former, and we turn therefore with good conscience to a further exposition of Agada.

III

Hebraism and Hellenism are regarded as the two component factors of our modern Western culture. The formulation was made by Ernest Renan, a thoughtful student of Christian and Jewish origins and of their impact on the modern world, and was rendered current among the English-speaking peoples in a famous essay by Matthew Arnold. It is a grand simplification and still true. The two forces are of course distinctive and different ("doing" and "knowing" says Arnold in his summary way) and for that reason may seek to ally themselves into an integral whole. But there must also be kinship and affinity for alliance; and that general kinship and affinity merges at one particular point into identity. Where the Hellenic genius inclines away from Hellenism and towards Hebraism, in the Platonic Socrates and in the mature Plato, *the primacy of the Good* brings Hellenism into closest proximity with the core and essence of Hebraism. Plato is, in Philo's phrase, a Moses talking Greek.

At the threshold of Midrash Rabbah, which is the most monumental and impressive of all the Midrashim, there stands as prelude and, so to speak, as keynote of all of Midrash, a monolithic Platonic utterance, which bases itself on a similar Platonism in the Bible, namely the passage in praise of the primeval Wisdom in Prov. 8.22–32, and is followed in the Midrash by the Jewish selection among the infinite Platonic essences or forms of the seven which it alone needs and wants. Let us examine the first keynote utterance.

"In the beginning." In explanation of this first verse of the first chapter of Genesis, R. Hoshaya the Elder quotes Prov. 8.30 "Then I was by Him as a nursling, and I was daily all delight." Do not read *Amon* (nursling), read *Uman* (artist or architect). What the Torah or

Wisdom is saying in that verse in Proverbs is this: I was God's architectural tool at creation. In human practice when a mortal king builds a palace he does not build it from his own knowledge but from the knowledge of an architect. And the architect does not build it from his own knowledge but relies on parchments and tablets (blueprints) in order to know how to make the chambers and how to make the doors. *Thus God looked on the Torah as he created the world,* כך היה הקב"ה מביט בתורה ובורא את העולם. And the Torah itself says in confirmation, '*With* the beginning God created,' where "Beginning" can mean nothing but Torah, as is witnessed by the word "Beginning" in Prov. 8.22 'The Lord possessed me (namely the primeval Wisdom or Torah) as the Beginning of his way.' Thus far R. Hoshaya the Elder.

"Beginning" therefore may be a temporal beginning, a beginning in time, but it may also be a logical or intrinsic beginning, a beginning in reality, what we call a principle, just as in Greek ἀρχή may mean a beginning in time, or a first cause and first principle. That principle or timeless beginning is Wisdom or Torah. God created the world in the image and by the instrumentality of that true Beginning which is Wisdom or Torah.

This is not an isolated utterance, it is the common property of the Midrash. Thus the widely known and popular Tanhuma begins on exactly the same note. " 'In the beginning God created.' This is what Scripture has in mind when it says 'The Lord founded the earth with Wisdom' (Prov. 3.19). And as God went on to create his world he took counsel with the Torah נתיעץ בתורה and so created the world." The Targum Yerushalmi translates the opening word בראשית quite simply בחוכמא, as if no further explanation were necessary. The Yalkut on the great text in Gen. 1.26 "And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness," has the words "God said to the Torah, let us make man," אמר הקב"ה לתורה נעשה אדם (Yalkut Shimeoni, Article 13, p. 4b, Col. 1, and Pirke Eliezer, Ch. 11, ed. Luria, 27b).

In the Midrash then the Torah, identified with the primeval Wisdom, is the blue-print, the objectified mind of God, but also the instrumental power, i. e. both the plan and the architect, which God employs in the creation of the world and of man.

The idea is already present, if not in such definite terms certainly clearly enough, in the Biblical original to which we have been referring throughout, namely the great poem in Prov. 8.22–32, where Wisdom-Torah, the first of God's works, is present at creation, and not merely delights in the beauty of creation as it proceeds, but is implicitly the means whereby, in contrast to the account in Genesis, creation is not an arbitrary act of divine omnipotence but precisely a cosmos. The

exact degree of participation and subordination of Torah-Wisdom in the act of creation, which busies the commentators, need not detain us here, since in any case participation in the act of creation and subordination to God are both true. So likewise, how far the hypostasis of Wisdom-Torah as the mind or intelligent will of God has taken place (here or in the Wisdom of Solomon 9.9 "And with thee is wisdom which knoweth thy works and was present when thou wast making the world") need not concern us; in any case it is sufficiently separate from God to confront God with a degree of independence. Further the Biblical scholars seem on the whole to feel that the poem in praise of Wisdom in Proverbs is indigenous, native to Israel, which would be a welcome confirmation of the view that a certain basic Platonism is one of the original motifs of the human mind whenever it rises to speculation.

But the passage at the beginning of Genesis Rabbah in the name of R. Hoshaya is certainly not independent of Greek influence. Bacher (in the old *JQR* III, 357–360 and in *Agada d. palästin. Amoräer* I, 107, note) has shown the exact parallel to this passage in Philo (De Opificio Mundi, 4), and indicated Origen who lived in Caesarea as the probable source of Hoshaya's knowledge (*ibid.* I 92). Origen, the Alexandrian Church Father, was precisely the man to be full of Philo, and residing as Bishop in Caesarea, and in constant learned intercourse for his Biblical and exegetical studies with the great Jewish scholars resident in Caesarea, would almost certainly have been in touch with Hoshaya who had his academy in Caesarea.

Philo however is faithfully Platonic. His God proceeds like the Demiurge in the Timaeus (28a). He consults the Torah-Wisdom as pattern like an architect who, in his mind's eye, consults a model, ἀποβλέπων εἰς τὸ παράδειγμα, and then conceives in mind the archetypes or forms of the world before he creates the corresponding empirical things, ἐνενόησε τοὺς τύπους αὐτῆς. And some such conception must have prevailed in the mind of the author of the poem in Prov. 8, since he is concerned with the individual beauties and orders of creation. But Hoshaya is interested in the summary and concentrated meaning of the procedure, which is that the Torah is certainly cause of the world but only its final or purposive cause, its goal and meaning. God created the world for the sake of Torah, i. e. for the sake of goodness, with a view to the realization or domination of Torah or goodness. Similarly in Plato the whole system of "Ideas" culminates in the Idea of the Good, which thus constitutes its ultimate meaning. And shortly after Hoshaya's statement we have a confirmation of this Rabbinic concentration of Plato's thought in the utterance

of R. Benaya (which a little later *is put into the mouth of God himself*): "The world and the fullness thereof were created only for the sake of the Torah." העולם ומלואו לא נברא אלא בזכות התורה (Gen. R., ed. Wilna. Romm, 8a and 10a).

Platonism itself is one of the supreme motifs of the history of philosophy, possibly the one single greatest theme in the whole range of philosophical speculation. Its coincidence with the central thought of Judaism is therefore of worldhistoric significance. That all visible things are created and guided by "heavenly" archetypes, according to perfect and deathless patterns ("burning seeds in the hands of God" in Browning's great phrase describing Shelley's Platonism), is only a partial statement of the doctrine, and still does not reach the centre. It is indeed the view of Platonism that the species and genera of the organic world everywhere in their individual exemplars are fashioned in the image of unitary ideal prototypes; and further that planets and stars in their courses and the atoms in their orbits traverse geometrical patterns and obey mathematical laws. But further than that, all mathematical validities, all true relations generally, subsist in a timeless being; *they are*; they constitute the ultimate substance or reality, waiting to be beheld or "discovered" by some chance mind, and waiting for a possible embodiment or translation into empirical reality of at least one portion of their infinite plenitude. But further than that, all moral and aesthetic validities, what we call the moral ideals and the endless shapes and varying types of beauty, "the light of God in which we see light," are a further and even higher region or realm of "Ideas." In his sad, pensive, profound way, Socrates is made to say concerning the ideal commonwealth in the Republic (592 a b), "In heaven perhaps there is laid up a pattern of it, which he who desires may behold and beholding may set his house in order."

The patterns of the true, the beautiful, and the good, the world of values and ideals, if these be considered not as chance thoughts in our heads or soap-bubble aspirations, but the ultimate stuff of reality, of which we get some dim inkling if we have the זכות; infinitely realer than the so-called real things, for sun and stars can burn up, get born and die, but these no fire can burn, no mildew can touch, they are indestructible, they simply are. We call them "the light of God" from which or whom they come as inspiration; but Plato did without a personal God (the later demiurge or creator in the Timaeus is on a totally different and lower plane). His system was indeed Godhead and with a centre, but that centre he designated impersonally as Idea of the Good, the Idea of Ideas. The Idea of the Good as the core of reality occupies the same place within the system of essences and

forms as the sun in our planetary system: as the sun renders things not merely visible and knowable but is also the source of their growth and being, so the Idea of the Good is according to Plato the why and wherefore of all the other ideas, they have their ground in that central invisible sun (Rep. 509). And it is this central thought which unites Platonism with Judaism: the Good as the heart and ground of all being and reality. The Rabbis call it Torah, Plato the Idea of the Good. R. Hoshaya's opening utterance as the overture to Midrash marks the august marriage of Hebraism with Hellenism.

A metaphysic whose ultimate principle or final reality is the Good, a moralistic metaphysic, binds Judaism and Platonism together: that is what constitutes them together the spiritual basis of our modern world. But in the further development Judaism follows its own nature, its own practical bent. It does not indulge in the play of ideas. It makes an austere selection. What it takes it really needs and converts into muscle. Greeks and Germans have a plethora of ideas, ideas both in the modern depressed and obliterated sense of thoughts or notions, as in the grand realistic and substantial sense of Plato, some of them needed and used, but most of them unused, and cheapening and festering through disuse. In the same Parasha following Hoshaya's initial declaration there is an enumeration of the seven Ideas which the Rabbis have distinguished for the high status of primeval forms or essences present before creation. Besides its conspicuous position here, the passage (with some variations) occurs twice in the Talmud (Pesaḥim 54a; Nedarim 39b), and many times in Midrashic literature, so it must be regarded as a known and received doctrine. Our text here in Genesis R. seems to be the most authentic and serviceable one.

Accordingly we are first told of six Things or Words (a seventh is later to follow) concerning which it is expressly said that they preceded the creation of the world. And of these six, two are reserved for a special first place within the group. These two are Torah and the Seat of Glory, but concerning both we must make a preliminary remark at once. The Torah originally, as we saw, stands for the whole sum of Ideas, for the objectified mind of God so to speak, at least for the concentration of them all in the purpose of God, in the "final" cause of creation. Here it seems to be just one of the Ideas co-ordinated with the others. The Seat of Glory is the veiled designation almost of God himself, certainly of his prime attribute, namely dynamic power, which as we also saw was at first reserved for Torah, conceived not merely as plan but also as architect. However, something of the old balance in favor of Torah is presently restored. For

the question is raised as to which of these two firsts has the further priority, and the decision is made in favor of Torah, so that in a sense Torah becomes prior to God himself. After these two absolutely primary Beings, four further forms or essences are enumerated: the Patriarchs, Israel, the Temple, and the Name of the Messiah. These are the constituent categories of history and temporal event, from its beginning in the "founding fathers" of the chosen people to its culmination in the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. That Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are heavenly ideas, above all, that Israel is a timeless and ideal prototype, can mean only the enormous sense of the unique role to be played by this people as the bearer of Torah from God to the world. The Heavenly Temple is of course the ideal prototype of all earthly places of true worship. And the name of the Messiah, in which the virtue and potency of the Messiah is concentrated, assumes the final victorious realization of the Messianic Kingdom.

With pathos and with humor a seventh Idea is singled out for the high status of pre-mundane existence or subsistence, namely Repentance. It is chosen because it is indispensable. Without its beneficent presence and protection men simply could not get on; it is the pathetic reminder of the incessant drama and vicissitude of man's moral life.

The culminating debate as to which of the seven has the real primacy, even after the question seems to have been settled, is the most interesting part of the whole passage. With his tongue in his cheek, one rabbi proves that "the Idea of Israel preceded them all," מחשבתן של ישראל קדמה לכל. Israel takes precedence over Torah itself, as Torah had taken precedence over the Seat of Glory. And therewith the matter is allowed to rest.

What tremendous consciousness of worldhistoric mission animated these men, despite the touch of humor and irony in the expression of the claim: a consciousness supported by the grandeur of tragedy which overshadowed them, but a consciousness which in more relaxed moments they summoned all the resources of great humor to lighten and to render plausible and palatable.

IV

The present section, dealing with suffering and its implications for the varied aspects of Theology and Philosophy, is the most important and most extensive of our entire study. For greater clarity we have articulated it into three parts: 1) a preliminary summary of the

philosophical themes involved; 2) a series of Midrashic texts illustrative of or in some way relevant to these themes; 3) a fuller exposition of the philosophical themes under discussion as well as of related subjects in philosophy to which they lead.

I.

"The earth is soaked with the tears of humanity from its crust to its centre" is the reasoned opinion of Dostoyevsky's profoundest character in his greatest work (*The Brothers Karamazov*, 256). And Schelling in his profoundest essay speaks of "the veil of sadness which is spread over all nature, the deep ineffaceable melancholy of all life" (*Menschl. Freiheit*, ed. Meiner, 72; ed. Fuhrmans, 64, Eng. tr., 79, "der Schleier der Schwermut, der über die ganze Natur ausgebreitet ist, die tiefe unzerstörliche Melancholie alles Lebens.")

It isn't merely the fact of suffering where that is an inevitable incident in the process of growth, or where it is compensated by fruit and flower of richer and deeper life. Such things we could understand and accept. Nor could we object to suffering which comes as inevitable retribution for foolish and wicked behavior. But where the suffering is out of all proportion to the spiritual results which ensue; and above all where the suffering falls to the lot of those who do not deserve to suffer, first the innocent, and secondly the good and true, that becomes the most stunning and paralyzing experience of the human soul, the most awesome paradox of the whole spiritual life.

Transfiguration of suffering therefore looms as the most pressing task imposed on the thinking mind, and if successful would be the rescuing of God, the restoring of God to the place he claims in our reverence.

The Greeks met the problem by inventing the art-form of Tragedy, the highest of all art-forms as dealing with the deepest of all problems.

The Jews faced it on an even higher plane: in the grand Bible generation by the invention of the supreme images of the human race, the Suffering Servant and Job; in the Rabbinic period by the coining and phrasing of supreme categories in which a sublime solution is compressed and enshrined, יסורין של אהבה and חביבין יסורין; and finally in their history, with their own body, with their own living person, as the most signal and paradigmatic sufferer. They are protagonists in the most august drama, the making of man. They are the people whose actual course of life furnishes the material for the apotheosis in Isa. 53, and the image there conceived is so supreme that it was borrowed and used to invest the central figure of the Christian religion.

Now what does transfiguration mean? Is it a word or a reality? What does it come to? What do the good achieve in taking over the sins and sorrows of the world, in a word by doing God's work for him?

The assertion of God in a godless world is the supreme act of religion. It is a continuing of the act of creation on the highest plane. It adds slowly to the area and substance of the Kingdom of God and to the stature of God, the translation of God as ideal and vision into the God of empirical embodiment and of power. Man in whom God's creative effort had achieved a provisional pinnacle, so to speak God's own self-consciousness of his aims, becomes from now on God's confronting partner, and the two together a re-enforcing polarity of give and take. They become allies in the most redoubtable of all struggles and for the greatest of all stakes. They are inevitably lovers, and both of them tragic heroes. But in a very real sense the fate of God and of the future rests on the heroism of man, on what he elects to do, for he is the manifesting God and the focus of decision.

The enormously difficult idea of growth, the idea that the reality of a thing can be still in the making and is to be found only in its fullness and completion, only at the end, not at the beginning; the difficult idea of the reality of time in which something genuinely new can come into being, that is, something not explicable merely in terms of what preceded: — these lead to the thought that God cannot possibly be anywhere but at the end, the קץ, the culmination or consummation. And a change in the very character of God must take place. This is due to the re-entrance into himself of the saints and heroes who have lived and died על קדוש השם, so that he becomes more and more like the best whom he has inspired, more and more a lover, from being at first primarily artist and dramatist. Without such an enrichment and deepening in the character of God himself there can be no intelligent religion for future mankind.

And tragedy from being at first a high necessity must in the event continue as mere necessity. It can become a danger, a danger of masochism or sadism, a danger cutting at the roots of life. It must be out-topped by humor, which redresses the balance and renders us sane. And humor leads to the final thought of the charge of Hybris, the charge of delusions of grandeur on the part of man. That thought is the serpent of skepticism sapping the lifeblood of all heroism. The charge of Hybris against man's high endeavor is Satan's most subtle seduction. But man must radically change in order to make himself immune against such seduction. He must stop being conceited in his outward bearing and impotent in his inward substance, as he is at

present; he must be overwhelmed by humility in his outward bearing, because inwardly he is filled with a sense of supreme and decisive destiny.

2.

Love stands at the beginning, the lover's love which chooses one amongst many, the beloved's love which returns the love in single-hearted devotion, the love which is proof against the trials and sorrows that love brings in its train because of the hatred aroused in others. The capacity for love is the prime mark of genius, and love is the main means in discovering new areas of truth, in finding new regions of being, which no merely intellectual agency by itself could find. Hence the ecstatic utterance concerning love by the greatest name in all Christian thinking, Augustine: "I loved not yet, yet I loved to love. I sought what I might love, in love with loving. *Nondum amabam et amare amabam, quaerebam quid amarem, amans amare*" (*Confessions*, beginning of Book III). And the Song of Songs has been the classic text of all deeper religiosity from Akiba to Bernard of Clairvaux. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," "Thou shalt love thy neighbor," in a word, "Thou shalt love," — although it is known in sober fact that love is an emotion which cannot be commanded.

Our basic text here is accordingly taken from the Song of Songs: "For I am sick with love", כי חולת אהבה אני (2.5): I am love-sick, love has made me sick. Love can be so ecstatic as to invade normal physical health, and this initial paradox that even on the plane of the natural life what should be wholesome and salutary can, when it becomes intense, turn upon itself and threaten the life which it suffuses, this initial conjunction of love with pain, sounds the sombre keynote to all the higher phases of love. For unmistakably on the higher plane of the spiritual life love moves within the shadow of suffering.

The Midrashic exposition of this text unfolds the theme of Jewish history: "All the sicknesses which thou bringest upon me are for the purpose of making me love thee, or in order to make me lovable . . . . all the sicknesses which the nations bring upon me are only because I love thee . . . . . though I am sick thou still lovest me . . . ." (Cant. R., Romm, 15a, col. 2). It is the watchword of Jewish history: they hate me because I love you, and you love me though I am sick and stricken.

Our next text is likewise from the Song of Songs: "Many waters cannot quench love" (8.7). The love which binds together God and his chosen servant by reason of the infinitely precious gift which they together bring to the world, to a world unready and unwilling to

accept it; the love which inevitably must subsist between God and his chosen servant in the face of the overshadowing and overwhelming antagonism of this world; the love which ties God and his servant together in closest union and mutual alliance: — that love is an emotion which the world resents and which it tries to dissolve by attempting to separate the two, to turn one against the other. But God's love for Israel is not to be quenched.

"Many waters: these are the nations of the world. Cannot quench love: the love which God bears to Israel, as it says, I have loved you (Mal. 1.2). Or, many waters cannot quench love: these are the idolators, for even if all the idolators were to assemble to quench the love between God and Israel, they would be powerless, as it says, Yet I loved Jacob (Mal. 1.2)." (Cant. R., Romm, 40a; Exod. R., Romm, 79a; Num. R., Romm, 7a).

Thus far the love which God bears towards Israel. But the love which Israel bears God has a far heavier burden to carry, namely disaster, death, martyrdom. How it is to fare under this shadow of death furnishes its most tragic and formidable task of transfiguration and re-interpretation, but they have in Akiba a master of love and martyrdom to speak for them and to set the tone.

Akiba speaks, in a poem in which this master of love and death sums up and transfigures the quintessence of his life. For the nations of the world which appear so eager for God in the poem are a fond anticipation of the poet and in present fact are the Roman executioners flaying him alive; and the God for whom Akiba is so utterly happy to die must surely be a wonderful God if he can so irradiate the martyr's face, though in actual fact that God is still unable to prevent the martyrdoms for his holy name's sake.

Akiba speaks: "I shall tell of the beauties and praises of God before all the nations of the world. For all the nations of the world ask Israel saying, 'What is thy beloved more than another beloved (Cant. 5.9) that you are so ready to die for him and so ready to let yourselves be killed for him? For it is said, "Therefore do the maidens, עלמות, love thee" (Cant. 1.3), meaning they love thee unto death, עד מות; and it is also written, Nay but for thy sake are we killed all the day' " (Ps. 44.23).

At this point in the dialogue the nations turn their gaze in admiration on the tragic heroic lover Israel, and exclaim "You are handsome, you are mighty, come and intermingle with us." But the Israelites say to the nations of the world: "Do you really know him? Let us but tell you some of his praise: My beloved is white and ruddy" (Cant. 5.10). Here the nations express themselves ready to join Israel. But

Israel in the stress and fervor of the emotion and in the language of true love replies: "My beloved is mine and I am his," דודי לי ואני לו, "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine," אני לדודי ודודי לי (Cant. 2.16 and 6.3), i. e. you have no share in him. Any true lovers know that love is a closed circle, love is lost in its object, lost to all the world beside. And a mere request on the part of some admiring outsider to be allowed to join in, is felt to be, in the face of the red-hot emotion, unreal and not authentic. Love must first be allowed to take its own exalted course, and the rest, namely a universal sharing, will come in due time (Mekilta, ed. Lauterbach, II 26; ed. Friedmann, 37a; ed. Weiss, 44ab).

And now we must put the crucial question. What is it that inspires this love of Akiba-Israel? What new vision, what higher insight, has slowly arisen and come to the fore to feed the fire and generate the power with which to withstand suffering, — to enable man to love God in a world in which God himself is still lamentably weak, a world in which God and man both are only like heroes in some tragic drama: defeated, and victorious only in the spirit?

It is a twofold insight of a new order of being whereby suffering becomes transmuted and meaningful. In a series of images and parables the thought is brought home to them in full self-consciousness, to Akiba, to the rabbis, to Israel, to future men for whom these are the prefigurations, that, in a growing world like ours, only when the old self is crushed and broken can a higher self emerge, and only if we transcend and forget the petty arithmetic of our private life and go on to include and assume the burdens of others do we rise to a higher life. This double insight takes the sting out of suffering and completely inverts its status, raising it from madness to creative heroism.

R. Abba b. Yudan said: "Whatever God has declared unfit in the case of an animal he has declared desirable in the case of man. In animals he declared unfit the blind or broken or maimed or having a wen (Lev. 22.22), but in men he has declared the broken and contrite heart to be desirable."

R. Alexandri said: "If an ordinary person makes use of broken vessels it is a disgrace for him, but the vessels used by God are precisely broken ones, as it is said, 'The Lord is nigh to the broken-hearted' (Ps. 34.19); 'Who healeth the broken in heart' (Ps. 147.3); 'I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit' (Isa. 57.15); 'The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart O God thou wilt not despise' " (Ps. 51.19). (Pesikta 158b and Lev. R., Romm 11a, col. 2).

R. Alexandri's utterance is so sublime that even slight variants in

the text are to be noted. In Lev. R. the reading is אבל הקב"ה כלי תשמישו שבורים, "God's service vessels are broken"; in Pesikta אלא כל שימושיו כלים שבורים, all of God's servants are broken vessels: the Pesikta reading seems to be the fuller and the more preferable.

And it may be noted in this connection that the image, the concept, the phrase "broken-hearted" enters the world-consciousness from these verses in the Psalms.

We go on. " 'My beloved is unto me as a bag of myrrh' (Cant. 1.13)... Just as myrrh is the most excellent of spices, so Abraham was the chief of all righteous men. Just as myrrh gives off its perfume only when brought into the fire, so the worth of Abraham was not known till he was cast into the fiery furnace".... (Cant. R., Romm, 12a, col. 2).

So we read in an English poet writing out of a religious mood: "Must Thou char the wood ere Thou canst limn with it?" (Francis Thompson, Hound of Heaven).

And back to our Midrash: "Just as oil is improved only by beating, so Israel is brought to repentance only by suffering." (Cant. R., Romm, 6b col. 1).

When Abraham stayed at home he was like a flask of myrrh with a tight fitting lid and lying in a corner. Only when opened and scattered to all the winds can its fragrance be disseminated. Hence לך לך, go and expend yourself. (Cant. R., Romm, 6b col. 2; Gen. R. 79 a Col. 1).

We now come to the famous group of parables on the text in Ps. 11.5, "The Lord tries the righteous." The question is, why should God try the righteous? The righteous do not need to be tried, they are already "tried and true." It is the wicked who should be tried; or are the wicked not even good enough to be tried? There is an inversion here of what one would naturally expect.

"R. Jonathan said: 'A potter does not test defective vessels, because he cannot give them a single blow without breaking them. Similarly God does not test the wicked but only the righteous, thus the Lord trieth the righteous.' R. Jose b. R. Hanina said: 'When a flax-worker knows that his flax is of good quality, the more he pounds it the more it improves and the more it glistens; but if it is of inferior quality he cannot beat it at all without its splitting. Similarly the Lord does not test the wicked but only the righteous, as it says The Lord trieth the righteous.' R. Eleazer said: 'When a man possesses two cows, one strong and the other feeble, upon which does he put the yoke? Surely upon the strong one. Similarly the Lord tests none but the righteous; hence The Lord trieth the righteous.' "

And in its purest, almost intolerably poignant form, the exquisite

phrase concerning the lover in the Song of Songs, "He feedeth among the lilies," is transferred from its erotic setting to the awesome tragic plane of the Divine Lover who by preference feeds among the lilies, that is, tries and breaks the tender and noble. . "God's rod comes only upon those whose heart is soft like the lily" (Cant. R., Romm, 19a). — אין שרביטו של הקב"ה ממשמש ובא אלא בבני אדם שלבם רך כשושנים.

These pantragic parables have but one meaning: the good must bear the burden of the bad and the strong that of the weak. The parables occur repeatedly, twice in the Rabbot, twice in the Tanḥuma and once in Midrash Tehillim, so that obviously they were an inalienable possession of the rabbinic mind, part and parcel of the thinking Jewish mind.

The sentiment gradually established itself that it is a mark of the grandeur of man to be asked to bear more than his share of the burden; and by the same token that the supreme degradation of the low and the base is not to be thought worthy of being ennobled through bearing the sins and sorrows of others.

And this theme of vicarious responsibility and vicarious suffering, "in which the heavy and the weary weight of all this unintelligible world is lightened," no matter how honorable for the good and the strong and how derogatory to the drags and the burdens, rises to tragic sublimity in the passages which openly proclaim Israel's atoning martyrdom.

"As the dove stretches out her neck to the slaughter, so do the Israelites, for it is said, 'For thy sake are we killed all day long' (Ps. 44.22). As the dove atones for sins, so the Israelites atone for the nations, for the seventy oxen which they offer on the festival of Tabernacles represent the seventy peoples so that the world may not be left desolate of them; as it says, 'In return for my love they are become my adversaries, but I am all prayer' " (Ps. 119.4). (Cant. R., Romm, 13a and 23a).

A final set of phrases must be considered in which the rabbinic mind enshrined an answer without parable or argument. Such are the great lapidary utterances חביבין יסורין and יסורין של אהבה, "sufferings are a mark of God's love" and "sufferings are precious." They are question-begging, that is, in default of argument they are answers by fiat and decree, they are answers by heroism. The answer to the question why the good must suffer for the inadequacies of the world would be the fact that the world is growing, developing, and therefore inevitably defective, and there must be someone noble enough to assume the burden, as exemplification of a new insight, namely that nobility obligates, noblesse oblige. But the answer to the question as

to what kind of a God there is in such a world is a baffling one, since the alternative is that he is unwilling or unable, and neither answer is palatable. Man in his grandeur therefore takes upon himself the odium or onus which would otherwise rest on God and brushes it aside, and the rabbis invent the sublime locution with its flagrant and obvious paradox יסורין של אהבה, sufferings sent by love, chastisements out of love, in which God is allowed to remain the lover, strange though that may sound, and man is willing to take over for him. That had already been the case in the supreme image before their eyes, the Suffering Servant of Isa. 53, the essence of which they sum up in their present phrase. God's love and justice may be veiled and obscured, but man stands forth as all the more heroic. He is willing to take over for God. For what sane mind would not regard as madness the assertion that love can manifest itself by sending sufferings upon the beloved? "And all men kill the thing they love, by all let this be heard" (Wilde, *Ballad of Reading Gaol*) is a saying fit for a crazed pagan penitent, not for the true religious soul. However, because of a crushing dilemma, the rabbis speak of sufferings sent by love, sent by God out of love; they transcend the rational calculus, they save God's face and honor, and they continue the sublime paradox by saying that sufferings are precious. What sane mind would regard sufferings as precious? What sane lover would mark his love by sending sufferings? It is a sublime ecstasy whereby man outdoes God, where man proclaims and postulates God in a world in which God as real power is barely emerging and where God's impotence has to be covered, as Akiba did, the greatest of rabbis and the greatest of Jews, who died with the אחד on his lips in the hope of making the אחד a reality in the world some day, and whose supreme legacy to those who are great among Jews and to all future heroic mankind is the injunction to be עושין מאהבה ושמחין ביסורין, to act out of real love and therefore to rejoice in sufferings.

These are the heights; and the willing acceptance of suffering remains the high-water mark of the religious spirit from Isa. 53 where the image is supremely conceived (and from there borrowed for the central figure of the Christian religion) on to Yehuda Halevi (the deepest Jewish soul of the Middle Ages) who, in words at once the most sober and the most mystical (*Kuzari* I, 115 and IV, 22), asserts that if the Jews were to assume their persecution and sufferings willingly and not merely as a necessary evil, the magic efficacy and sheer suasive power of that truly religious act would overcome nature itself and bring on salvation at once. But, as he recognized himself, it is a sublimity beyond man, it can hardly serve as an everyday pattern of conduct, and a deliberate cult of it would undoubtedly lie

in the direction of the morbid. Suffering can be forced on us by fate, and then the best of us may hope to rise by ineluctable grandeur to the willing acceptance of it; but to envisage it as a steady goal is simply inhuman and is out of the question. That way lies masochism.

Hence we shall presently, under the guidance of the Rabbis, have to mark the limits of all suffering: — first, in the simple healthy humorous בשר ודם sense of who wants to suffer? but secondly also as cutting at the roots of life if (as is the danger of the best) it is raised to a tragic-heroic cult.

After that we can undertake as next step the great theme of man and God's mutual need of each other, their mutual implication and mutual cooperation.

However, before developing both of these themes we must bring to our attention God's own special suffering as the Rabbis conceive it: his weeping, his helplessness, his need of comfort. This is indispensable for a weighty reason: because it is the mythological form of expressing the philosophical thought of God's limited power in the world as it stands. In our Halakic creeds we may profess or assert theoretically an omnipotent God (as the great seer of the Exile facing the Zoroastrian dualists whose arguments surely struck home nevertheless insists on a single God though it makes God author of evil as of good, Isa. 45.7); but here in the realm of Agadic freedom we can afford to tell the truth as we feel it with the sharp sting of reality: God is a very finite God in the world of actual things. We can say it if only we say it in the form of images which are not binding as sober formulated creed but which have the supreme value of tacit admission and of irony. Hence the force and justification for the Agadic anthropomorphisms, the human all too human way of speaking the truth as one immediately feels it, and without definitive commitment to the letter.

Now let us look at the weeping God. First a general view: "When God remembers his children who dwell in misery among the nations of the world, he causes two tears to descend to the ocean and the sound is heard from one end of the world to the other" (Berakot 59a).

The weeping stricken God, who says of Israel "I am with him in his distress," עמו אנכי בצרה (Ps. 91.15), can be supremely distressed in his own person. The proems or introductions to Lamentations Rabba contain poems of great pathos and poignancy depicting this bowed and defeated God. It would be the shallowest of rationalisms to dismiss these as anthropomorphic vagaries. Anthropomorphisms are the device of our intelligence to say mythologically what we are afraid or unable to say in bald abstract prose: in the present case, that God and Israel

are the emerging higher principle in a world not ready for them, in a world which is still vastly stronger than they. Let us listen to one of the poems.

"In the hour when God determined to destroy the Temple, he said, 'So long as I am in its midst, the nations of the world will not touch it; but I will close my eyes so as not to see it and swear that I will not attach myself to it until the time of the End (the Messianic era) arrives, then the enemy can come and destroy it.' . . . Thereupon the enemy entered the Temple and burnt it. When it was burnt God said, 'Now I have no dwelling place in the land; I will withdraw my Shekinah from it and ascend to my former place.' In that hour God wept, באותה שעה היה הקב"ה בוכה, and said, 'Woe is me, what have I done? I caused my Shekinah to descend for the sake of Israel, and now that they have sinned I have returned to my former place. Heaven forbid that I should become a laughing stock to the nations and a scorn to men,' חס ושלום שהייתי שחוק לגוים ולעג לבריות. Then Metatron came and fell on his face and said, 'Let me weep but Thou must not weep.' Then God said, 'If thou sufferest me not to weep I will go to a place where thou hast no power to enter and I will weep there, as it is said "My soul shall weep in secret places (Jer. 13.17)." Then God said to the angels of the service, 'Come we will go, you and I, and we will see what the enemy has done to my house.' So God and the angels of the service set forth, Jeremiah leading the way. When God saw the Temple, he said, 'Assuredly this is my house and this is my place of rest into which the enemy has come and worked his will.' In that hour God wept. . . Then God said to Jeremiah, 'Go call Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and Moses from their graves, for they know how to weep' שהם יודעים לבכות. Then they all went weeping from one gate of the Temple to another, as a man whose dead lies before him. And God mourned and said, 'Woe to the King who in his youth succeeded but in his old age failed.' " — אוי לו למלך שבקטנותו הצליח ובזקנותו לא הצליח (Lam. R., Introduction 24, Romm, 6b col. 2).

The candor here leaves nothing to be desired. God's insistence upon the plain right of the grief-stricken to weep, however unbecoming to the dignity of a God, is especially touching. And as there is no greatness of thinking without audacity, the Rabbis go on to tell the truth about the whole business of comforting. First, it is a very doubtful business at best, of little value and efficacy; and secondly, if anyone can be said to be in need of comfort it is God, not Israel.

There is in the Pesikta de R. Kahana an entire section (ed. Buber, 123b–129a) devoted to homilies for the Sabbath following the Ninth of Ab, the so-called Shabbat Naḥamu, because the Haftarah for the

day is the great text from Isaiah 40, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people." But in the midst of the comforting there is a sudden halt and a complete about-face in mood, and someone invokes the text from Job (21.34) "How then comfort ye me in vain? And as for your answers, there remaineth only faithlessness." The prophets, namely, at God's request, proceed to Jerusalem to bring the message of comfort, but as each arrives with his word of consolation, Jerusalem listens blandly and retorts with another utterance from the same prophet flatly contradicting the first, whereupon the prophet has to retire crestfallen. Ten of them by name, from Hosea to Malachi, make their appearance in order and all receive the same treatment. They then set forth in company to God, and say to him, "Ribono shel Olam, Jerusalem refuses to be comforted." He answers, "Let us go together and bring her comfort" (changing the opening words of Isaiah to read not *Naḥamu naḥamu ammi* but *immi*, i. e. with me). And though God, in addition to himself and the prophets, brings to bear all the powers and agencies of the world on the same task, namely the upper and nether regions, the quick and the dead, the life here and the life to come, there is no indication that comfort is of any avail. On the contrary, there is so little efficacy in comfort that God himself is made the object of pity.

Our text proceeds with several parables the purport of which is unmistakable. When a King's palace is captured by the enemy and burnt, who is to be commiserated, the palace or the King? Surely the master of the palace. So with the Temple. God says, "Who is here in need of comfort? Surely I." Hence the opening words of Isa. 40 should properly read נחמוני נחמוני עמי, "Oh my people, comfort me, comfort me." And if a King has a vineyard which the enemy captures and lays waste, who is here in need of comfort? "Surely I," says God, with the same refrain, "Comfort me, comfort me, my people." And if a King has a flock of sheep that are attacked and killed by wolves: again the same refrain, "Comfort me, comfort me, my people" (Pesikta 126b–128b, with supplementary notes).

But comfort either for Israel or for God is of little avail. Tragedy can be overwhelming. In Pesikta Rabbati (138a–140b), in the passages corresponding to those cited above from Pesikta Kahana, when the culmination is reached, Jeremiah and Isaiah are made to vie with each other, Jeremiah pointing to the agonizing wounds and Isaiah uttering the words of comfort. But who can fail to feel the greater force of Jeremiah's outcry, "Let it not come unto you, all ye that pass by! Behold and see if there be any pain like my pain" (Lam. 1.12). Tragedy can be so great as to forbid the wish for it to happen at all,

to anyone, not to man, not to God, for it cuts at the roots of life itself.

We had better round out this theme of the opaque limits to all suffering before we pass on to other related themes. And first the pathetic honesty of the Rabbis who cannot bear suffering when it comes as a visitation to their own body, even though they have preached its value to others when they were well themselves. "I want neither the sufferings nor their reward," says Hanina b. Hama to Johanan when the latter visits him in his sickness, although Hanina had urged the same on Johanan when the latter had been sick. No less than three stories with the same pathetic humorous refrain are told on the same page (in Berakot 5b) concerning three of the most distinguished rabbis. "Are the sufferings dear to thee?" asks the visitor who is well (and the sufferings should be dear, according to the theory), but the patient who is sick replies quite brazenly "Neither they nor the reward they bring," although he had been the comforter in a previous instance. לא הן ולא שכרן, or (in the Aramaic version in Cant. R., Romm, 19a) לא אנא בעי להון ולא לאנריהון, had thus become the standing concession to human frailty and human honesty in reply to the high demand of חביבין יסורין.

Transfiguration of suffering indeed, that remains the high task, the supreme achievement, of Judaism, but in the breathing spells there is also the recognition of the intolerable reality. "R. Hiyya b. Abba said: 'If a man were to say to me, "Give your life for the sanctification of God's name," I would give it, but only on the condition that I should be killed at once. But the tortures of the Time of the Persecution I could not endure" and the text proceeds to give in detail the horrors of Roman cruelty under Hadrian (Pesikta 87a and Cant. R., Romm, 16a col. 2). There must be a truce to suffering at the point when it cuts at the roots of life.

And that is expressed in two profound Agadic utterances. The one deals with Job. When God expresses himself as willing to hand Job over to Satan with the bare exception of life, Satan is shocked at the outrage, though it is Satan himself who has tricked God into the offer. "R. Johanan said: 'If it were not expressly written in the Bible, it would be improper to speak of God as behaving like a man whom others can seduce and who can allow himself to be seduced.' . . R. Yizhak said: 'Satan's pain was greater than that of Job, for God's offer resembled that of a master who orders his servant to break the cask but to preserve the wine' " (Baba Bathra 16a). The image of Satan himself secretly sympathizing with Job at the outrageousness of God's methods is one of superb irony. There is such a thing as

racking a man up to the breaking point, but it is not for God to do so. Satan himself is better, at least according to R. Yizhak. — אמר ר' יצחק קשה צערו של שטן יותר משל איוב משל לעבד שאמר לו רבו שבור חבית ושמור את יינה.

The second passage is on the text in Jeremiah (15.17). "I sat not in the assembly of them that make merry nor rejoiced, I sat alone because of thy hand." "I sat alone," says Israel to God, "but there are two kinds of being alone. I am well acquainted with the one and am quite content with it, namely to sit alone in devotion to Thee, to absent myself from felicity a while and for all while, to stay away from their circuses and theatres, to sit alone through all the successive hatreds of the world, alone and not alone, for I had Thee. But when Thou, for whose sake I sat alone, when Thou turnest Thy hand against me, then I am truly alone, alone and desolate" (Pesikta 119b, Lam. R., Proem III Romm 1b, col. 2).

From suffering, which is passive and enforced heroism, we turn to that high active life of which suffering is merely the necessary incidence, we turn to the partnership of God and man in the creation of the new world. This is in truth the peak and the dominating motif of our whole undertaking, for here the mythopoeic power of the Rabbinic mind is most clearly at work.

God and Israel need each other. They are partners in the same enterprise. Therefore he who hates Israel hates God, and if Israel is forced into exile by the powers which for the present overshadow both, God will detach his visible Presence, his Shekinah, from himself and send it into exile with Israel, to return to God only when Israel itself is enabled to return. The love which initially led the two to gravitate towards each other is a primal and opaque urge of the will; but once in operation the love must justify itself in fruits. "God said to Israel, 'You have made me the only object of your love in the world, so I shall make you the only object of my love in the world.' " (Berakot 6a). But Israel must continue to make God the only object of its love. And now read the mythos as to how God closes the circle in return for the love.

The passage is in Sifré on the text from Num. (10.35) "and let them that hate thee flee before thee." The exposition of the Midrash is as follows: "Has God enemies? It means: whoso hates Israel is as one who hates God. . . He who rises against Israel is as one who rises against God. . . . . And he who helps Israel helps God. . . And so each time when Israel is subjected by the empires, the Shekinah as it were is subjected by them. . . . And when it says (2 Sam. 7.23) 'Because of thy people whom thou hast redeemed unto thee from Egypt, a nation and his God,' R. Akiba comments: 'Had we not a direct Scripture it would be impossible to say it, namely this: Israel said to God, "Thou

hast redeemed thyself" . . . And thus we find that wherever they went into exile the Shekinah went with them. . . They were exiled into Babylon, the Shekinah went with them . . . to Elam, the Shekinah went with them; to Edom, the Shekinah went with them. . . . And when they return (in the Messianic Age) the Shekinah will return with them. For it says (Deut. 30.3) 'And the Lord thy God will bring back thy captivity.' It does not say והשיב but ושב that is, God himself will return' " (Sifré, ed. Friedmann, 22b; ed. Horovitz, p. 81–3).

The doctrine mentioned last, the mythos of God's going into exile with Israel, or at least God's Indwelling Presence or Shekinah taking exile and captivity upon itself, and waiting for its eventual return or its full restoration to God on the heroic activity of Israel, becomes in later centuries one of the outstanding doctrines in the Kabbala, the great Agada which the Jews developed in the field of the esoteric. We shall have to give it more than passing notice presently.

We come now to the boldest, most forward-reaching thought concerning God in the Midrash, to that conception of God in which the Agada anticipates the most modern speculation concerning the nature of God and his relation to man.

It is this: that God depends on man for his strength and for his failure, for his growth and for his retrogression. In a world in which both are growing or in process, it is man who by his acts increases or decreases the stature of God.

There can be no question of our reading a modern thought into an ancient text: the texts are too unmistakable and unambiguous for that. And on the other hand there can be no asking whether this is the prevailing or predominant view of God in the Midrash. It is not; there is no one prevailing or predominant conception of God. But there can be no question of its presence, of its boldness, and of the full awareness of its boldness on the part of those who utter it. And in general a sense of the interlocking polarity, the mutual implication, of God and man, is one of the ever present features and convictions of the Agadic religious mind.

Let us now look at the texts.

"When the Israelites do God's will, they add to the power of God on high. When the Israelites do not do God's will, they, as it were, weaken the great power of God on high." (Pesikta 166a b and Lam. R., Romm 15a col. 2).

" 'Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and I am God' (Isa. 43.12). That is, when ye are my witnesses I am God, and when ye are not my witnesses I am as it were not God." (Mid. Ps., Buber 255a; Sifré Friedman 144a; Pesikta 102b).

"Unto thee I lift up mine eyes O thou that sittest in the heavens,"

says the Psalmist (Ps. 123.1). To which the Midrash comments: "If it were not for me i. e. if I did not lift up my eyes, Thou O God wouldst not be sitting in the heavens." — אלמלא אני לא הייתי יושב בשמים (Mid. Ps., Buber 255a; Sifré Friedman 144a, and note; Moore *Judaism*, III, 181).

One is reminded of modern utterances in the same vein. Thus the well known lines from the 17th century Baroque mystic Angelus Silesius:

> Ich weiss, dass ohne mich Gott nicht ein Nu kann leben:
> Werd ich zunicht, er muss von Not den Geist aufgeben.

Or the more modern lines from Rainer Maria Rilke:

> Was wirst du tun, Gott, wenn ich sterbe? . . . .
> Mit mir verlierst du deinen Sinn.

There is no intention of blasphemy here, or of facile Hybris; it is merely an expression of the thought that God by himself is an abstraction, i. e. an unreality, as of course man by himself is by the same token abstraction and unreality. The real significance and value of stressing the correlation, or as we shall say the polarity, between God and man, is that in our opinion it is the only way, the only directing guide towards an acceptable, credible and viable theology of the future. Only if we distinguish God from the rest of the universe (*deus* from *deitas*) as that part of the universe which not merely has the insight and will but is also reaching out for the power to implement its insight and will in order to realize the ideal; and only if we distinguish man from the anthropoid ape which he still largely is, as the being correlated with God in the high drama of ushering into reality a new and higher world: only then can the elements of a real authentic religiosity, worthy of the future and adequate to create a future, have room for deploying their power. Thus prayer as the communication between two related powers (numerically two, not just autosuggestion or whistling in the dark) becomes at least possible; thus the relation between God and man becomes a beneficent circle of give and take, each growing and profiting by the other; thus God and man can give each other comfort and forgive each other their mistakes; thus God and man can insist on an active program and a goal, rather than be content with a gorgeous and infinite display of imagination and drama.

We turn back to other related texts which may be less challenging in the wording but which are firmly and solidly founded on the same high estimate of man's share in shaping the future. There is a text in Kiddushin 40a, b (and in Tosefta Kiddushin I, 14) which is so expres-

sive of the Jewish ethos as to man's decisiveness with regard to the open and unshaped future of the world, that it was taken over by the Rambam into his Summa of Jewish doctrine and placed in the *Hilkot Teshuva* at the opening of his great code, and though it is a bold and subtle and ever modern thought it has become part of the Jewish religious outlook.

The text reads as follows: "The Rabbis teach: 'Let a man ever regard himself as if he were half guilty and half deserving; then if he fulfils one command, happy is he, for he has inclined the scale towards merit; if he commits one sin, woe to him, for he has inclined the scale to guilt.' . . R. Eleazar b. Simon in the name of R. Meir said: 'The world is judged by the majority and the individual is judged by the majority. If a man fulfils one command, happy is he, for he has caused the scale for himself *and for the whole world* to incline towards the pan of merit; and if he has committed one sin, woe to him, for both himself *and for the whole world* he makes the pan of guilt the heavier.' "

In taking over this old rabbinic doctrine, Maimuni not merely retains this cosmic implication of every man's every act at any time, but focuses attention upon it as constituting the main point of the doctrine. "Every man should look upon himself throughout the year as though his merits and failings were equally balanced, and also to look upon the whole world as though it were half deserving and half guilty. Now if he commit but one sin more, then by this simple sin he causes the scale of guilt to preponderate both with regard to himself *and to the whole world and consequently brings destruction upon it.* On the other hand, if he fulfils but one single commandment more, then by this single good deed he causes the scale of merit to preponderate both with regard to himself *and to the whole world, and consequently brings salvation and deliverance both upon himself and them*, as it is said, The righteous man is the foundation of the world (Prov. 10.25) וצדיק יסוד עולם, meaning that *he who acts righteously causes the merit of the whole world to preponderate and by this means brings about its deliverance.*" — (Hilkot Teshuva, III 4). זה שצדק הכריע את כל העולם לזכות והצילו.

The feeling or conviction, that man has the responsibility and the power to help decide the fate of the world at any moment, could hardly be stated with greater definiteness in a work which is not a formal treatise on metaphysics: a profound notion of the grandeur of man, and of the open future which he is free to make or to mar, of the unfinished creation in which he is a decisive factor, is obviously part of the rabbinic mind and of the Jewish outlook on life, whether they can formulate it in set academic terms and propositions or not.

We read it set forth in modern treatises, say in William James and his school of thought ("that the course of destiny may be altered by individuals, no wise evolutionist ought to doubt," *Will to Believe*, p. 99 and in the essays throughout the volume), but we fail to remember that the world's most memorable and effective thinking has been done informally and by way of intuitive insight and in the form of myth.

And to the myth we turn for a moment. The Kabbala and its later development in Isaac Luria of Safed and its adoption into Hasidism are beyond the scope of the present essay, but it would be a fatal omission while dwelling on this supremely important theme of man's rôle in the cosmos not to allude in passing to the profound and abiding significance of the Kabbalistic mythopoeic thinking on this subject.

Leaving aside the system of Gnostic Metaphysics or Theosophy which explains the relation of God to our present world of darkness and evil, let us lift out and state briefly that part of the doctrine which is relevant to our present purpose. The bold principle of man's responsibility for God's fate in the world, the influence of man through the acts of his life on the destiny of the universe, is felt to be in line with an age-old conception in Judaism, namely that man's heroism adds strength to God. Further, that the Shekinah is in exile and that it is man's function to redeem and restore it to God, now becomes one of the basic themes of Kabbalistic-Lurianic thinking. The process of restitution is called *Tikkun*, and essential parts of that process are allotted to man. The Jew has it in his power, through *Mitzwot* and Prayer, to accelerate or hinder the process. The *Tikkun* restores the unity of God's name. It is the true purpose of the Torah to lead the Shekinah back to her Master, to unite her with him. Prayer is a mystical action with almost magical potency in proportion to its intensity. Everything is in exile. But the Jewish exile, the Galuth of the Jewish people, is a mission to enable them to uplift the fallen sparks of the Godhead from all their various locations. That is why Israel is fated to be enslaved by all the nations of the world, so that Israel may be in a position to uplift those sparks which have fallen among them. The doctrine of *Tikkun* thus raised every Jew to the rank of protagonist in the great process of restitution, namely the extinction of the world's blemish, the restitution of all things in God.

The principle of the cosmic and metacosmic power and responsibility of man was never preached so proudly. Our world is the world of man. Man, in accordance with the original intention of his creation, is to be God's helper. All of freedom has gathered itself into man, he has the full heritage of freedom. All creatures and creation wait for him; God waits for him. All worlds hang on his works, all worlds look and yearn for the teaching and good deeds of man, for that concentra-

tion and intensity of acts and prayer whereby alone the Shekinah can be redeemed from its deep humiliation in banishment and united with God.

Man has freedom, he can choose God or reject God, he can lead the world to perdition and to redemption.

The creation of this being Man with such power of freedom means that God has made room for a co-determining power alongside of himself. Man is the cross-road of the world.

To ask whether God cannot redeem the world without man's help, or whether God has need of man for his work, can lead only to quibbling. In history we see that God waits for man. It is clear then that God has willed to use man for the completion of his work of creation and to allow him autonomy in that work.

For further development of these and related ideas the student can consult the great work of Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, and the popular essays on Hasidism by Martin Buber.

We here must pass on from this staggering and immense exaltation of man's function for God and the universe to the more sober and less mystical estimate, none the less high, of Israel's function within history. That more feasible function is to convert mankind to the One God. God is the great patrimony, God the special assignment or "burden" of Israel. Other peoples may have other special and indispensable assignments for the world's economy: the special concern, the special lot and allotment of Israel is God.

"If you do not proclaim my Godhead to the nations I will punish you" — אם לא תגידו אלהותי לאו"ה הרי אני פורע מכם (Lev. R. Romm 10b col. 1). "God did a kindness to Israel in scattering them among the nations." Pesaḥim 87b. צדקה עשה הקב"ה בישראל שפזרן לבין האומות.

"Hosea says (2.25): 'And I will sow her unto me in the land.' When a man sows a measure he expects a harvest of many measures. Thus God exiled Israel among the nations only in order to increase the number of proselytes who will join them" — (Pesaḥim 87b). לא הגלה הקב"ה את ישראל לבין האומות אלא כדי שיתוספו עליהם גרים.

The proselytes are as dear to God as Israel itself. "It is written in Hos. (14.8): 'They shall return, dwelling under his shadow.' 'These,' says R. Abbahu, 'are the proselytes who come and take shelter under the shadow of the Holy One blessed be He. . . They become the root just like Israel.' . . God said, 'The names of the proselytes are as pleasing to me as the wine of libation which is offered to me on the altar . . .' " (Lev. R., Romm 2a col. 2 and many other passages in the Midrash).

The ingathering of proselytes in the fullnes of time is the theme

of great hymns of the Synagogue, of the second half of the Alenu which concludes every prayer service, and of the magnificent ויאתיו which occupies a place in the Musaf of each of the High Holydays (ed. Birnbaum, pp. 373 and 801).

But that conversion and ingathering of the peoples is of course not the result of intellectual debate and argument, it does not proceed on the plane of peaceful dialogue and persuasion. The suasion is far profounder and bloodier. It is a matter of exemplary life, and its consummation is often a death of martyrdom. It is tragic suasion.

We are not going too far afield in summoning Yehuda Halevi as the witness to the kind and depth of suasion which Israel must practice to bring the world to its side, because he sums up the Jewish experience in this area. In a memorable passage in the Kuzari (IV, 23) he has recourse to one of mankind's supreme images, that of the dying seed. He likens the nations of the world to the soil, and Israel to the seed which is dropped into the soil and trodden underfoot and seems to be completely obliterated and destroyed. But it is only seemingly dead, dead for a greater and more glorious re-birth and life. By the magic alchemy resident within the higher form of the seed it transmutes the lower form of soil and loam into its own higher grade of life, and gradually a tree will grow up in which all will have a part, a single growth in which all will be embodied, due however to the active life-principle within the seed. And in the end those members of the tree which had looked down upon and despised it will acknowledge its supremacy, its inherent transforming power.

This characterizes the Jewish experience at its incandescent white heat, and there is a verse in the Ps. (109.4) which very properly is used as its summing up: "In return for my love they are my adversaries, but I am all prayer." תחת־אהבתי ישטנוני ואני תפלה. — There is definite awareness of what is later known as vicarious atonement, awareness namely of that heart and centre of the religious sentiment whereby we feel that we are all bound together and that the best of us are known by our willingness to bear the burden of the worst.

A formal statement of vicarious atonement occurs in several places in the Midrash, and we have already quoted one such representative statement (Cant. R., Romm 13a col. 1, and 23a col. 1). But there is also a more ominous and profounder touch, namely the intimation of why there should be suffering at all and how much of it must be borne until there can be a turning. Schelling, the last of the world's great theosophists, basing himself on Jacob Boehme and on Gnostic Manichean heresies with a deep sense of the rift at the very heart of things, declared that all evil must be tried out. This is a terrifying prospect

for the bravest; and for the easy optimist and progressivist it is so disconcerting as to be unbelievable. But this is the view held in their own way by the Rabbis, and taken over from them by the Kabbala because of its deep sympathy with the tragic dualism informing the heretical Gnostic sects through the ages. It was God's decree that before the Messiah Redeemer can come, Israel must suffer banishment to all and persecution from all the seventy nations of the world. And when the Messiah's coming is prematurely announced they turn in wonderment to the Messiah, and he in the attempt to soften the dread decree re-assures them with the statement that even if only part of Israel had been made to suffer by only part of any one of the seventy Gentile nations (provided all are represented), it will be accounted as full measure both ways (Pesikta 47b, 48a, b and note 98; Cant. R., Romm, 16b, col. 2; Pesikta R. 71b).

There is indeed, both in the liturgy and in the Midrash, a frequent assumption of guilt to account for the suffering; but that is a magnificent and generous gesture of self-castigation which can be and has been misunderstood. The true view is, כי עליך הרגנו כל היום, "For thy sake are we slaughtered day by day." The suffering does indeed purify them from sins, but they are also the lamb כבש or the dove יונה on whom all evil and suffering must be tried out, because of some dread and ominous feature in the scheme of things whereby light can come only after all darkness, and goodness only after all evil, has had its day, and where the elect must bear the burden of the world by taking upon themselves all responsibility and all suffering.

That is the Jewish experience at its incandescent white heat, the truth as it concerns the "remnant" or ideal Israel, into which the great mass are lifted or dragged up in the peak dread moments of history. But the Jewish religion would not be the classic religion that it is, if it did not also have the poise and balance to take a humorous and honest view of the empirical everyday Jew in the broad breathing spaces of life.

Let us take four examples of Agada which give expression to the human, all too human, character of the Jew in four different phases.

The first is one of the most famous of all Agadot. Jacob is asleep out in the open with a stone for a pillow, and he dreams of a ladder propped on to the floor of heaven, with angels ascending and descending. Each angel (the guardian angel of some one people) goes up a certain number of rungs and then descends, but the angel of Edom (i. e. Rome) seems to go up and up without ever turning back. Jacob is afraid that the power of Rome will last forever. "Fear not, Jacob,"

God re-assures him, "even if he rises and sits by my side, from there I will cast him down."

That is the first great half of the story. Small Israel is pitted in a world-historic struggle against all the empires and against mighty Rome, and cannot be defeated in the end.

But the remaining half must also be told. God asks Jacob likewise to ascend. But Jacob is afraid, thinking he too will have to descend like the others. He does not trust God and refuses to try. For that lack of faith he is punished by the miserable oppression of his children throughout their exile, א"ל הקב"ה אלו האמנת ועלית לא הייתי יורד לעולם. If thou hadst had faith and ascended, there would have been no descent for thee. But now, since thou wast lacking in simple faith in God, thy children will be enslaved by all the four Powers of the world."

Thereupon he is again afraid that the oppression may last forever, and has to be re-assured again with the verse from Jer. (30.10–11): "Fear thou not O Jacob, neither be dismayed O Israel, for lo I will save thee from afar, I am with thee to save thee." (Pesikta 151a; Lev. R., Romm 42a).

The second Agada is even more poignant. The Israelites have just experienced the supreme event of history, the theophany at Sinai. Without further ado they lapse into the idolatry of the golden calf. Moses descends with the Tablets, but as he looks at them he perceives that the Ten Words have disappeared, have gone with the wind, the Tablets are a clean slate. He thereupon shatters them at the foot of the mount and is himself struck dumb and unable to utter a word. At that moment, a decree was issued concerning Israel that they would from now on have to study those Words (i. e. the Torah) in the midst of distress, grief and hunger.

באותה שעה נגזרה גזירה על ישראל שילמד אותן מתוך הצער ומתוך השעבוד מתוך הטילטול ומתוך הטירוף מתוך הדחק מתוך שאין להם מזונות (Seder Eliyahu, ed. Friedmann, p. 117).

There is thirdly the profound legend of Joshua b. Levi's meeting first with Elijah and then with the Messiah himself who is stationed among the sick and the lepers outside the gates of Rome, himself also full of sores and wounds. All the others uncover all their wounds and then bind them all up again, but he uncovers and binds up each one separately, for he thinks "Lest I should be summoned and detained." Joshua b. Levi asks him, "When is the Master coming?" The answer is of the utmost pathos and irony, the single word "Today." Joshua returns to Elijah who congratulates him on the promise to himself and to all Israel. "He lied to me," is the Rabbi's response. "He said he would come today and he has not come." To

which Elijah replies with a verse from the Ps. (95.7): "Today, if ye hearken to God's voice." — היום אם בקלו תשמעו. The Messiah could come any day if the Israelites would hearken to God's voice for one single day (Sanhedrin 98a).

The concluding Agada is in a sense the most disconcerting, for it seems to contradict the whole theory of Jewish suffering, namely that Israel suffers vicariously for the rest of the world and thus is the first and major bearer of the brunt of suffering. No less a person than Johanan has the following: "Any affliction in which Israel and the Gentiles are partners (i. e. equally affected) is an affliction, but any affliction of Israel by itself is not an affliction."

כל צרה שישראל ואו"ה שותפין בה צרה, וכל צרה של ישראל עצמן אינה צרה (Deut. R., Romm 103a col. 1).

It is obviously meant as a commonsense salutary correction of any morbid cult of martyrdom. It is not a contradiction of the unique signature of all of Jewish history, but it is a rare and isolated though all the more necessary caution urged by a great Rabbi against overdoing the cult of suffering. For who needs to be told that Israel has had afflictions, untold in number, all by itself, which were the most veritable of all afflictions?

There is one final theme to round out our present series of considerations: the sense of chosenness which the Rabbis have of the Jewish people as the centre of the whole economy of history, and the sardonic humor which the Rabbis have about it, in the attempt to maintain the chosenness as a matter of course and still to be fair with the other nations.

There are two famous passages dealing with this theme, in two of the oldest and most authoritative Midrashim. The one in Mekilta remarks blandly: "The Torah was given in the desert, in no man's land, in all men's land, for all to come and take if they so desired." It would seem that no one but Israel put in an appearance. (Mekilta Lauterbach II, 198; Friedmann 62a).

The passage in Sifré (ed. Friedmann 142b) is much more sardonic: When God decided to reveal the Torah to Israel, it was not to Israel alone that he revealed himself but to all the nations. He first went to the children of Esau and asked them, Will you accept the Torah? They replied, "What is in it?" He answered, Thou shalt not kill. To which they said, "The very essence of our father is killing, as is written 'By thy sword shalt thou live' (Gen. 27.40)." God then went to the children of Ammon and Moab and asked them the same question,

"Will you accept the Torah?" to which they reply with the same question, "What is in it?" God is wary this time and he quotes a different commandment, namely, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." To which they offer the prompt reply: "Adultery is of the very essence of their being," and they quote in support the story of the compound adultery and incest of the two daughters of Lot with their father, ending in the verse 'Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father' (Gen. 19.36), which children were Moab and Ammon. God then sought and found the children of Ishmael, and by the same procedure they hear that the Torah commands, "Thou shalt not steal," to which they retort: 'That is the very essence of their forbear, as is written, "And he will be a wild man, his hand will be against every man and every man's hand against him.' " (Gen. 16.12). There was not one nation among all the nations, our text continues, whom God did not visit and knock at their door and speak to, leaving it to those who were willing to come and receive the Torah. לא היתה אומה באומות שלא הלך ודבר ודפק על פתחה אם ירצו ויקבלו את התורה.

The spectacle of God peddling the Torah from door to door is edifying. The Gentiles had their chance. They refused a Torah which interfered with their favorite pursuits.

But let no one think that the Rabbis indulged in the belief that the Jews lacked their share of killers, adulterers, and thieves. Such foolish beliefs are not feasible. And they are bothered to explain the chosenness of Israel in the face of the common humanity of all men. The chosenness, the special love God bears for Israel, seems beyond reason. For are the Jews better than the others? Surely both are sinners. There is no clear ground for a special predilection. Love must be an aboriginal arbitrary choice, an opaque attraction.

Thus we read in the Midrash on the text in the Song of Songs (8.8), "We have a little sister": "In the time to come, all the guardian angels of the nations of the world will come and accuse Israel before God, saying, 'Sovereign of the Universe, these worshipped idols and these worshipped idols, these were whoremongers and these were whoremongers, these shed blood and these shed blood. Why do these go down to hell while these do not go down?' God will say to them ' "We have a little sister": just as a child, whatever it does, is not reproved because it is but a child, so however much Israel may be defiled by their iniquities throughout the year, the Day of Atonement comes and atones for them.' " (Cant. R., Romm 40a col. 2).

We see then, God can find no better reason for indulgent favor towards Israel than the utterly arbitrary ground that it is an innocent

irresponsible child, for whom in addition the Day of Atonement restores innocence perennially.

Again: "In the time to come the guardian angels of the nations will come to accuse Israel before God and they will say: 'King of the Universe, these worshipped idols and these worshipped idols, these acted lewdly and these acted lewdly, these shed blood and these shed blood. Why then do these go down to Gehinnom while these do not go down?' Then God will answer them saying: 'If that is so, let all the peoples go down with their gods to Gehinnom, and so it is written (Micah 4.5), "For let all the peoples walk each one in the name of its god." ' Said R. Reuben: 'Were it not written in the Scripture, it would be impossible to say such a thing, namely "For by fire will God be judged," כי באש ה' נשפט, (Isa. 66.16). It does not say שופט (judges) but נשפט (is judged)' " (Cant. R. 40a and Mid. Ps. Buber 11a and Mid. Ps. to 1:3).

So then all peoples, including Israel, go to hell, each one dragging his own god with him. And there in hell God saves Israel and delivers him; or can it be the other way? The grammar is somewhat tricky here. In any case the Rabbis are under no illusion as to any rational ground they can adduce for God to bear a special love for Israel. There is no reason for love, seems to be their conclusion.

And in truth chosenness is far more than love, it is ineluctable destiny: The individual Jew may drop away, but Israel as a whole is held inexorably fast. Thus Johanan, the prince of the Agada, has the following to say in explanation of God's ontological definition of himself as אהיה אשר אהיה, "I can be whatever I may be to individuals; but as for the mass I rule over them even against their desires and will, even though they break their teeth" (referring to Ezek. 20.33) אהיה לאשר אהיה ביחידים, אבל בטרובים על כרחם שלא בטובתם כשהם משוברות שניהם (Exod R., Romm 11b col. 2).

And of course, even though chosen, God so far from playing favorites, imposes special burdens and special responsibilities on Israel. The prophet's stern reminder that special rights bring special duties ("You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities," Amos 3.2) holds with equal force on Israel's later career. The protagonist must bear burdens commensurate with a protagonist's rôle.

3

In attempting to state in philosophic terms the main ideas at the core of the Agadot which we have been considering in this long middle section of our essay, certain sobering thoughts as to the value of

philosophy must accompany us and must be set forth as premise. And they are, first, that whatever in philosophy is capable of translation or transformation into poetry is alone vital and valuable; and secondly, that whatever has orginally been conceived as myth is alone real and effective, for it is something capable of being believed and therefore loved. With that in mind we can proceed to state, in programmatic fashion, for whatever clarifying and pedagogic value it may possess, the main heads and captions of philosophic thinking present in solution in the Midrash and capable of being abstracted and formulated.

First there is the theory of tragedy implicit in the Rabbinic reflection on Jewish suffering, to be compared and contrasted with other theories of tragedy which have been set forth from academic and from pagan points of view.

Secondly there is the idea of man as the helper of God and co-creator with God, which carries with it implications in two important directions: —

First, metaphysically, to the effect that the future is genuinely open and not pre-determined in advance; that creation is unfinished and continuing; that time is real, against the claims of eternalism that time is an illusion and the perfect present at the start; and that all monism is wrong, meaning that the universe is not a homogeneous single whole and really not a universe, that there is a rift in it, that it is a pluralism or at least a dualism, and its unification in the highest sense has to be achieved, i. e. it is a growing world, a world in process.

The second implication under this important heading lies in the correct apprehension of the mutual relation of God and man: it is a relation of mutual polarity, of give and take or reciprocal enrichment, resulting in the slow change and growth not merely of man but of God, God needing man as much and owing as much to man as the other way about; resulting also in a plausible theory of prayer; and resulting finally in an activistic conception of life, as being more than a dream or a pageant of the imagination, but also more than the emptiness and nothingness which Catholic Christianity and Buddhism conceive it to be at bottom.

The final aspect of Rabbinic thought or reflectiveness and outlook which we single out in our theoretical formulation of its main features we shall call Humor, not of course in the sense of the comic or witty (the small humor), but on the contrary as one of the deepest elements in its attitude towards life (the great humor), something which has gone through tragedy and passed beyond, and is the concluding word in mellowness and perspective and ultimate serenity.

Tragedy arises through our sense of the contrast between what the good man ought to get and what he does get. What he ought to get is happiness; what he does get is pain, disaster and death. Supreme tragedy arises when the best man suffers the worst fate.

Tragedy thus upsets the initial view held as to the relation between virtue and happiness. The initial view is that suffering is a punishment for sin, and that virtue and happiness go together. This is the view, say, of the friends of Job in the face of Job's calamity. And say what we will, it is profoundly rooted; that virtue and happiness imply each other is a basic demand of our conscience. The disturbance which the primitive view suffers is only provisional; it persists after some thought-taking and sober readjustment.

Granted then that the suffering is not a punishment for sin, as must be evident to the thoughtful and honest person, the happiness still demanded to equal or balance the goodness is transferred to another world, it is reserved for a life to come. Thus traditional religion. But thus also philosophy. Kant at the peak of philosophy postulates a God to adjust the balance between our deeds and our rewards, also as assurance of the validity of the moral world-order. And in its last and deepest phase philosophy does not leave the sufferer to himself. The sombre view held by Royce (in whom Hegel culminates) is that the sufferings are taken up into the consciousness of the ultimate world-mind or Absolute, and as details or elements in that grandest setting are seen to be needed for the full experience of God, and are thus explained and justified. The good and the innocent are not allowed to have suffered for nothing. The tragic aspect of the good man's life serves a higher and highest purpose; the tears of the oppressed, דמעת עשוקים, will find their explanation and transfiguration.

But the true theory of tragedy rejects all this. The hero accepts the suffering not for any reward but for growth in greatness. The alleged transfiguration of the hero's suffering within the Absolute is felt to be a cruel farce; because, first, it is not clear how that transfiguration takes place and it looks like verbal juggling or self-delusion, and secondly even if it did take place it does not touch the main point, namely it does not undo the actual suffered anguish. It may be good for the putative Absolute, but not for the sufferer.

The tragic hero accepts whatever suffering that comes to him, as part of his greatness. He acts as the heroic focus of the world. His reward is that he grows in greatness.

With this conception of the grandeur of man which they have in common, the two highest theories of tragedy diverge in a final and supreme respect.

The highest pagan theory of tragedy (as summed up by Nietzsche)

would say: the tragic hero ("der tragische Mensch") accepts all the agonies of life because of the wonders of life; if that is the price, he is willing to pay it. But there is no goal or plan and, of course, no God. There is a vast ocean of Becoming, and eternal recurrence, and finally "der tragische Mensch" to face it.

The Jewish theory of tragedy at its highest likewise puts the emphasis on man and man's intrinsic greatness. Man stands on his own and accepts his burden without any view of external reward or relief. Take the great tragic symbolisms and images which Judaism has invented. Thus the Suffering Servant: God is a poor figure in the background, allowing the injustice to be done. Job: God is clearly in the wrong and wins by browbeating. Akiba: God waits for Akiba to assert him, God; otherwise God is muted and impotent.

But the difference of the Jewish from the Pagan view is this: that, in spite of God's inadequacy or absence, the Jewish heroes all proclaim and postulate God, proclaim a belief in God in a godless world, and perhaps in that way help to call him into being and give him strength. That is a capital difference and makes of them the classic of the religious life. They see God through, and so give power to his emerging substance, whereas Prometheus, the greatest creation of Greek tragedy, brushes God aside and is content to be pure humanist and atheist. Man is sufficient unto himself, and the Promethean world-view is a humanism divorced and truncated from the vast background in which it is rooted.

What both views have in common is the refusal to be resigned, a certain activism or dynamism. But if, in the Pagan view, the tragic hero is ready and willing, for the sake of life's grandeur and wonder and beauty, to accept life's horrors and sufferings, even though it will always recur that way without abatement or assuagement, the Jewish view holds that the horrors and sufferings of life are man's task to convert, to make them over and make them other and make them less. God may just be emerging from the vast ocean of Becoming and therefore of little actual power (of great light but of little power); but man emerging with God and through whom God acts, will continue to say "Though God slay me (or suffer me to be slain) yet will I trust in him," (Job 13.15) and eventually there will be no more slaying. Men must be עושין מאהבה ושמחין ביסורין, they must accept יסורין and call them חביבין, they must save God's face by calling יסורין a mark of God's love, they must insist that there is a God because there can, must and will be one, and by that heroism will help to make God real and extend his kingdom. It will *not* always recur that way as the Pagan maintains; something *is* being achieved as our teachers

maintain, namely the *Tikkun* of the world and the *Yihud* of God, the rectification of the world and the integration of God, through the labor of the God-inspired and God-bearing man.

There is a stupendous metaphysic of definite type and character implied, a certain kind of world presupposed, in all the various expressions of the Rabbinic mind which we have been passing in review and in Jewish thinking before and after. The Rabbis are of course not aware of any system, for they are not abstract thinkers nor philosophical system-builders; and if we try to lay bare and bring to the surface what is merely implicated and inherent, it may seem like an arbitrary imposition. But we are to remember that the creation is always first, and only after the actual finished achievement can one proceed to unravel the theory or rationale that has been at work in it. So in our present instance of Jewish creative thought we have a bold adventurous imagination making a magnificent anticipation of modern philosophy in its own terms of myth, parable and image; and what needs to be done for a later age to realize what is involved is to translate it into the idiom of abstract terms.

That Jewish thinking is temporalist, not eternalist, is clear to anyone who is at home in it. Eternalism occurs late in isolated cases as a result of mystical and philosophical influence. But, for Jewish thought the victory of God's cause is not a foregone conclusion, hence time as the medium of effort is the most real of things.

That creation is unfinished and that the future remains to be woven, is testified by the one fact of the Messianic ideal. This goal of all time and event has to be achieved and created through the most real and the bloodiest effort. That God has an environment and opposition is indicated by the fact that the unity of God is a postulate and has to be achieved through the whole course of time. "On that day the Lord shall be one and His name shall be one" is the prophetic utterance (Zech. 14.9) which is quite knowingly placed at conspicuous points in our liturgy (in the *Musaf* for Rosh Hashanah at the end of the *Alenu*, of the *Kedushah* and of the triumphant *Kol Ma'aminim* (ed. Birnbaum, pp. 337, 365, 371). On that day God shall be one, that is at the end of time, not before. And the act of making God one, the יחוד השם, is so real and bloody that the locution becomes one of the synonyms for martyrdom.

Of course the formal distinction between God and the rest of the universe (God's "environment"), between הקדוש ברוך הוא and מלך העולם is never made: that would run counter to all psychological need and religious habit. It is implied in fact but never admitted as theory. Only occasionally is there a deliberate identification of the two. Thus,

in the great nature Psalms used for the Friday evening services, the God of Nature is identified with the God of Justice; the God of the thunderstorm promises to come to judge the world with righteousness (Ps. 96.13 and 98.9). And Maimonides identifies his Infinite Unknown with the God of the Ten Commandments. But the Psalmist is a gorgeous and sanguine anticipator of the End, and Maimuni does flagrant and unabashed violence and outrage in forcing Plotinus into Moses. Actual Jewish religious practice and thought has הקדוש ברוך הוא fighting a valiant battle against the מלך העולם, mostly with pathetic results.

The next theme, involving the correlation of God and man in a polarity of give and take, of mutual influence and reciprocal enrichment, is the crucial chapter in any living and hopeful theology of the future. If we are to avoid the two great failures and blind alleys of religion, an utterly transcendent God and a self-sufficient and godless humanism, we shall have to cultivate and develop the notion of interaction between the two poles of the emerging higher world. They must both do something for each other or they don't need each other. All the various themes of this great area of religion fall into place on the basis of such a theory.

Thus prayer as the converse between a soul and a great reservoir of power: two centres dominating an environment and seeking each other. They must of course find each other and meet; that is their problem. That they can and do meet is the incontrovertible testimony of certain souls, whose experience whether subjected to scientific scrutiny in a book like James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*, or speaking with unfailing success to all climes and ages and peoples in so supreme a record as the Book of Psalms, is ample proof. What does God give? Light and support for faith. What does man give? Faith and added power.

If they help each other, each must be greater than the other: that is not a paradox in a genuine polarity. God is greater as source and giver of light. Man can be greater in what he develops and offers as return gift to God. Abraham is better than God and tells him what justice is. The Suffering Servant is more loving, Job more truthful and courageous, and Akiba more heroic and godlike, than God. They enrich God with new visions, make him realize his own possibilities in them. There is nothing absurd in a product being superior to its own ground or cause: that takes place in every creation. That is what time and freedom are for. Creation is always inexplicable purely in terms of what preceded, the effect is always more than the cause.

Only science operates with the initial stupidity that nothing can be gained or lost, that birth and becoming are always merely a reshuffling of given elements. Life is growth and growth is creation and creation is the wonder of something genuinely new.

Now the world gives birth to saints and heroes who are so much grander than anything the world contains that they alone confer upon it meaning and sanctity; and having given birth to them the world allows them to perish.

Here we stand at the crossroads. If we allow God and the world, God and the great creativity of the ocean of Becoming, to telescope together and act as one, we are in a bad way. What could ever change their course? We are where Nietzsche was: the eternal recurrence, an immense pageant of dramatic thrill, terror and beauty, but certainly no hope and no culmination in love and redemption.

But, if we distinguish between the two, we can begin to avoid despair, though the temptation to despair is enormous. Till now there has never been a saint or hero whom God has not allowed to die forsaken. Is the inference that the world gives the lie to the best and highest it produces and is therefore itself a heartless lie? That would indeed be a counsel of despair. Let us take heart and call that inference a *non sequitur*. There is one way out, namely that the creative God can learn through the re-entrance into himself of his highest manifestations, and grow into something as good as his own highest miracles. That would indeed be the most momentous event in all events, the supreme problem for any philosophy and theology to contemplate and the supreme truth to establish. And is it so inconceivable in a world really alive and growing that the great consciousness in which we all participate can receive back into itself and be enriched by its own highest spirits? God from being mere creativity must become light, and from being mere light must become person and from being mere dramatist must become lover.

So then God needs man to redeem and restore the Shekinah, to exemplify God's sublime possibilities, to translate God into the real, and to unify the new God with the old world. And if man needs God to forgive him for failings and shortcomings, God too must be forgiven for whatever share he may have had in the dread fate which is allowed to overtake the Suffering Servant and Job and Jesus and Akiba. It is no idle conceit when the poet addresses that God who is the מלך העולם with the words —

"For all the sin wherewith the face of man
Is blacken'd, man's forgiveness give — and take!"

The sacred heart of man fighting for a God may need forgiveness for its lapses, but must also grant it to a blind, heartless and stupid universe that knows not what it does, whatever Caliban-God or half-blind *élan vital* may be its sovereign.

There are two things further that we must take expressly to heart in this connection. First, that life is more than the mere pageantry which the Shakespearean imagination (a reflex of the divine imagination) would have it, and secondly, more than the emptiness and nothingness which a certain type of religion (Buddhism and Catholic Christianity) would assess it to be. "We are such stuff as dreams are made of and our little life is rounded with a sleep." "Out, out, brief candle, life's but a walking shadow." "All our yesterdays have lighted fools the way to dusty death." These are expressions of an imagination as comprehensive and totalitarian as the world itself, but which, lacking a dominating purpose or bias, ends in resignation and sadness. And when Bossuet speaks of *le vide et le néant au fond*, the nothingness and emptiness of all things at bottom; and when Buddha counsels us to renounce living and desire since desire forsooth ends as ashes in the mouth: they are both of them libellers and calumniators of the glory and wonder and thrill of living. Compare with that the "Go and do," the זיל גמור of the Hebraic hero, whatever language he speaks, Puritan or otherwise, and see which of the two you feel to be the spokesman of the world-spirit.

All these directions in which modern philosophy, in its last great almost contemporary representatives (Scheler, Berdyaev, and above all Whitehead), has been arriving at specific and new revisions of the old concepts of religion and philosophy, show deep kinship and elective affinity with the hidden but active forces of Jewish religious thought.

One last concluding respect we must not leave unmentioned because it is indispensable as rounding out any true and valid world-view, and that is Humor. We mean of course the great humor (as Höffding calls it), the final smile of serenity and understanding, the understanding that is close to forgiveness and acceptance, as experience comes full circle. The Jewish religious experience which has plumbed all tragedy, would end in madness without that final smile and forgiveness of the great humor. Humor sees the element of smallness that hangs on to all greatness, the shadow of pretentiousness it casts, no matter how genuine and authentic that greatness may be; and conversely the element of eternal value present in the most trivial and laughable individual. Humor is a final comprehensive judgment, a thought that comes after the sum has been cast up and the synthesis

completed. The Jews regard themselves as the central figure in the whole economy of history, but make fun of it too. God had no special reason for choosing and loving them, but he did. How odd of God!

V

The proper culmination for a study like the present is the idea of the Messiah. This is a supreme creation of religious genius, for it rests on two new religious insights, on two imperishable thoughts: first, that all men are one, and secondly that they have a future.

But before we go on to this culmination it is worth our while to pass in rapid review certain salient features of Rabbinic thinking in order to complete the picture, — to show its range of interest and to show how wholesome and honest and perennially fresh it is.

And first with regard to that desire or appetite which sets all our activities in motion, and which has such a bad name in almost all religions as the great inciter to temptation. The church name for it is *concupiscentia*, for which I suppose the proper English rendering is "lust"; and what could bring us closer to sin and evil than to follow every object and every direction which we lust after? The Hebrew takes a far more sober and healthy view. The term is *Yeẓer*. There can be good or bad *Yeẓer*, but even the bad is good, for *Yeẓer* means drive, power, indispensable motive force for all action, and with the suppression of Yeẓer we would have the extinction of life. This is an immense anticipation of modern psychology, an intuition of the very dynamic of life itself.

The opinions and utterances of the Rabbis on this subject of desire and of the field in which it chiefly operates, namely love, constitute one of the most fascinating chapters in the entire range of the Midrash. It is a chapter not indeed extensive or overdone, because the Jews do not make a special cult of love, but it is of vast importance for the understanding of Jewish life and, whenever the Rabbis touch on it and whatever they say, their attitude is always of great depth and interest. The relation of the two sexes in the marriage bond, the importance of children, the intrinsic right of love but also its subservience, the lure of love and its limitations, all the subtle dialectic of love when allowed free course, the temptations which love by its special nature involves for both sexes and the corresponding loyalties and devotion for both sexes, all together constitute a most significant contribution to this great central theme of life and the creation of life. We shall have to content ourselves however with two

bare statements. First, the famous utterance "The greater the man the greater his libido" (in Sukkah 52a, as conclusion of a most interesting story). And secondly, the equally famous and bold utterance of R. Samuel b. Naḥman. When the Divine Workman reviewing his six days' labor of creation remarks "And behold it was very good," Samuel b. Naḥman interprets these words of approval as referring to the evil *Yeẓer*. For, he argues, without the evil *Yeẓer* so-called, no man would build a house nor marry a wife nor beget children nor transact business. And he quotes the verse in Eccl. (4.4) concerning "all labor and all excelling in work, that it is a man's rivalry with his neighbors" (Gen. R., Romm, 24b col. 2). Without this rivalry and ambition, without libido and appetite, the business of the world and life itself would come to a standstill.

Education must be the prime concern of any people that wishes to conserve its distinctive character, but quite especially of a people trying to maintain itself without the usual aids of a land and government of its own and trying to conserve a high and unique character under these unusually difficult conditions. Such a people must bend every effort towards shaping and fashioning the soul of its offspring so as to make sure of its future. For education means primarily children and children mean primarily future. And it is this will to the future which marks it off from other peoples, and makes it regard the future as greater than any past no matter how great that past has been. This superlative valuation of a past which must at all costs be conserved, and at the same time the refusal to be overwhelmed by it, the due regard for future creativeness and future responsibility, is likewise a salient feature of Rabbinic thinking. Self-creation at all times, education in this most intense and incisive sense of the will to continued life, is a profound mark of the authentic Jewish character.

Let one Midrash speak for many. "When Israel stood to receive the Torah, the Holy One, blessed be he, said to them: 'I am giving you my Torah, bring me good guarantors that you will guard it.' They said: 'Our fathers are our guarantors.' The Holy One, blessed be he, said to them: 'Your fathers are unacceptable to me. . . Yet bring me good guarantors and I shall give it to you.' . . They said: 'Master of the Universe, our prophets are our guarantors.' He said to them: 'The prophets are unacceptable to me. . . Yet bring me good guarantors and I shall give it to you.' They said: 'Behold, our children are our guarantors.' The Holy One, blessed be he, said: 'They are certainly good guarantors. For their sake I give the Torah to you, as is written, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast Thou founded strength" ' (Ps. 8.3) (Cant. R., Romm, 7a).

Honesty in looking the facts in the face, the refusal to indulge in "soft soap," in lush and saccharine prospects and promises, is another characteristic of the Rabbinic outlook. In the end this stern realism pays off better than the love assurances which the tender-minded so eagerly look for. For these are invariably boomerangs. When today the word is handed out by means of all the instruments of mass communication, during a so-called religious hour, that God is love, what can that mean to the hundreds of millions of the human race for whom the opposite is true? It would be truer to their experience to say that God is wrath or that God is hate. That which should be a sublime goal is changed into a sordid makebelieve, and all honest effort and honest emotion falsified.

We all have to face two ineluctable facts: first, that each one of us is born into a certain status or condition with which we must reckon from the very start: we are born either white or black, bond or free, handsome or ill-favored, gifted or mediocre, and our life is decided for us three-fourths of the way in advance. Secondly, there is no forgiveness for our mistakes: everything is collected, everything paid for, everything recorded, nothing erased, nothing forgiven. Let the Midrash speak its mind on these two themes.

On the text at the beginning of Genesis that "God created the heaven and the earth and the earth was *tohu* and *bohu*," there are two Midrashic parables in which the strange words describing the earth are taken to mean "bewildered and astonished." "R. Abbahu said: 'This may be compared to a king who bought two slaves on the same bill of sale and at the same price. One he ordered to be supported at the public expense, while the other he ordered to toil for his bread. The latter sat bewildered and astonished: 'Both of us were bought at the same price,' exclaimed he, 'yet he is supported from the treasury whilst I have to gain my bread by my toil!' Thus the earth sat bewildered and astonished, saying, 'The celestial beings and the terrestrial ones were created at the same time: yet the celestial beings are fed by the radiance of the Shekinah, whereas the terrestrial beings, if they do not toil do not eat. Strange!' "

R. Yehuda b. R. Simon said: "Compare this to a king who bought two bondmaids, both on the same bill of sale and at the same price. One he commanded not to stir from the palace, while for the other he decreed banishment. The latter sat bewildered and astonished. 'Both of us were bought on the same bill of sale and at the same price,' she exclaimed, 'yet she does not stir from the palace while against me he has decreed banishment. How passing strange!' Thus the earth sat bewildered and astonished, saying, 'The celestial and the terrestrial beings were created at the same time: why do the

former live forever whereas the latter have to die?' Hence, 'And the earth was *tohu* and *bohu*,' bewildered and astonished."

The earth sat bewildered and astonished at the initial inequitableness in the distribution of gifts.

On the text in Joel 2.13 "Turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, long-suffering and abundant in mercy and repenteth him of the evil," the Rabbis comment as follows: R. Johanan says, "God is long-suffering before he collects, but once he begins to collect he takes a long time in collecting." מאריך רוחו עד שלא יגבה, בא לגבות מאריך וגובה. R. Hanina says: "He who says that God is lax, his bowels shall be relaxed. He is long-suffering but He exacts his due." א"ר חנינה מ"ד רחמנא ווותרון הוא יתווחרון בני מעיו אלא מאריך רוח וגובה דיידיה — (Pesikta 161b; Yer. Taanit 65b).

And similarly in the solemn description of the Judgment contained in the famous נתנה תוקף prayer which is the highlight of the *Musaf* for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, God is described as judge, prosecutor, expert and witness דיין, מוכיח, יודע ועד; and if God is all that in one, it can hardly be called a fair trial, not to say a sympathetic or indulgent hearing. So likewise the Greek proverb concerning anyone who undertakes to appear in a trial before Zeus: Jove's dice are always loaded. *Διὸς κύβοι ἀεὶ εὐπίπτουσι*. The court is packed, the gods are always right.

With that situation in mind, the old proverb is thrown up to God "not to pull the rope at both ends." R. Levi said: "If it is the world thou seekest, there can be no justice; and if it is justice thou seekest, there can be no world. Why dost thou grasp the rope by both ends, seeking both the world and justice? Let one of them go, for if thou dost not relent a little, the world cannot endure" (Pesikta 125 b. Gen. R. Romm 79b, col. 1).

To which the proper sardonic retort on the part of God would be the variation he gives in the Midrash of the words he utters through Jeremiah. Jeremiah makes Him say "They have forsaken me and have not kept my Torah" (16.11), but in the Midrash God takes the liberty of changing that into the bold invitation, "Would they had forsaken Me, provided they had only kept My Torah." The permission to neglect the religion if they would only practice the morals, is interesting and not so generous as it sounds. For he goes on to add, "The leaven or ferment in the practice of the good would have brought them back to Me" (Pesikta 121a). And that is true. Ethics inevitably leads in the end to religious assumptions: the fate of the good, and of the good man, can never content itself with the defeats this life offers. It demands conservation; it has to have the faith that the best things are also the most eternal. And the dialectic

which subsists between the good and the religious is of deep concern to us all and needs to be understood. A man can be said to believe in God only insofar as it is an inference from his behavior, and then his saying so is unimportant. He can say he believes in God and really be an unbeliever and denier by his life. He can in rare cases say he does not believe in God and still have his life belie the denial: there have been great saints who were indifferent to professing God, such were men like Shelley and Eugene Debs and John Stuart Mill and others who were rooted in the divine no matter what they said. The last mentioned is particularly interesting because he is a confirmation of the text in the Midrash. His posthumous "Three Essays on Religion" land in religious belief after a lifetime of agnosticism and freethinking, because his profound interest in the good forced him into religious assumptions, and that is a phenomenon of utmost interest to all students of this question.

We come at long last to the Messiah. This is indeed the zenith or dazzling sun in the whole firmament of Jewish religious thinking. As the prophets had lifted religion from a tribal and particularistic basis to the plane of justice and goodness, and so made it the concern of all men, and indeed thereby discovered the idea of a single mankind, so the figure and image of the Messiah is the coping stone of that structure. He was indeed originally conceived in national terms as savior and redeemer of the Jewish people, but he presently becomes the savior and redeemer of the world by ushering in a reign of peace and welfare for all men. He heals the wounds of the sorest and most afflicted people, and that is possible only after all other and lesser afflictions have been healed. He is the light of the world, the concrete but symbolic embodiment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

And epoch-making in the maturing of human thought as is the idea of a single mankind, the idea of the future as replacing a golden past is equally decisive in marking the passage of mankind from childhood to manhood, from dreams and nostalgia to hardihood and achievement.

And this is also the line of cleavage between Christianity and Judaism which, starting from a common source, part company on this crucial and fateful question as to whether the Messiah is still to come or has already come. Christianity, by throwing in its lot with the childhood of the race, condemns itself to its immature mythology; and Judaism by severing itself from powerful protection adds woefully to its already tragic lot. The real accentuation of its tragedy stems from a brother's hatred.

What does the Messianic future promise? Everything from the

abolition of war to the abolition of death, i. e. beginning with something so feasible as to be on the agenda of the council of nations today, and ending with something so utterly transcendent as the assault on the citadel of perdition itself.

Naturally the temptation to indulge the fantasy in picturing relief from human miseries is very strong, but it will be found on examination that, in the recital of Messianic measures, the note of sober sense and steady thought prevails even when it seems to hover on the borders and realm of the fantastic.

And first of all the authorized spokesmen for Judaism stress the note of feasibility. Thus Mar Samuel, most sober-minded of Rabbis: "There is no difference between the present world and the days of the Messiah except the oppression by the great kingdoms alone" (Berakot 34b). And Maimonides, who sums up Jewish tradition as no other, adopts and quotes these very words at the end of his code (Hilkot Melakim XII 2). And he says expressly there will be no change in the course of nature, no thaumaturgy, no חדוש במעשה בראשית אלא עולם כמנהגו נוהג (*ibid.* XII 1). The only change will be the absence of hunger, war, envy, and hatred and, in their place, an economy of plenty, so that all will have the leisure to devote themselves to the study of religion. — ובאותו הזמן לא יהיה שם לא רעב ולא מלחמה ולא קנאה ולא תחרות שהטובה תהיה מושפעת הרבה וכל המעדנים מצויין כעפר ולא יהיה עסק כל העולם אלא לדעת את ה' בלבד (*ibid.* XII 4).

These are so to speak Halakic utterances; let us take a glance at the Agada, which allows free scope to imaginative flights. There is an extensive passage in Exodus R., Romm, 29b, describing the ten things which God will "renew" in the Messianic era. The first three are concerned with healing: a greater sun, healing waters, and healing fruits. The fourth deals with the re-building of all waste cities, including Sodom and Gomorrah. The eighth promises no more weeping or wailing, and the tenth likewise, presumably through the abolition of the main causes of wailing and weeping, namely sickness, poverty, hatred and war. So that six of the ten are quite feasible ideals in the program.

The sixth preaches peace in the animal world ("The cow and the bear shall feed together" Isa. 11.7), and the seventh a covenant between Israel and the whole animal world. The fifth is the re-building of Jerusalem, the light of the world, in sapphires. There remains only one more, the ninth, which promises the abolition of death. There are thus only four beyond the realm of the soberly plausible.

As for the sapphired Jerusalem resplendent in light, it is a naive physical rendition of the higher and more difficult thought of "nations shall walk by thy light" (Isa. 60.3).

As for the peace in the animal world it is but an extension, a kind of shadow or reflex, of the peace in the human world. If nature is red in tooth and claw, that holds as much for human nature as for animal nature. The human has been animal so far, and if the human is to get humanized, why not indulge in the further fantasy of the animals getting humanized? If ever poetic license is to be indulged it would be here; it is pathetic and touching to wish the good to invade the animal kingdom itself.

There remains the frank mythology of abolishing death. But even that, with all its proud vaulting surge, or rather because of it, has a deep foundation in sober thought. If the vanishing and perishing of the good is felt to be the heart of evil; if the complete loss of the heroic soul, of the loving soul, of heroism and of love (of "values" as they are heartlessly called in the schools) would be the supreme evil; if the true synonym of evil is death — then death must go. "He hath swallowed up death forever" בלע המות לנצח, (Isa. 25.8) then becomes the proudest, the clearest, the most important demand in religion.

From a far different source and in a different mood, but nevertheless as confirmation, we have the vision of a pagan soul:

> "As a god self-slain on his own strange altar
> Death lies dead."

When will the Messiah come? First and foremost when we have made ourselves ready and worthy, and this primarily through conduct and behavior, through changing the past into ripeness for the future. In Hebrew grammar the *vav* conversive changes a past into a future, and the Midrash makes use of this peculiarity of the Hebrew language by making it bear a creative Messianic meaning. The Messianic age will come when a change has been worked on the past, it is something that has to be achieved and earned, and the pivotal words are והיה ביום ההוא, "and it shall come to pass." In Genesis R., Romm, 137a, col. 2, on the words of Jacob (Gen. 28.21), ושבתי בשלום אל בית אבי והיה ה' לי לאלהים, where the two preterite verbs have a future meaning, R. Levi remarks: "God took the manner of speech used by the Patriarchs and made it a key for the redemption of their descendants. Thus God said to Jacob: 'Thou hast said, "Then shall the Lord be (*we-hayah*) my God." By thy life, all the benefits and blessings and consolations which I am to confer upon thy children (in the Messianic age) I will confer with this very expression (*we-hayah*). As it says, "And it shall come to pass (*we-hayah*) in that day that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem (Zech. 14.8)"; "And it shall come to pass (*we-hayah*) in that day that the Lord will set his hand the second time to recover the remnant of his people (Isa. 11.11)"; "And it shall

come to pass (*we-hayah*) in that day that a great horn shall be blown etc. (Isa. 27.13)." ' "

There are of course many other passages making good conduct the specific condition of the coming of the Messiah, in fact the nearness and remoteness of his coming directly dependent on the height and depth of Jewish behavior. But the wait is long and trying, whilst at the same time the eagerness and readiness must never be relaxed. On this theme there is a pathetic and humorous Midrash in Sanhedrin 97b to the following effect: Do not rely on those who compute the exact date of the Messiah's coming, since dates innumerable have been fixed but passed without his coming, so that you may in the end believe he will never come. You must on the contrary trust the Prophet (Habakkuk 2.3) who enjoins us to wait no matter how much he tarries. It cannot be that we expect his coming and he himself does not expect to come. But supposing both Israel and the Messiah desire his coming, what is there to stop it? The answer is, the Attribute of Justice מדת הדין. But if that is the case, why should we keep on waiting? The answer is, לקבל שכר to receive reward: it is good to wait ("they also serve who only stand and wait"), since the prophet tells us "happy are all they that wait for him," (אשרי כל חוכי לו, Isa. 30.18).

The second condition of the Messiah's coming, next to conduct, is the more sombre and ominous one of fulfilling the measure of suffering. Israel must be exiled to all nations and be oppressed by all peoples. We have already heard the Gnostic-Manichean-Jacob Boehme-Schellingian version of the same view: all evil must be tried out in this most tragic-heroic of all worlds before there can be a definite turning. To the eternal glory of Israel be it said that they themselves record and accept this terrifying burden for themselves, professing that a part of the sufferings will serve to purify them of their sins, and the rest are a free gift of atonement to the world by its suffering servant.

The last mark of the Messianic age will be that all men will speak one language. Men spoke a single language at the beginning, namely Hebrew. Then came the confusion at the Tower of Babel, the division of mankind into seventy warring tongues and peoples. The final language spoken will also be one, not one indeed as single linguistic idiom, but one in clarity and sincerity and mutual understanding, namely the שפה ברורה, "the pure language" of the Prophet's promise (Zeph. 3.9) (Tanhuma, Buber I, 28b; ed. Singermann, p. 78). That is the final sign and seal of the unity of human kind.

Conclusion

The world is young, not old, as the prematurely aged youthful Utopist poet sang because he could not wait. "My Father Time is old and gray with waiting for a better day," says Shelley and dies before his time. The world is young, history has hardly begun, and those who have helped to lay its foundations and have a mind towards the future must bethink themselves how they may perdure through a boundless future in order that they may contribute towards the further building and maturing of historic event. Individuals die, and nations may die but need not die, for nations are not (except by the veriest figure of speech) a concrete physical organism which is perforce doomed to die. On the contrary they may renew their youth perennially, and the ancient Jewish prayer חדש ימינו כקדם, "Renew our days as of yore," is a vivid reflection of this conviction.

However, the art of renewing a nation's days as of yore must be extremely rare and difficult, since it has been so rarely tried with success, and the rhythms and vicissitudes of a nation's life are by no means cumulative and conserving in one progressive direction. Perennial crisis may be said to be the mark of all life, and most peoples have succumbed, and where they have not succumbed they have become stagnant — weary, stale, unprofitable (witness the old China and India).

A tragic destiny has served to keep the Jewish people lean and alert. It has been bad for the nerves but good for the soul. But there are constant imminent dangers; as of today, urbanization, oversophistication, almost complete absorption into a bourgeoisie, loss of self-respect, loss of belief, and loss of the tragic-heroic sense of destiny. These are dangers which in the case of any other people would be felt as decisive, radical, insuperable. But the Jewish people has always lived in an atmosphere of extremes and not by rules but by exceptions. The incidence of decimation and attrition has been enormous throughout its history; it is the descendant of the minority of minorities; it has always felt its centre of gravity to reside in a "remnant," in an ideal Israel which, like the bird Phoenix, has risen from its own ashes. Heroic measures are needed, but heroic measures will be found by the new great Jewry of this country on which the fate of future Judaism so largely depends.

The heroic measure consists in nothing short of a renewal of life, the rejuvenation of the old life, and we can proceed to specify its elements. First, the warmth of emotion in which alone the religious

sentiment can find refuge and love; and religion is one name for that renewal of life. Mythology is another name for it: a high mythology, a high sense of mission, a cult of the Jewish People, like the cult of Jesus in the Christian religion, as incentive to further greatness because of the greatness already given; further, the emotions which feed the sense of calling and distinction, such as tragic protagonism in a heroic drama. Jews need such a climate of the mind to be wooed back to their faith, to feel pride in it and to spearhead it into the future. We need something to believe and love, a great mythos about ourselves, such as we have had since God spoke to Abraham, and such as has continued through Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones' coming to life and Yehuda Halevi's parable of the dying seed transforming the world's soil and mud into a glorious tree: a credible and viable mythos capable of being embraced and loved. I quote in praise of mythos a thinker and poet who has meditated on a similar problem for his own people.

"By myth I do not mean a fiction," says William Butler Yeats, "but one of those statements our nature is compelled to make and employ as a truth though there cannot be sufficient evidence. . . Myth is not a rudimentary form superseded by reflection. Belief is the spring of all action; we *assent* to the conclusions of reflection but *believe* what myth presents; belief is love, and the concrete alone is loved; nor is it true that myth has no purpose but to bring round some discovery of a principle or a fact. The saint may touch through myth the utmost reach of human faculty and pass not to reflection but to unity with the source of his being." (Wheels and Butterflies, N. Y. 1935, pp. 91, 121).

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion
UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS

CINCINNATI
NEW YORK
LOS ANGELES
JERUSALEM

CLIFTON AVENUE - CINCINNATI, OHIO 45220

Office of the President

December 4, 1970

Dear Friend:

Dr. Henry Slonimsky, Professor Emeritus of Ethics and Philosophy of Religion and Dean Emeritus of our New York School, died on November 12, 1970. Services were held at the School on November 15th. I thought you would want to have a copy of the eulogy delivered by Rabbi Herbert Weiner and of my remarks.

Sincerely,

Nelson Glueck

Nelson Glueck

SERVICES IN MEMORY OF DEAN HENRY SLONIMSKY

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE - JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

NEW YORK SCHOOL

November 15, 1970

Remarks by Dr. Nelson Glueck

Eulogy by Rabbi Herbert Weiner

Remarks by Dr. Nelson Glueck

I speak on this occasion in behalf of the entire Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion family, of the Board of Governors and its Chairman, Mr. S.L.Kopald, Jr., its faculties and student bodies and of course for myself. We have come together to thank God for the life of Dr. Henry Slonimsky, who for many years was the Dean of our New York School, having joined it several years after it was first founded by the late, beloved Stephen S. Wise in 1922. He continued in that post for nearly thirty years, until after the merger of Hebrew Union College and Jewish Institute of Religion in 1950. After his retirement as Dean, he kept on teaching with full vigor until a few years ago. He was 86 when a few days ago he departed for the Yeshivah shel Ma'alah, the Academy on High. His spirit lives with us and his memory will remain green in the hearts of all those who came within the reach of his teaching and exposition.

I first got to know him when I sat in his classes for two years nearly fifty years ago, when he taught Midrash at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. I have never known a more engaging and stirring teacher. We never cut his classes. He held us spellbound from the beginning to the end of each session. There was depth and elegance and passion in his teaching, and one would have had to be a mindless clod not to have reacted with admiration and affection for this extraordinarily splendid teacher, who made the Midrash and Jewish Ethics gleam for us. We sought him out after class, too, and spent many an evening in his apartment listening to him hold forth on all manner of things, Jewish philosophy and modern poetry and literature, on the intellectual and artistic giants he had consorted with while a postgraduate student in Germany, on Herman Cohen, under whom he had studied in Marburg and received his Ph.D. degree.

I think it was then that there developed in me the conviction, which others too such as Adolph Oko of blessed memory and my great predecessor, Julian Morgenstern, had helped foster, that I, too, must spend some years of graduate study in Germany after being ordained at the Hebrew Union College. If the years abroad had helped in the development and flowering of the spirit of Henry Slonimsky, then, perhaps, I thought to myself, a sojourn in Europe and acquiring my Ph.D. there would help me try to emulate him. Not that I thought I could ever achieve the heights he had reached, but that Henry Slonimsky, with all his learning and charisma, was a personality I would

try to be like in my own small way. Before I graduated from the Hebrew Union College, he left for New York City, but my determination to go to Germany to study had become unshakably firm. The day after I was ordained I was on my way, and remained in Germany and Palestine for nine years before returning to America for a brief period.

One of the things I had learned from Henry Slonimsky was that neither the lack of money nor the failure to get established in some paying position at the earliest possible moment should deter me. And so I salute Henry Slonimsky here and now for this kindness, this hesed he showed me. He alerted me to the promise or possibility of my gaining greater maturity through the process of more learning and reflection and of my living without being compelled to fulfill any obligations other than those I cared to impose upon myself. And as for money, he told me, "somehow or other you'll manage to scrape by," - and I did. And as for position and advancement, "you will gain them in due course from your peers if you are worthy, and the only person you need to satisfy is the guy whose countenance stares at you each morning in the mirror."

I have often wondered why particular individuals become preeminent in their times and continue to loom large in the perspective of history. I speak particularly of those whose being is surrounded by an aura of blessing, whose words bring enlightenment, whose strivings are for creative peace, whose example is an inspiration for that which is beautiful and good. And as I look back into our own history, I believe that greatness in our Jewish tradition devolves upon men like Abraham and Moses and others of their like, whose lives furnished standards of excellence to their brethren and their times and exercised an abiding influence for good upon the future. Such a man was Abraham, who was the first person in all of recorded history to articulate the meaning of conscience and to emphasize the sanctity of life. Such a man was Moses who led his people from slavery to freedom, circumscribed only by the limits of Torah, of moral law. Their personalities made such an indelible impact upon history that their utterances and example were remembered and accepted, where others would not have been listened to or followed. Such a man was Henry Slonimsky, whose entire personality and inspiring teaching and warm insights lifted him to the realm of greatness.

Happy the brother and sister who knew him so well, the wife who helped so greatly to give him the inner peace and love and devoted care he required. I salute the parents, who somehow must have influenced their children and in particular this son in the search for knowledge and truth. Happy the students who sat at his feet, inside and outside the classroom, who came under his influence. Happy all of us who felt the glow of his personality. May his memory be for blessing.

Eulogy by Rabbi Herbert Weiner

Gorgeous teacher!

In behalf of your students -- those here at this moment and so many not able to be here, but for whom you remain teacher supreme, I address you personally. For when I close my eyes, I find it easy to see you again -- so vivid were you and are you to us. And so I speak to you as if you were here.

Brilliant, tempestuous, lovable, recalcitrant, loving, difficult, irreplaceable man!

I am not worthy, but I ask permission of your colleagues and friends -- those here, and those whose souls hover about in the corridors and classrooms of this School that you and they built; in their behalf, and in behalf of those whom you knew from other times, in other lands, poets, philosophers, writers -- names known to most of us only by hearsay, but part of our life and youth, in their behalf also, I take liberty to address you personally -- as if you were listening. For that was the assumption, the great assumption of faith which underlay all your so-called heresies, all your impatience with the easy platitudes of religion -- namely, that nothing truly good dare be lost, permanently annulled in the universe. Therefore, you who were not only able to perceive, but at the moment of perception became one with the truth and beauty and wonder in this world; and we, who through your genius were also united with this truth, beauty and wonder -- remain in touch, our bond conserved by the great Conserver of all that is truly valid. Only now there is a change in the direction of communication. For despite your talk about the virtue of eloquent listening, in life you talked, and we, enthralled, did the listening. Now, we wish to say something. And this is what we wish to say:

Henry Slonimsky, אשריך וטוב לך , you did well. And אשרי יולדתך blessed was she who brought you into the world. I dare speak of her even though present are those who really knew her, your good brother and sister. For some three weeks ago, on the eve of Hoshanna Rabba, the eve of your 86th birthday, you lifted a cup of wine to life, and you told me you could still hear her voice saying, "geboren fun donnerstig zu freitig -- "born from Thursday to Friday". And later your wife told me about her. Sarah was her name, like the mother of us all, Sarah. Pious and pure, but not learned even in the Hebrew words, let alone in the English and Greek, in the poetry and literature and philosophy wherein her brilliant son was so sovereign. But when you had gone to Europe to study at the great universities,

when you were already in the process of conquering and absorbing into your being the glories of Hellas, the thought and languages of Europe, the heights and depths of Western culture; when as a handsome, blonde student you were already the friend and darling of fascinating talented writers and poets and thinkers, she mustered up all her knowledge of the old Hebrew letters to write you some simple words, "Zei, mein kind, a gute yid." "Be, my son, a good Jew." And you never forgot, not the sound of her voice, nor the imperative of her words. The world in all its beauty, mystery and sadness opened itself to your sensitive arms and mind. The landscapes of nature, the stimulation of great minds and books, the pleasure of good wine and food, the full deposit of centuries of civilization -- all this you knew, embraced, and it became yours. It became yours so vividly that forever after you were able not only to transmit it, but to literally intoxicate others with its glory. We who heard you speak of those matters felt our lives to be expanded, our minds stretched, our inner vision sharpened. With your words we were transported into Plato's archetypal realms, into the intricacies of Kantian categories, into the soul agony of a Dostoevski, into the imagination of poets and artists of a dozen lands and ages. Teaching, you told us, requires love. Without love and enthusiasm, souls cannot be enkindled and you must have deeply loved these worlds, for you so enkindled our souls with them. But, evidently, through and above all this love was the sound of your mother's voice and the command of her words. Because you asked of these worlds that they offer you more than brilliant thought, more than beauty, power and glory. You asked also that they reveal to you a heart -- how did you put it -- a heart in the universe which will assure us that, "the great and good causes of the human heart shall be brought to victory, that the poor and oppressed should be comforted, and wrong righted and justice done and good prevail," -- namely a God, a Jewish God. And since you searched in this universe for evidence of the heart and found it lacking, you evolved your thesis, the cry of your life -- the assertion that there might indeed be such a God, a Jewish God who cared for the suffering of innocents, but that this care could become manifest, translated into living fact only if man helped to translate it.

This cry of your life you embodied and embroidered in a thousand variations. Life is real, you told your students, time is real, the world is in the making, the future entirely open, waiting to be created by God and man reinforcing each other in a mystic life-giving circle. This was your message and, truth to tell, it was not always an easy message, as you yourself used to say for those who had to work leading congregations in prayer to a God who seemingly was Himself in trouble. But it was all right, this message, both for those who were strengthened by it and those

who were troubled, for through its pain, there still came with unfaltering faith, the words, "Be a good Jew." And a good Jew is one who may succomb to many sins, but never the sin of despair. And a good Jew is one who, after all the mysteries are confronted, still knows with every fibre of his being that "there is an arch spanning time from Sinai to the furthermost future," and a good Jew knows that he is part of that arch and that "when the best names are named, his will be among the first."

But this, O teacher, you who liked to call yourself an "entertainer of ideas" -- this is not the time to entertain or rehearse your ideas. Besides, what are these words and ideas without the living presence that gave them life -- without the tall handsome man rising to his feet and pushing aside the carefully written, and equally carefully ignored, written manuscript; without the crack of the big hand on the table, without, for those of us lucky enough to have felt it, the enveloping grip of that hand around our own wrists, without the dramatic lift of those hands, without the dramatic pause, followed perhaps by a deliciously wicked bon mot, that bit of scandalous humor needed, as you put it, to help us see "the element of smallness that hangs on to all greatness, the shadow of pretension," the reminder that this or that person would be more if he were less.

You were right. There is a vitality in Torah she b'al peh, the teaching of the mouth, which evaporates from the written word. And you chose, as you put it, to write not on paper but on our hearts. And how you wrote. We who knew you will carry the impressions of that writing with us to our dying day.

So אשריך. You did well, Henry Slonimsky, and so did she who bore you and commanded you to be a good Jew. And one other blessing among many was yours, dear friend, a blessing more private, more hidden because she was and is so modest. But a blessing, oh so precious. I speak of your wife, and speaking of her, I speak of love and devotion that knew no limit.

As for the last word, why should this hour with you be different. The last word is yours. Even though I read it for you, it is the word you spoke six years ago and a word I know you meant for this moment, so I quote you to say:

"Finally, a word of gratitude to whatever fate or providence has enabled me to do the work which I have been doing: a word of gratitude for the opportunity, for the place, for cherished

colleagues early and late; and, above all, for the students who, through the years and decades, have provided the resonance, the eloquent listening, the co-authorship of what I have taught. Without them I would have been nothing at all in my intellectual life. And last of all a word of thanks to my wife, who, through good days and bad, through all my moods and vagaries, has been the steady unfaltering help and support of my life.

Has the whole enterprise been worthwhile? Yes. I have had a good life. I have labored in a cause which I believe in. I had the high destiny to be born a Jew, and I tried to make myself worthy of it, and to make others -- young impressionable students-- feel worthy of it.

My feelings as I say goodbye is one of thanks and contentment.

חזק חזק ונתחזק