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CENTRAL CONFERENCE AMERICAN RABBIS



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THE CONFERENCE JOURNAL: *Published by the Central Conference of American Rabbis.*

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EDITOR'S NOTES



We briefly sketch our tentative plans for the coming year, anticipating that many of our readers will want to join in the discussions that will appear in the pages of the Journal. For some time, we have been at work putting together a Journal issue on the subject of Synagogue Art. We are primarily interested in the art forms that have been introduced in many of our new synagogues, symbolizing the many facets of our Faith. We have also been concerned with the form and observance of the Festivals (שלוש רגלים) which we believe pose problems in need of discussion. There has been a good deal of talk about the Religious School curriculum. In certain quarters the reliability of the curriculum is questioned, while in other quarters the validity of the curriculum is up for judgment. In line with our Religious School interest, we shall also consider our program in the field of Adult Education.

In the Field of Education appears as a new department in this issue of the Journal. Under the editorship of Rabbi Albert M. Lewis, Rabbi of Temple Isaiah, Los Angeles, California, we plan through this column to bring to the attention of our readers books, materials and papers published and distributed by the many educational agencies both Jewish and non-Jewish which might be of interest and assistance to the rabbi.

CCAR *Journal*

CENTRAL CONFERENCE AMERICAN RABBIS

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In a recent review of Rexford G. Tugwell's new book, *A Chronicle of Jeopardy 1945-55*, Cabell Phillips writes:

"History written at short range is likely to be deceptive. It is hard to bring events into sharp and stable focus while they are still enveloped in their own dust clouds and while one's emotions about them are still green." (*New York Times*, August 14, 1955)

And I may add that this is because all too frequently fantasy takes on the appearance of reality and reality that of fantasy. Yet fantasy and reality are not so separate and distinct as we are sometimes prone to believe, for all too often reality is the projection of fantasy. Life is too full of the impossible becoming possible for us to place fantasy and reality into separate compartments, destined never to mix.

Though I agree in the main with the caution expressed by the reviewer that history written at short range is likely to be deceptive, nevertheless what has been happening recently is so revolutionary in character as to warrant the belief that the New Year, 5716, is opening *spiritually* "at the summit." We are not just trailing our own dust clouds to admit to ourselves that the world is today in a happier and a more hopeful

mood than it has had reason to be in the last ten years.

The radical change of manner by the Kremlin leaders and the signs of amity emanating from the Red Chinese, following the Geneva meeting "at the summit," give warrant to the belief that the mood of coexistence indicates the relaxing of existing international tensions. Perhaps the possession and development by the Kremlin of atomic power, has brought us on a par militarily and led both sides to the realization, out of enlightened self-interest, of the futility of another war.

This mood of acceptance of political coexistence was heightened by the even more significant Atoms for Peace Conference, which followed the meeting of the Big Four in the same city of peace, Geneva. In the world in which we live, it is science which determines economic and government policy. At the Atoms for Peace meetings it was demonstrated how we can and must *coexist also with the Atom*. It was Professor Homi J. Bhabha, of India, President of the Conference, who said, "I venture to predict that a method will be found for liberating fusion energy in a controlled manner within the next two decades. When that happens, the energy problem of the

world will have been solved forever." At Geneva there was displayed the Atomic Reactor, which will be the source of atomic energy in the future and which will drive the wheels of industry, particularly where there is no coal or oil — foreshadowing a new industrial revolution far greater in scope than the one that transformed society in the nineteenth century. Deserts will be made to bloom like gardens through the irradiation of seeds and soil. The radioactive isotope and other forms of atomic energy may even cure cancer and other dread diseases. Veritably a new world is opening up, one that may witness the elimination of war, pestilence, and famine.

The timing of these two Geneva Conferences was providential. They occurred exactly ten years after the most devastating weapon ever devised by man had been released over Hiroshima and Nagasaki and ended history's most cataclysmic war. May not the prophetic words of Isaiah be applied here? May it not be that God used the Atom as the "rod of His anger" (שבט אפי) to bring a wayward mankind to its senses? May it not be that God intended the devastating bomb with its attendant suffering to lead, as suffering usually does, to the realization that the gift of God — in this case, nuclear fission — was intended to be used for man's weal rather than for his woe and that it was only man's perversity that made him use the splitting of the Atom for his own decimation?

How telling, then, are the words of Moses: "Behold, I set before thee this day life and death, good and evil; choose ye the good, choose ye life." After a

decade of suffering, of cold and hot war — of hatred, vindictiveness, and insecurity — we are coming to the realization that the choice between life and death is truly ours. We are far from being the puppets of fate, but in a decisive way have the power to exercise that free will which will bring us life and not death — provided that we master the יצר הרע and choose the יצר טוב in us.

It is not fantasy but reality that confronts us. We can choose to make this a better and a happier world if we but will it so, provided that we make our way *His* way instead of trying futilely to bend His will to our will. We must cease playing God; we must choose to believe in God and, as Dr. Leo Baeck has said, "to make a place for Him in the world which He has created."

I find it significant that so many Jews, way out of proportion to our numbers, were selected to represent the seventy-two countries at this meeting of scientists at the summit in Geneva. Jews are leading the way in teaching mankind to master the atomic fire. I pray that, as a people, we who are rooted in faith and morality may give mankind that moral and spiritual direction it now needs and hasten the new era.

Colleagues, with this New Year we have a "job" cut out for ourselves, to lead our people back to the spiritual sources which are our heritage and to which the world must return for its salvation. To do this is to bring events into sharp and stable focus, a focus toward which 4,000 years of Jewish and world history have been moving.

NORTH AFRICA

It is not a simple matter to organize impressions and to draw from them some clear-cut recommendations, even after a lengthy and carefully planned journey. Reality often refuses to fit itself neatly into a two-dimensional frame. Actual places and people persist in being self-contradictory, elusive and complex — in short, real. When one is traveling it is necessary to try to understand not only what goes on straight in front of his eyes, but also what is flitting past the corner of them.

Therefore, instead of attempting to offer generalizations, let me present instead rough material from the trip's diary. I believe certain conclusions will become inescapably obvious, out of the situations sketched in these pages. The responsibilities of American Jewry will also become obvious.

My journey began in the great city of Paris, took me through Tangier, Spanish and French Morocco and Tunisia and thence, via Rome, to Israel. My last day was spent in a new settlement in the Lachish area of Israel which is being readied for newcomers from North Africa seeking a new life in a new land. Thus I ended these travels in a place of hope — hope which I trust

will be justified by the response of the American Jewish community to the call of the nationwide United Jewish Appeal in the months ahead.

The excerpts which follow are based on the sometimes hasty notes I took in the course of those forty-odd exciting days.

July 25, *Paris*. Lunched today with Shmuel Bendor, second in command at the Israel Embassy in France. We discussed the plight of North African Jewry and the need of migration to Israel. M. Bendor was of the opinion, concerning those families who wish to move to Israel, that entire families should be taken out in every instance where a breadwinner or potential breadwinner is part of the group. Later, a conference with the Yiddish writer Moshe Sambatyon, who left Russia in 1947, and who believes that at least a third of the Jewish population of Russia would emigrate to Israel if given the opportunity.*

July 26, *Tangier*. Arrived today in this city in Morocco's international zone. Significant conversations with Albert Reinhard, Director of the JDC, and

*Recent figures approximate Jewish population at 3,000,000. Ed.

Tangier-born Abraham Isaac Laredo, vice-president of the Jewish community here, whose family came from Spain in 1492. There are 12,500 Jews in Tangier and 15,000 in Spanish Morocco. They are emigrating at the rate of 150 per month to Israel, believing there is no future for Jews in Moslem countries, that if independence comes about, they will have to clear out. Most Jews in this area have been craftsmen, traders or peddlers. The very poor make up the bulk of those leaving for Israel, because they are desperate. But the middle class, who conduct small businesses with very narrow margins of cash, are having difficulty liquidating assets, and are afraid that their small capital, even if realized, would quickly run out in Israel.

July 27. *Tetuan in Spanish Morocco.* The almost unanimous opinion of leaders here is that the Jews must eventually leave. If they wait, they may get caught later. There are 5,000 Jews in Tetuan. 250 contribute to the apparatus of the Jewish community. The rest have no means to do so. Visited a girls' school where 35 girls are learning sewing, cooking. They get hot meals, good care. After three years of training most girls can earn a living by skills learned here. Six have already left for Israel, others hope to go. A committee of local ladies operates this school as volunteers. Also visited a feeding canteen for 150 children, and a new clinic, the "Preventorio Infante," caring for children from birth to school age, giving supplementary feeding, medical aid, lunches, X-rays for TB. Started in one little room five years ago. It now has a huge building. But this clinic is only for

sick children. There is no such concept as a "well-baby clinic." It is partly financed with UJA funds through the Joint Distribution Committee. The Jews of Tetuan feel somewhat isolated from the rest of the Jewish world. They would like to have more contact with Israel. Was taken later to the "Soupe Populaire" in the Mellah, or ghetto, where 100 old people, previously beggars, are now brought here to be fed. Some send their children with pots to bring meals home. The food is clean and nourishing. The project costs \$250 a month, takes the beggars off the streets, is part of a campaign to "liquidate mendacity." This is a bold notion in a country where begging is one of the commonest occupations.

There is a *takkana* dating back to the 16th Century forbidding more than 16 synagogues in Tetuan. Sixteen now exist in the Mellah. A leader here, Moses Hassan, wants to build a new one, outside the Mellah. This means that one inside must be closed. There is a big controversy about this matter between the community leaders and the rabbis. Indications are that the new synagogue is going to go up.

July 28. *Casablanca.* Went directly from the airport to the Talmud Torah to see a group of about 1,000 who fled from the Mellah seeking refuge when the Arabs went on the rampage of anti-French rioting a few days ago. These people are really afraid. If we could put them on a ship to Israel immediately, they would go *en masse*. They will not return to the Mellah.

The Mellah of Casablanca is a ghetto of indescribable poverty. It is one of

the most over-crowded areas in the world. Of the 250,000 Jews in Morocco, 80,000 live in Casablanca and 50,000 of them within the sordid precincts of the Mellah. A cramped mud hovel in the Mellah will often house a family of 8 or more.

Talked with Albert Levy, vice-president of the Jewish community here, and "Amos," who is Chief of the Jewish Agency mission devoted to emigration to Israel. The feeling is that while all the Jews of Morocco cannot hope to leave, the slogan should be "Those who want to go should be helped to go," that a breadwinner could support another six or seven dependents once established in Israel. Registrations for emigration are now at 60,000. In the past nine months, 18,000 have left. It is felt that 10,000 should be evacuated directly after the High Holidays — 5,000 in October and 5,000 in November.

July 29. Conversation with William Stokes, American vice-consul here in Casablanca. He told me Jews show good ability to get along with best elements among French and Arabs. In Rabat, met Jacques Dahan, Secretary of Council of Jewish Communities of Morocco, who declared that "There will be no panic emigration to Israel." M. Dahan is the exception to those who feel that Jews have no future in Morocco. He believes Moroccan Jews would be more willing to stay here, if they could achieve equality with others and modern human rights. But even in his opinion middle class emigration will depend upon political turn of events. As for the more numerous poor, they will continue to want to leave with little reference to the

future situation. They have already made their estimate of how little the future holds for them in Morocco.

July 30. Meeting with George D. LaMont, American Consul General in Morocco, who predicted an "orderly transition" of Jews leaving Morocco. Also spoke with Madame Helene Benatar, who is a lawyer and who, during the war, helped save thousands of lives through her work as a representative of the JDC in France and North Africa. Mme. Benatar felt there is "increasing anti-Jewish sentiment" in Morocco. The meetings of the past few days would seem to indicate the following situation in general: 1) Under the French the Jews feel protected. 2) Under Moroccan government Jews would feel insecure, although not now in immediate danger of life except for occasional outbursts. 3) However, Jews must emigrate, and this emigration should be carried out before the situation grows worse, necessitating "panic" emigration.

July 31. Went down to the port in Casablanca to see a group embark on the "Lyautey" for Marseilles, where there is a camp called Grand Arenas. From this camp they are trans-shipped to Israel. With their pathetic baggage, they were packed in the deepest hold of the ship. My first thought was that this must have been the way my father came to America from Russia in steerage fifty years ago. It was dark and there was much confusion. Children crying and people shouting, trying not to lose each other. In the midst of all this I tried to talk to them. I asked one man who was 43 years old, the father of ten children, with no occupation at

his command, what he hoped to do in Israel. He said he would do any work, even if that meant cleaning lavatories. He wanted to live some place where his children would be safe and where he himself would be treated as a human being. After talking to others, I could see this was the general feeling.

August 1. A conference with leaders of Casablanca Jewry, at a private home. The group comprised the top leadership, cautious and conservative people. The almost unanimous opinion was that a maximum number of Morocco's Jews should be moved to Israel. The Joint Distribution Committee has done well — in terms of medical care, feeding, clothing, education, scholarship programs, community advice, loans to artisans, rehabilitation through its support of "ORT" training programs. Nevertheless, after hours and hours of meetings with people in many spheres of life, including American Consular officials, one thing has become crystal-clear to me: there is no future for the majority of the Jewish population of Morocco. Three major factors lead to this conclusion:

- 1) Morocco is a theocracy. The Koran governs this land. All non-Moslems are without protection. There are no civil courts and there is no writ of habeas corpus. A Jew has no place in a Moslem theocracy.
- 2) Danger of life. There is no danger of a mass pogrom, but constant danger of unexpected outbreaks, with the Jews as scapegoats even when violence is directed elsewhere. Jews are usually the secondary target of the mob if not the primary.
- 3) Economic displacement. Jews are gradually being squeezed out of the

economy and their functions taken over by Arabs. Under an independent Arab government, Jews may find it increasingly impossible to obtain licenses, permits, franchises, necessary for doing business.

Casablanca is quiet right now. The city is still under martial law and there is still a curfew in the evening. But there have been no large street riots and demonstrations for the past several days. Individual incidents still occur and there are shootings and bombings each day.

August 3-4. *Tunis*. Here in the capital of Tunisia I met with six of the local leaders at a private dinner last evening, all of whom spoke of the economic crisis here and their hopes for increasing the rate of Jewish emigration.

Subsequent note: One of the men present at the dinner was Albert Bessis, recently appointed the lone Jewish minister in the independent Tunisian cabinet.

There are at present 100,000 Jews in Tunisia (of whom 80,000 are natives) living amidst 3,500,000 Arabs. The present rate of immigration to Israel is about 600 persons per month.

Met with Shushan Cohen, the Grand Rabbi of Djerba, an island community off the coast of Tunisia whose inhabitants claim continuous Jewish communal existence on the island since the First Temple was destroyed. This would make Djerba the oldest unbroken Jewish community in the world. Rabbi Cohen knows that they would be destroying a chapter of history if Djerba's Jews left the island. But the 2,700 Jewish inhabitants fear the future. After 2,500 years Djerba is still not home.

There are three main reasons why

the people of Tunisia want to leave: fear of the future, as Arabs obtain rights to self-government; economic squeeze resulting from the slogan, "Arabs trade only with Arabs"; good news from Israel, trickling back to those with relatives who have already gone to start enjoying a free life.

Today went through the *harah*, equivalent of Casablanca's *mellah*. But conditions are not as bad. There is light and air. The JDC has developed a wonderful program here. Trachoma, tinea and TB are slowly being controlled through an extensive medical aid program. Saw cartons of cheese, butter being distributed, children being fed, teachers being trained. Talked to several children who are learning Hebrew, so they can "go to Israel." Those who are going are much sounder in body and in spirit as a result of what is being done for them.

August 5. *Rome*. After North Africa, I have flown northward to spend a few days discussing the situation of Italian Jewry. There are about 35,000 Jews here of whom 12,000 live in Rome. On the whole they are quite poor, with an extensive ghetto section, greatly overcrowded, poverty apparent. But the JDC works closely with the Union of Italian Jewish communities. Schools and clinics are often the beneficiaries of more Italian money than American. This is excellent since in the long run the very best we can do for any overseas Jewish community is to help put it on its own feet as quickly as possible. A new youth center is being constructed in the basement of the Great Synagogue in Rome — a project which while common enough in America, is almost unheard of here.

August 10. *Jerusalem*. After finishing my visits to North Africa and Europe, here I am in Israel. My last trip was almost two years ago, and I was prepared for changes. But what meets the eye is really startling. There are so many new houses, new villages, new gas stations and new people that even an old visitor must catch his breath. The strongest single impression is one of new immigrants being made useful and empty land being filled with crops and settlements. Reclaiming people, reclaiming land — that is the story of Israel in a few words.

In a Malben hospital at Mahane I saw a girl who had come from Iraq four years ago, literally unable to walk. Her name is Fortuna and now, after several operations, good fortune is really beginning to smile on her. She wears heavy orthopedic shoes but at least she walks upright. She kept saying חודרה לאלהים וחודרה למלבן.

Malben is JDC's chief program in Israel, and a wonderful one. It consists of a network of hospitals, sheltered workshops, etc. which care for the aged, handicapped, and "hard core" social cases among immigrants.

August 18. Today I stood in the midst of a great green field containing a thousand acres of cotton. I have one of the fluffy white pods on the table in front of me. Out there under the hot Negev sun this afternoon, looking at the green and white, so different from the parched brown of previous years, I could only think of the miracle of birth. Give sweet water to thirsty soil, apply sweat, and new life comes forth.

On the way to the Negev, an official of the Jewish Agency Colonization

Department explained that he was going to show me something new. He said that food was now plentiful in the land. The new emphasis is on industrial crops. With great enthusiasm he pointed out extensive fields of cotton, sorghum, peanuts and sugar beets. These new crops are being grown and tended and harvested in large measure by newcomers from the North African countries I had just visited.

At the end of the journey, deep in the Negev, we stood together at the huge concrete reservoir marking the terminus of the Yarkon-Negev pipeline. It holds a million cubic meters of water. Looking out over the desert surrounding us, he predicted that these industrial crops would soon cover the sand now that the water was available.

Empty land is always an invitation to a potential aggressor. The northern Negev lies uncomfortably close to the Egyptian-held Gaza strip. Once it is filled with people, farm machinery and homes, everyone will realize that it is less vulnerable.

August 20. I have had several conversations so far with the Prime-Minister designate, Mr. Ben-Gurion, Mr. Eshkol, the Finance Minister, and others. Most of these talks have had to do with the question of immigration from North Africa. There is no doubt that a larger immigration is in the offing, also no doubt that this can wreak havoc with Israel's economy. How do you match the human needs of North African Jewry against the economic needs of the State of Israel for stability? In the past Israel has always answered this question by giving priority to human needs. Her leading officials are

prepared to do so again, but they are worried.

As the headlines from Morocco grow bigger and blacker, almost everyone in Israel has been thinking about the fate of North African Jewry. How many immigrants can be taken in? How quickly? There have been demonstrations urging open immigration.

August 22. Visiting a jet plane base, with the whistling planes circling the countryside in quick, flashing maneuvers, I thought of the technical progress Israel has made, not only in the realm of mechanical things but also in the whole field of social planning. The ship-to-settlement program is amazing. Trucks are at the dock at Haifa when a ship carrying new North African immigrants arrives; within hours the newcomers are at a new settlement where a planning officer is ready with a list of housing assignments; a ten-day stock of food is in the cupboard; all supplies, ranging from beds to a kerosene cooking stove, are in place; farming implements are waiting to be used. All this requires co-ordinated planning of the most advanced kind.

This past twelve months 30,000 Jews have been received from North Africa. The Government and the Jewish Agency are both in debt on this problem — not enough funds from abroad. For the year ahead a figure of 45,000 has been tentatively agreed upon. Obviously, if pogrom situations develop, that number will be vastly larger. But even that number represents staggering financial burdens. Sources of funds must be increased. Dr. Josephthal, Treasurer of

(Continued on page 49)

ON FRANZ ROSENZWEIG

Rosenzweig, who died twenty-five years ago, has been quite recently introduced to the English speaking public and has since become a much talked about thinker. Few can escape the fascination of Rosenzweig's life story. But it is not only the dramatic biography that appeals to the reader. His philosophy, too, attracted attention. And, following the unwritten law of literary and philosophic criticism, it is being given a label, put in one or the other category and accepted or rejected, depending on the critic's tastes, prejudices, convictions, etc.

Viewing carefully the various reactions to Rosenzweig's life work, one is compelled to make the following observation. Here was a man who made it absolutely clear that his philosophy (in the *Star of Redemption*) was merely a preparation to a life as a Jew; that the writing of his religious-philosophical system had the function of crutches which an injured person may need until he has learned to walk without them. The reader is, of course, right if he takes a book like the *Star* seriously. He would, however, be expected to take it for what it is and not for more than it is supposed

to be. A great artist makes his sketches in view of the painting; they are preliminary, personal, and only indicative of the artist's intentions; they may intrigue us or leave us indifferent; but they are not the painting. Rosenzweig's theories are preparations for what was to follow, preparations in a sense to be qualified in the course of this paper. Yet, his theories, as e. g., those on Judaism versus Christianity are being discussed as if they were a part of a dogmatic theology. It is being pointed out that Rosenzweig's distinction between what he termed the "eternal way" (Christianity) and the "eternal life" (Judaism) does not cover the entire, quite complex, problem. By way of correction Rosenzweig is being posthumously informed that "the Law" is central in Judaism and that the Law must be mentioned as a distinctive mark between Judaism and Christianity. That is sad irony. Because all Rosenzweig did after having written down his theory of Judaism, was to translate this theory of eternal life into practice. And practice meant: study of the classical Jewish literature and observance of the Law, i. e., exactly what

the critics today take pains to "suggest." Rosenzweig's theory is not being viewed in the light of the ensuing practice which alone could prove the validity, or the falsity, of the theory. Instead, that which was to Rosenzweig "practice" is being offered by the critics — as a new and correct theory to replace Rosenzweig's old and incomplete one.

What the reader should have noticed is the radical turn from thinking for the sake of thinking to thinking for the sake of doing and living. Or, from the solitariness of the Jewish thinker to the communion of study and teaching, of family life and worship, of social responsibility and charity.

Rosenzweig decided upon this turning under a sudden impact of living Judaism. A series of personal experiences convinced him that the most solid system, the most comprehensive ideology, the most perfect theory will at best play an auxiliary function; on the other hand, a Jewish deed — in any one of its thousand possible forms, is a valid, uncontradictable, expression of Judaism.

A Jewish deed, Jewish action — let's avoid the term activity — is, both overtly and mysteriously, rooted in Jewish knowledge. The pursuit of that knowledge ("learning") is itself action, deed, even worship.

Rosenzweig had a childlike confidence in the activating power of learning. Devoted, faithful study will by itself lead to deed, just as, in Rosenzweig's view, an openminded experience of existence will — by itself — include a notion of the existence of God.

Thus, Jewish learning (and the resulting doing) assumes the central position

in Rosenzweig's life program after the conclusion, in 1919, of the *Star of Redemption*. After reading the *Star's* profound analyses of the Western World's great systems of thought, after following Rosenzweig into the depths of the monotheistic religions and wandering with him from Creation through Revelation to Redemption, the call to learning sounds like an anti-climax. Rejecting the glamorous and exalted career of a German university professor, Rosenzweig chose to give all his genius, his energy, his time to the House of Jewish Study (*Juedisches Lehrhaus*) in Frankfort, established in 1920, and to find happy fulfilment in the teaching of courses in Hebrew language, prayer book and Bible and in attending a Talmud course in Rabbi Nobel's study group.

The Frankfort *Lehrhaus* introduced, or better, revived a spirit of inquiry and search for the relevant in a community which had considered Judaism either as a religion stabilized in the past and thus without much relationship to the issues of contemporary life, or as a monotheistic and ethical creed and thus without much distinction from the best formulations in other contemporary religions. In both cases, no intellectual involvement was required on the part of the Jew in interpreting Judaism to himself or to others. In consequence, all intellectual energies went in the direction of extra-Jewish pursuits: philosophy, science, literature, art, politics. Rosenzweig, in his *Lehrhaus*, tried to channel a part of this effort back into Judaism. To him, the stagnation, datedness and rigidity of Jewish life on the one hand, and the indifference, and

colorlessness on the other hand could only be counteracted by a living contact with the classical sources of Judaism, by a free, openminded reconsideration of the vast complex called Judaism. The constant reference to the sources was a safeguard against dogmatism and a spirit which in the weaker periods in our history had led to codifications of the Law.

It was Rosenzweig's conviction that only men who actively engage in a study of the great documents of Judaism and who are free to quest and to examine, can overcome the cleavage between Judaism and modern life without curtailing the rights — and the inherent possibilities — of either realm. This approach, questioned in the beginning by many good people, gained more and more acceptance as the work progressed. And as the Frankfort *Lehrhaus* experiment was imitated in other communities, both conservative and liberal elements in central-European Jewry came to appreciate the value-directed and at the same time liberating and liberalizing power of classical Jewish "learning." The community of those who learn together tore down the barriers between the experts (who know everything) and the listening audience (which will never know anything). There was no longer the question of knowing everything and of dispensing expert information or authoritative interpretation but of a revaluative study of materials and issues where everybody had to take part. The "layman" ceased to be a passive participant. He who knew more could help him who knew less, but both were equal before the Law, in an acute sense of the word. Local rabbis,

used to preach at their congregations, were at a disadvantage in the *Lehrhaus*, unless they caught on and were ready to act under the new order.

The *Lehrhaus* movement should not be confused with adult education. Adult education courses are simplified college courses in which the lecturing method prevails; the *Lehrhaus* was a truly modern *Beth ha-Midrash*, in which the discourse of the leading scholar is but the basis for the intensive deliberation of the participants and where individual study and research is early encouraged.

Without minimizing the importance of Rosenzweig's religious philosophy, one is prompted to consider his *Lehrhaus* activity — and the thinking behind it — as his most decisive contribution to modern Judaism. Or, biographically speaking, his work in behalf of a renaissance of classical Jewish learning (and, as a result, of Jewish living) is to be seen as giving perspective to Rosenzweig's intellectual development. Thus, the *Star of Redemption* appears as a highly personal attempt to find his way into Judaism out of the chaotic state of his world in 1913; his *Judah ha-Levi*, written in 1922 and 1923, presupposes the mentality and the experiences that went into building of the *Lehrhaus*. The first is written in the form of a philosophical system, the latter in the form of a commentary; this difference in the choice of literary form is indicative of the change in the attitude to Judaism. The *Star* is a passionately polemical work in the first parts and a triumphal song of the victorious fighter in the final sections; the *Judah ha-Levi* analyzes quietly (and not without humor) some

major tenets of Judaism; one feels, the writer has long gained entrance and is completely at home. The *Lehrhaus* is the crucial point on the cross-roads between the two major books.

Yet we must go one step further. Being at home in Judaism, allowed Rosenzweig to modify some extreme positions which he had taken in his *Star of Redemption*. Messianism, e. g., so deeply Jewish a thought and so capable of assuming various meanings and shades of meanings, is largely overlooked in the *Star*. Its place is taken by a concept of eternity; the anticipation of eternity in time, the experience of the eternal in the fleeting moment is equalized by Rosenzweig with redemption. As compared with this concept of redemption, Messianism would be a veiling of the vision of eternity; it would be only a striving for fulfilment of national hopes. Messianism thus would be a progenitor of nationalism which, Rosenzweig felt, is but an early and no longer valid stage of Judaism. His anti-nationalism (any nationalism) expressed itself in his underplaying of Messianism and an overemphasis of a meta-historical religious existence culminating in an eternity-filled redemption.

This radical stand which Rosenzweig takes in his *Star* appears significantly changed in his *Judah ha-Levi*. Without renouncing his view of redemption as transcending history and without abandoning his critical attitude to nationalist egotism, Rosenzweig accepts Messianism as a historically justified view in Judaism; even the pseudo-messianic outbreaks in Jewish history find their rightful place as labor pains before the

emergence of the true Messiah. Realizing that the messianic hope was at times able to arouse the deepest and finest sentiments in Judaism and keep alive a belief in an ultimate correction of mankind and a homecoming of Israel, Rosenzweig no longer could replace Messianism by a better, "purer" theory.

Hand in hand with this change of mind (and of heart) came a change in Rosenzweig's attitude to Zionism. In the first period of his life as a Jew, a period characterized by the *Star*, Rosenzweig saw in Zionism an assimilatory movement aiming at normalcy and conformity to the ways of all nations. This seemed to him a renunciation of the special character of Judaism which had developed mainly in the dispersion. Jacob Klatzkin's radically nationalistic theories were much discussed in those days; according to them only the territory of Palestine and the Hebrew language were required for the new Jewish nation; the teachings of Judaism, its past, are not only not binding; they are irrelevant. This position of Klatzkin provoked Rosenzweig's protest and his interpretation of Zionism as an expression of a wish to throw off the "burden of Jewish heritage" and to assimilate.

The change came when Rosenzweig progressed from theory to practice, from the *Star of Redemption* to the *Lehrhaus*. Once this decisive step "into life" was taken things appeared in a different light. Reconsidering Zionism, he saw that people very much concerned with the great teachings of Judaism became Zionists, that much of perennial

(Continued on page 34)

Martin Buber's influence on religious thought has steadily grown and spread for more than three generations and has been equally great among Christian thinkers as among Jews. Among the many prominent Christian theologians whom Buber has significantly influenced are Karl Barth, Nicholas Berdyaev, Emil Brunner, Karl Heim, Reinhold Niebuhr, H. Richard Niebuhr, and Paul Tillich. "Professor Buber," writes the Old Testament theologian J. Coert Rylaarsdam, "is in a unique way the agent through whom, in our day, Judaism and Christianity have met and enriched one another." Buber's existential "I-Thou" philosophy challenges "both orthodox and liberal theology," writes the great theologian Paul Tillich, and "points a way beyond their alternatives." "I am convinced," writes J. H. Oldham, a leader of the ecumenical movement of the Christian church, "that it is by opening its mind, and conforming its practice, to the truth which Buber has perceived and so powerfully set forth that the Church can recover a fresh understanding of its own faith, and regain a real connection with the actual life of our time." The English theologian

Herbert H. Farmer writes of Buber's "I-Thou" philosophy: "I regard this as the most important contribution that has been given to us of recent years toward the reflective grasp of our faith. It has already entered deeply into the theological thought of our time, and is, I believe, destined to enter still more deeply." And Reinhold Niebuhr writes of Buber:

His interpretation of Biblical religion in terms which reveal Prophetic thought to be the source of what we now know as "existentialism," a form of thought which does justice to the unique mystery of the "existing individual," is probably a more persuasive form of this philosophy or theology than any system elaborated under Christian auspices.

Buber's impact on modern Judaism has been even more profound than on modern Christianity. "Dr. Buber is the most distinguished and influential of living Jewish thinkers," writes Ludwig Lewisohn. "We are all his pupils. The contemporary reintegration of modern Western Jewish writers, thinkers, scientists, with their people, is unthinkable without the work and voice of Martin Buber." No Jewish thinker has had a

greater cultural, intellectual, and religious influence than has Buber in the last four decades. He is of significance for Judaism not only as religious philosopher, translator of the Bible, and translator and re-creator of Hasidic legends and thought, but also as a religious personality who has provided leadership of a rare quality during the time of his people's greatest trial and suffering since the beginning of the diaspora. Since the death of Hermann Cohen, Buber has been generally acknowledged as the representative figure of Western European Jewry. He wielded a tremendous influence not only upon the youth won over to Zionism but also upon the Liberals, and even, despite his non-adherence to the Jewish Law, upon the Orthodox. "It was Buber," writes Alfred Werner, "to whom I (like thousands of Central European men and women devoid of any Jewish background) owe my initiation into the realm of Jewish culture."

Today, in the third generation of his writing, speaking, and teaching, Martin Buber is not only the representative figure of Western European Jewry but, more than any other single person, of world Jewry as well. No one has done more than he to bring about a rebirth of Judaism, and his works promise to affect generations of thinking religious Jews of the future. The steady spread of his influence from Europe to England and from Israel to America makes it clear that this is no temporary phenomenon but a deep-seated force in the life and destiny of the Jewish people.

Buber is perhaps most widely known today for his philosophy of dialogue. This philosophy has had a widespread

influence on thinkers of all faiths in Europe and America, and Buber has himself explored its implications for such fields as religion, ethics, education, philosophical anthropology, social structure, art, and Biblical criticism and interpretation.* The classical expression of this philosophy is Buber's little book *I and Thou*. Man's two primary attitudes, or relations, according to this book, are "I-Thou" and "I-It." Man's personal self comes into being through his direct and reciprocal relation with other selves, and it develops through the interchange of the two primary relations. What is important in these relations is not so much the nature of what is over against one—person or thing—as whether one responds to what one meets as to something of value in itself (a "Thou") or deals with it as an object to be experienced and used (an "It"). What counts in true friendship and true love, according to Buber, is the mutual reality which exists *between* the partners and which cannot be reduced to what goes on within each of them. If I am a real friend, I care about the other person for his own sake and not just for my own. I do not try to exploit him or make him over into my likeness. I say "Thou" to him and respond to his address whether spoken or silent. True love, accordingly, is not primarily feeling. It is my responsibility for another with whom I stand in genuine relation.

*In my book, *Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue* (The University of Chicago Press, 1955), I have devoted a chapter apiece to evaluating the significance of each of these aspects of Buber's thought, except art.

But it is also possible to treat the other person as merely an object, or an "It," to be observed and put into categories according to his capacities, race, religion, or social position. When we know a man in this way, we inevitably regard him as there for our use. Although we may not be aware of it, we are like the propagandist who wishes to mold and influence someone for the sake of his cause but does not actually care about him as a person of value in himself. The I-It relation takes place within a man, and not between him and the world. Hence it is entirely subjective and lacking in mutuality. It is comprehensible and orderable, significant only in connection and not in itself. The Thou must continually become It, for one inevitably puts others into categories and uses them as means to one's ends. The It too may again become a Thou for us. But the It need not become a Thou at all, for man can live continuously and securely in the world of It. Yet if he *only* lives in this world, he is not a man.

The essential element of genuine dialogue is "seeing the other," or "experiencing the other side." To meet the "other," one must be concerned with him as someone truly different from oneself, but at the same time as someone with whom one can enter into relation. "Experiencing the other side" means to feel an event from the side of the person one meets as well as from one's own side. It is this action of "seeing the other" that Buber believes to be the essence of genuine ethical responsibility, which is neither the furtherance of subjective interest nor the application of an objective moral code, but real response

to the actual person one meets. It is also the essence of friendship and love, in which each member of the relationship is made present by the other in his concrete wholeness. In teaching and in psychotherapy this "seeing the other" is necessarily one-sided, since the pupil cannot be expected to see through the eyes of the teacher nor the patient through the eyes of the therapist without destroying the relationship. Through experiencing the side of the other in this way we confirm him in the realization of his unique potentialities. "For the inmost growth of the self is not accomplished, as people like to suppose to-day, in man's relation to himself, but . . . in the making present of another self and in the knowledge that one is made present in his own self by the other."

God, to Buber, is the "eternal Thou" who is met through the meeting with man and nature. Even the most beloved person must again and again become an "It" for us, but God is always Thou. Men lose sight of God when they insist, in their philosophies and theologies, on turning Him into an It—an object that can be defined and discussed. God is the Being lastingly over against us who can be addressed but not expressed. He is the "Absolute Person" who, if He is not a person in His nature, has nevertheless become a person in order to know and be known, to love and be loved by man. God is not reached through turning away from the world. Man becomes aware of the address of God in everything that he encounters if he remains open to that address and ready to respond with his whole being. "Meet the world with the fullness of

your being and you shall meet Him," writes Buber. "If you wish to believe, love!"

The philosophy of dialogue has been of particular importance in Buber's interpretation of the Bible, and it is in the Bible that this philosophy finds its most solid base. Probably the most significant Biblical work of Buber's is his translation of the Hebrew Bible into German with the aid of his friend Franz Rosenzweig. The volumes of Biblical interpretation which have followed this translation — *Königtum Gottes, Moses, The Prophetic Faith, Two Types of Faith*, and the first section of *Israel and Palestine* — are also of great significance as a creative contribution to the field of Biblical scholarship.

In contrast to the customary view that it is monotheism which is the contribution of Judaism to the religions of the world, Buber regards the dialogue with God as the center and significance of the Jewish religion. In order to speak to man, God becomes a person and makes man too into a person. In this conversation man remains utterly inferior and God utterly superior; yet if only man truly speaks to God, there is nothing he may not say. Man was created in an independence which enables him to take part with full freedom and spontaneity in the dialogue with God which forms the essence of human existence.

The Biblical dialogue finds its most significant expression, in Buber's opinion, in the concept of the kingship of God. The people of Israel recognize YHVH as their King, and they recognize themselves as chosen by Him.

They must make real God's kingship through themselves becoming a holy people, a people who bring all spheres of life under His rule. There can be no split here between the "religious" and the "social," for Israel cannot become the people of YHVH without just faith between men. The mission of the prophets arose from the failure of the kings in the dialogue with YHVH, from their tendency to a merely cultic acknowledgement of His kingship. The prophets fought the division of community life into a "religious" realm of myth and cult and a "political" realm of civic and economic laws. Their prophecy was altogether bound up with the situation of the historical hour and with God's direct speaking in it. They set before the people real choice in the present rather than the prediction of any certain future.

The Messiah of Isaiah, similarly, is not a divine figure who takes the place of man's turning or brings about a redemption which man has merely to accept and enter into. The belief in the coming of a messianic leader is the belief that at last man shall speak with his whole being the word that answers God's word. God awaits an earthly consummation, a consummation in and with mankind. The messianic belief is "the belief in the real leader, in the setting right of the dialogue, in God's disappointment being at an end." The kingship of God does not mean, accordingly, the triumph of "life in the spirit" over "life in the world." The "It" must be penetrated by the "Thou," the "evil urge" re-directed and the everyday sanctified, if the kingdom of God is to become a

reality. Redemption, for Buber, is not redemption *from* evil but redemption *of* evil as the power which God has given us to do His will. "This very world, this very contradiction, unabridged, unmitigated, unsmoothed, unsimplified, unreduced, this world shall be — not overcome — but consummated."

Buber's attitude toward Zionism is integrally related to his conviction that in the work of redemption Israel is called on to play the special part of beginning the kingdom of God through itself becoming a holy people. This election is not an occasion for particularist pride but a commission which must be carried out in all humility. It is not to be understood as an objective fact or a subjective feeling but as an uncompleted dialogical reality, the awareness of an address from God. Israel's special vocation is not just another nationalism which makes the nation an end in itself. The people need the land and freedom to organize their own life in order to realize the goal of community. But the state as such is at best only a means to the goal of Zion, and it may even be an obstacle to it if the true nature of Zion as commission and task is not held uppermost.

In his history of Zionism, Adolf Böhm lists Buber, Nathan Birnbaum, and A. D. Gordon as the three most influential leaders of Zionism after Herzl. One of the means by which Buber exerted great influence on the Zionist movement was his emphasis on Jewish community, through which he became a co-creator of the idea of the *Halutzim*, or pioneers. Another was his re-creation of Hasidism. "Buber's discovery of Hasidism was

epochal for the West," writes Robert Weltsch. He "made his thesis believable that no renewal of Judaism would be possible which did not bear in itself elements of Hasidism." In his earlier writings Buber regarded Hasidism as the real, though subterranean Judaism, as opposed to official Rabbinism which was only the outer husk. He has since come to feel that in Hasidism the essence of Jewish faith and religiosity was visible in the structure of the community but that this essence has also been present "in a less condensed form everywhere in Judaism," in the "inaccessible structure of the personal life." In his first Hasidic books, such as *The Legend of the Baal-Shem*, Buber exercised a great deal of freedom in the retelling of the Hasidic legends in the belief that this was the best way to get at the essence of the Hasidic spirit. His later tales, however, such as those in *The Tales of the Hasidim*, are closely faithful to the simple and rough originals and are often fragmentary sayings and anecdotes rather than complete stories. Technical criticism of Buber's retelling of the Hasidic legends is beside the point, writes Ludwig Lewisohn. "These legends will remain a permanent possession of mankind in the form he has given them by virtue of that form which has itself become a part of their message and meaning."

Buber's chronicle-novel *For the Sake of Heaven* is a remarkable calling to life of the inmost world of Hasidism. It is at the same time a profound literary creation comparable with Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* in the depths of its insights into the problem of evil and

of human existence. According to Karl Kerényi, the noted authority on Greek religion and myth, it is this work that has won for Buber a secure place among the ranks of classical writers in the fullest and deepest sense of the term. No one of Buber's works gives us as much of his simple wisdom, however, as the latest and most distilled of his interpretations of Hasidic teaching, *The Way of Man*. One must not be concerned with individual salvation, Buber writes in this work. One begins with oneself, searching one's heart and finding one's particular way, but one is not preoccupied with oneself but with "letting God into the world." Hasidism is a mysticism which hallows community and everyday life rather than withdraws from it, "for man cannot love God in truth without loving the world." There is nothing which is profane in itself, according to Hasidism; the profane is simply that which has not yet been sanctified. One must overcome the pride which leads one to compare himself with others, but he must not forget that in himself, as in all men, is a unique value which must be realized if the world is to be brought to perfection. "In the coming world they will not ask me: 'Why were you not Moses?'" wrote Rabbi Susya. "They will ask me: 'Why were you not Susya?'"

Although Buber cannot be classified as a Reform Jew, anymore than he can be classified as an Orthodox or a Conservative Jew, he is in agreement with Reform Judaism in not regarding the observance of the Jewish law as an indispensable part of the Jewish tradition. This is not because Buber regards the law as a less essential part of the

tradition than ritual or moral principles, but because the law, too, to be meaningful, must be a part of the dialogue between God and man and cannot legitimately be upheld as a separate objective reality. Religious truth is obstructed, writes Buber, by those who demand obedience to all the *mitzvot* without actually believing the law to be directly revealed by God. The relation to the Absolute is a relation of the whole man, undivided in mind and soul. To cut off the actions that express this relation from the affirmation of the whole human mind — as do those who advocate the observance of the law as a means of preserving Jewish tradition and furthering Jewish civilization — means to profane them.

Buber cannot accept the law as something general or universal but only as an embodiment of a real address by God to particular individuals. "Is that said to me, really to me?" Buber asks. On this basis, he writes, "I can at times join myself to the Israel to whom a particular law is addressed and at times not. And if I could with undivided heart name anything *mitzvah* in my own life, it is just this, that I thus do and thus leave undone."* To accept the law as a separate, objective reality would be opposed to *emunah* — that unconditional trust in the relation with God which Buber feels to be the essence of Judaism.

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*See the exchange of letters between Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig on revelation and law in Franz Rosenzweig, *On Jewish Learning*, edited by Nahum Glatzer (Schocken Books, 1955), pp. 72-92, 109-118.

TEACHER FOR THE AGES

I
The bitter controversies which raged about Maimonides and his writings for centuries following his death, the recriminations and fantastic charges, the bans and ostracisms have all been resolved in the unanimous affirmation echoed by succeeding generations, *משה אמת וחורו, אמת אמת*. Perhaps the most eloquent and convincing testimony to the genius of Moses Maimonides is the diversity of the groups who vie to pay him homage. The entire gamut from the ultra-traditionalist to the most liberal—obscurantist, mystic and rationalist—philosopher, theologian, scientist, halachist and exegete all enthusiastically applaud and thus perpetuate the judgment of the ages, *ממשה ועד משה לא קם כמשה*, "From Moses unto Moses there arose none like Moses."

The cumulative voice of Judaism, persisting in its adulation of Moses Maimonides, becomes all the more interesting when we observe that Copernicus toppled the Ptolemaic structure which was the groundwork for Maimonides' cosmology with its system of Spheres, Intelligences, the Active Intellect and

its domain the sub-lunar realm; that his doctrine of knowledge which sees the highest form of cognition in the actualization of potential reason through the intermediacy of the Tenth Intelligence, the Active Intellect, has no permanence in our philosophic structure; that his physics based on the four elements—a medical knowledge which differs but insignificantly from Galen—a psychology of faculties and humors, a philosophic system hemmed in by Aristotelian concepts has no contemporary relevance. Furthermore, his thirteen Principles of Faith were challenged by Crescas and Albo among a host of others and never achieved universal acceptance. Even his great halachic code was superseded by the *Tur* of Jacob ben Asher and the *Shulhan Aruch* of Joseph Karo, at least for practical use in the western world. Many of the leading halachic authorities of Germany, Italy and France do not even mention Maimonides and his code. Asher ben Yehiel, the author of the famed abstract of the Talmud, though he only rarely contradicts the decisions of Maimonides, would nevertheless be guided by his conclusions only when traced to the original Tal-

mudic sources and modified accordingly. It is true that fully one-third of the Code of Karo is a transcript of the *Mishneh Torah*. But it is to the *Shulhan Aruch* that the western halachist turns for practical decisions.

It must, of course, be observed that the Copernican revolution and the rise of modern science occurred after Maimonides had already been securely established as the great authority and he was thus carried into the modern period by the momentum of centuries of hero worship. He was the undisputed leader not only of Egyptian Jewry but of communities from all corners of the diaspora. His absolute authority in halachic matters as well was not displaced until some time after his death. And even in the centuries of most violent opposition, he retained the zealous loyalty of many of the scholars and communal leaders. A number of Spanish communities established the *Mishneh Torah* as the binding code. Significant segments of Jewry, like that of Yemen, adopted the *Yad* as the basis for their religious practice. Moreover, though challenged as a practical guide for daily living, his code stimulated a genuine renaissance of creative Talmudic study. The limited task of tracing the sources of Maimonides has produced approximately two hundred commentaries and the problem is still far from being exhausted. Though intended for a far different purpose and audience, the *Yad* became the point of departure for a great number of scholarly studies.

Furthermore, while the Renaissance claimed the attention of the peoples of

Western Europe, Jewry was overwhelmed with the struggle for physical survival. This seriously limited his participation in the new areas of learning. With his innate capacity to transform necessity into virtue, the Jew proscribed the area of his intellectual concerns. He anathematized secular philosophy; placed science without the pale; relegated art, literature and music to the profane. In this atmosphere the mass of Jewry remained unaware of the ferment which was destined to change the life of Western man. It was not until the Emancipation of the nineteenth century that the Jew faced the realities of the new era and by then Maimonides was too deeply ingrained in the fabric of Judaism to be affected by its challenges. To the contrary, Maimonides the halachist, whose philosophic and scientific postulates were obscured during the Renaissance is appealed to for sanction in the new effort to make Judaism co-extensive with life and to justify participation in the new intellectual and cultural world.

It is essential that we direct a question — in view of the fact that Maimonides has played and continues to play a significant part in the development of all phases of Jewish life even though the validity of his presentations has been questioned by developments since his day — to that quality or genius possessed by Maimonides which has motivated men of all ages to overlook all that was untenable in his writings and to find in him or his works the pertinent and meaningful for their respective ages.

II

A cursory glance at Maimonides' writings reveals a number of obvious characteristics which alone would place him considerably above most of his contemporaries. One is impressed by the erudition evident on every page which, in its cumulative effect, is almost unbelievable. He had a thorough knowledge not only of the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmud, of Tannaitic and later Midrashim, of Geonic responsa and exegesis, of the productivity of his predecessors in Spain and North Africa but an amazing mastery of the total Jewish creativity from Biblical times to the thirteenth century. He was completely at home in the writings of the Arabic philosophic schools, a master grammarian and logician, a student of astronomy, of medicine and of mathematics. His *Commentary to the Mishnah* begun at the age of twenty-three and written almost in its entirety under the trying circumstances of a homeless wanderer, relying only on memory, is a good indication of his stature. He informs us in the Introduction that he based his commentary on the *Talmud*, *Tosefta*, *Sifra*, *Sifre* and on the words of the Geonim. His comments on each Mishnah include a clear summary of the Talmudic discussions, comments and explanations distilled from the total Rabbinic literature which have relevance to the particular subject, and insights culled from the secular disciplines, mathematics, physics, medicine, ethics and philosophy whenever the opportunity presents itself. But perhaps the scope of his knowledge, even as a com-

parative youth, is most clearly revealed in his series of Introductions appended to the Mishnah as a whole, and to each of the six *Sedarim*. The General Introduction is in reality a preface to the entire Oral Law. He analyzes its basic principles, the chain of authoritative tradition, the evolution of the Mishnah, its Orders and Tractates, a discussion of the Tannaim cited, their personalities, and authority. One is particularly impressed with his Introduction and commentary to *Seder Toharot* for which, with the exception of the tractate *Niddah*, he had no *Gemara* to guide him. He collected all the principles of purity and impurity which lie scattered throughout Tannaitic or Amoraic literature often only as *en passant* remarks or subtle hints. Even the Tannaim considered the intricacies of *Negaim* and *Ohalot* a worthy challenge to the genius of an Akiba. Little wonder, then, that Maimonides reports not without justifiable pride, that he gathered the root principles and their derivations "one from a city and two from a family, from all corners of the *Talmud*, *Baraitot* and *Toseftot*."

Erudition alone, however, even of such exceptional scope, would not sufficiently explain the eminence of his position. We come somewhat closer when we discover another obvious endowment, his genius for clear and orderly exposition of the most intricate subject. Is there more convincing proof of a systematic mind of the highest order than the ability to reduce the intricate philosophy of the Kalām into twelve brief, simple statements and the entire Aristotelian system into twenty-six propositions as

Maimonides does in his *Guide*; or to extract from the mass of Jewish tradition fourteen general criteria for the enumeration of the six hundred and thirteen positive and negative commandments, as he does in the *Book of Precepts*; or to trace every law from its Biblical source through the labyrinth of Rabbinic exegesis and Geonic novellae and responsa and to present it to the student with the clarity, evident in almost every paragraph of the Code? The fourteen books included in the Code of Maimonides, which encompass the totality of Judaism from its theoretical pre-suppositions to the most minute precept, demonstrate both in their total structure and in the individual *perakim* and *halachot* an insistence on system and logical symmetry even at the price of deviating from all predecessors including the Mishnah of Judah ha-Nasi, in spite of his often-repeated statement that his Code is patterned on the Mishnah.

A degree of his influence must also be ascribed to the clarity of his style. The beauty of his Hebrew permeates the pages of the *Mishneh Torah*, the only major work written in that language. In the Introduction to the *Book of Precepts*, Maimonides gives us an indication of the care he exercised in his choice of language, "I have therefore seen fit not to write it (the Code) in the language of the Prophets . . . nor in the language of the *Talmud* since our people with rare exception do not understand it — many of its words are strange and difficult even for experts. But I shall write it in the language of the Mishnah in order that it be easily understood by the many." Maimonides probably wrote several

complete versions of his *Mishneh Torah*, revising it numerous times to meet his high standards. Remnants of his original manuscript clearly reflect the attention given to minutest detail, editing over and over again to find the proper word. He describes the desired procedure in his *Ma'amar Kiddush Hashem* (Kobetz II, p. 12). "It is improper for a person to speak or preach in public until he has rehearsed his message four times and has learned it well . . . But that which is to be put down in writing must be gone over a thousand times, if possible."

A vast erudition, a genius for system and logical structure and a mastery of style are a rare combination and would assure prominence in any generation. Yet, with Maimonides they represent but the preliminaries. We approach the sources of his true greatness in the occasional personal glimpses found in his correspondence. Maimonides the halachist, the opponent of anthropomorphisms and popular superstitions, the disinterested scholar becomes for us, by way of his many letters and responsa a man of profound personal piety and punctillious observance, of strong emotional attachments — to his family and students — genuine modesty and of kindness toward his opponents. Eight years after his brother's death he writes, ". . . Until this day do I mourn and have not been comforted. Wherein shall I find consolation . . . he was the brother and the student; he carried all the financial burdens while I dwelt securely . . . I had no joy except when I saw him. All joy has set and has gone to life eternal while I am left despondent in a strange land. Whenever I see his handwriting or one

of his books my heart turns within me and my grief is reawakened . . . Were it not for the Torah which is my delight . . . I would have perished in my affliction (*Kobetz II*, p. 37.).”

One cannot but be moved by the spirit of compassion which prompted his *’Iggeret Teman*. His words of encouragement became a “door of hope” for the forlorn and the persecuted. His attitude toward *’anusim*, toward Moslems and Christians and his surprisingly mild and gentle approach even to the Karaites all speak of a love for his fellow man, of a gentle human being sympathetic to man’s frailties. “There is no doubt,” Maimonides writes concerning members of other faiths, “that whoever has perfected himself morally and intellectually and in the knowledge of the Creator, blessed be He, will certainly share in the world to come (*Kobetz II*, p. 24).”

III

His superb natural endowments, coupled with an exceptional drive established him as the outstanding leader of his day. However, Maimonides transcended his own time by a series of radical innovations in the treatment of the sources of Judaism.

Through the ages, a vast gulf had developed between the written and oral traditions. The Talmud, which originally was either based on or constantly strived for rooting in Scripture, became an independent structure. The general procedure was to build on the final link of the chain of tradition and to neglect completely the original source. Maimon-

ides reversed the process. Throughout his writings and particularly in his Code, Maimonides bases the detailed legal prescriptions on scriptural passages, often beginning with the Biblical Command and tracing its development to his own times. With the *Mishneh Torah*, Maimonides re-establishes the organic unity of the written Torah and oral tradition. Not only is the general structure of the Code determined, primarily, by the *mizvot*; but the mass of detail that flows from and is given sanction by the scriptural verse.

At times, he relates a law to a verse even though the Talmud cites no such proof. Similarly, he often disregards the scriptural authority cited by the rabbis and provides a biblical statement of his own choosing. Wherever possible, he prefers the simple meaning of the verse for halachic purposes even though it involves, in some instances, a direct contradiction to the position sustained in the Talmud. Not infrequently, a particular provision which the rabbis relate to a Biblical text merely to give it some support or as a mnemotechnical aid (*asmachta*), Maimonides treats as if it had explicit Biblical authority. In his approach to the Bible as a source for *halachah*, Maimonides demonstrates an amazing independence. He removed the wall which segmentized Jewish creativity and divided Jewry into various sects. His work was a significant factor in the emergence not only of a unified Judaism but of a unified Jewry.

His revolutionary attitude is also manifest in his treatment of the *Mishnah* which he often interprets contrary to the Amoraim, even when it resulted in

practical consequences for halachic decisions. Of far-reaching influence is his use of *Tannaitic Midrashim* which were largely neglected or completely forgotten by the Geonim and their predecessors. Maimonides does not hesitate to derive rules for normative practice from the *Mechilta*, *Sifre* and *Sifra* even when contradicted by the *Gemara*. Nor did Maimonides accept the rule of the Geonim and Alfasi that the Babylonian Talmud was the supreme authority and was to be followed in all instances. He not only used the Jerusalem Talmud more extensively than any of his predecessors but often decided in its favor. He also included in his Code a number of laws taken from the "Talmud of the West" disregarding the Geonic principle, "whatever is in the Jerusalem Talmud but is not included in our *Gemara* (Babylonian), is not to be considered binding." Furthermore, he utilized haggadic literature and adapted it for halachic use. He was the pioneer in considering the total Jewish literary creativity as a legitimate source for defining "the way." The implications of this principle alone have sufficient creative potential to make of Judaism a "tree of life to those that hold fast to it" in every age and circumstance.

Of particular interest is the role of Maimonides' philosophic and scientific convictions in influencing his legal decisions. He was uncompromisingly opposed to every form of popular superstition. He omits from his Code laws specifically stated in the Talmud if they involve a belief in demons, or the evil connotations of "pairs." Nor does he

hesitate to leave the Talmud and follow his own mathematical computations whenever scientific consideration demands it.

IV

The greatest achievement of Maimonides, however, is his testimony to the monotheistic ideal and its implications for man. Through his halachic and philosophic writings, Maimonides, perhaps more so than others before him, drew the full implication of Judaism's insistence on God's absolute unity and in doing so opposed every form of idolatry no matter how thinly disguised. The *Mishneh Torah* includes along with the minutiae of ritual observance a physics, a metaphysics, an ethic, a cosmology, observations on medicine, astronomy; it covers every area of life and experience. It is true that the medical data and the astronomic details are of the twelfth century; the important fact, however, is that these supposedly secular disciplines are included in a code of religious law which enumerates and defines the *mizvot*. Maimonides well knew that Judaism's insistence on the oneness and unity of God implies a constant struggle against a segmentized world view. Every aspect of a universe which is the creation of the One God, and particularly man, "created in His image," is included in the religious concern. No place is empty of His Presence.

To know that there is a God, that He is One, incorporeal, that it is mandatory to love Him are the commandments

discussed in the opening chapters of the *Book of Knowledge*, the first of the fourteen books in the Code. What is the path to the knowledge and love of Him? Maimonides replies, "When man will reflect upon His works and upon His most wonderful creatures and will derive from them His incomparable and infinite wisdom he will immediately be filled with love and praise and exaltation and be overcome by an uncontrollable longing to know God . . . Accordingly, I shall explain the general principles of God's handiwork . . . (*Hilchot Yesodei ha-Torah* II.2). With the above introductory statement Maimonides presents an elaborate cosmology. Thus the study and knowledge of the world in all its aspects is one of the Divine commands. The universe reflects, as it were, God's Unity and is the path to a higher intellectual understanding of His nature.

Following the discussion of "The Foundations of the Torah," Maimonides devotes the second section of his Code to a "Treatise on Ethics." The central motif of his ethical system is *imitatio dei*. The rabbinic statement, "Even as He is called gracious, be thou gracious; even as He is called merciful, be thou merciful; even as He is called holy, be thou holy" is quoted by Maimonides and serves as the basis of his ethics. He thus seems to say in the very order of the books in the *Mishneh Torah* that a knowledge of God leads to the ultimate ethical goal which is, "to imitate His ways, . . . to love one's neighbors, to love the stranger, . . . not to put one to shame, not to be a tale-bearer, not to seek vengeance." In the

concluding chapter of the *Guide*, Maimonides again defines the highest intellectual attainment as the knowledge of the ethical attributes, ". . . the perfection in which man can truly glory is attained by him when he has acquired — as far as this is possible for man — the knowledge of God, the knowledge of His Providence and of the manner it influences His creatures . . . Having acquired this knowledge, he will then be determined always to seek lovingkindness, judgment and righteousness and thus to imitate the ways of God."

Maimonides' profound understanding of idolatry "as the great error of mankind" the essential nature of which is the elevation of the creature to the status of a creator, or the worship of the preliminary as if it were the ultimate (*Hilchot Avodat Kochavim* I.1 ff.) enabled him to purify Judaism of the dross which threatened to compromise it beyond recognition. This may well be compared to the great reforms of the Jewish past.

His refusal to be bound by a blind literalism which he saw as a form of idolatry enabled him to maintain his position in spite of the anthropomorphisms in the Bible. While Spinoza, in attempting to prove the temporary and unphilosophic nature of the Mosaic Law, insists on a literalism and accordingly states in a lengthy polemic against Maimonides that "the Law of Moses nowhere prescribed that God is without a body," the author of the *Guide*, to whom Judaism was the embodiment of the highest truth, made of the message of the

prophets a living reality through allegorization and interpretation. He carried the strong anti-bibliolatrous tendency in Judaism to new heights and thereby contributed immeasurably to its survival.

His doctrine of Negative Attributes occupies a central place in his philosophic system and is also a corollary of his understanding of the Unity of God. He insists that God cannot be known essentially except through negations which are never exhausted. Man's search for the Ultimate results only in an ever more profound understanding of what God is not. Any possible description positively stated not only threatens God's unity but identifies Him with the partial, the conditioned, the human and the transitory. This is the essence of idolatry, No thing, no man, no attribute, no value is God; only God is God. Thus the intellectual task of man is an infinite process of non-idolatry — a continuous "no" — an endless protest against the hypostatization of the limited, the determined, the time-space. The clear implication of Maimonides' negative theology is an anti-dogmatism; only the infinite search remains.

There is, however, one area in which a positive knowledge of God is possible. One may come to know Him through the ethical attributes. God as truth, as love, as justice — these are the attributes of action. They are relational; they describe not the essence of God but the manner in which cumulative Jewish experience has come to know Him; they are the names by which men address Him. They are not descriptive of God as He is; they are rather expressions of

the meaning of God for man — from man's side. They are man's glimpse of human possibility.

Here Maimonides catches the humanistic spirit of Judaism. His insistence on God as absolute creator, for example, has positive meaning only as an ethical task. It certainly cannot describe His essence, for in that realm, only negations are possible. The doctrine of creation, therefore, represents the testimony of Jewish experience to the possibility of creation *ex nihilo*. That is one aspect of the response to the Jewish search. Man can transcend himself. He may become a "partner of God in the act of creation." "A new heaven and a new earth" is possible. But beyond its possibility is the imperative to strive for creativity — to approach it in ever purer form. Man bears witness to God as Creator by fulfilling his own creative potential. Every creative act sanctifies the ultimate Source of all creativity.

The statement "God is One" also has positive meaning only as an ethical imperative. It is descriptive of His essence only negatively *i. e.*, that He is not plurality. Here again millennial Jewish experience testifies that unity is possible — the unity of heart and deed — of inner and outer man; man can achieve wholeness; man can overcome his alienation from the world and from himself. Furthermore, man realizes "the image," the *humanum* insofar as he strives to achieve this unity.

The daily recitation of the *Shema*⁶ is preceded by the prayer, "Thou hast chosen us and drawn us nigh unto Thee to unify Thee in love." To unify God is

Judaism's chosen commitment and historic destiny. Man unifies God, so to speak, by bringing Him into every sphere of life and experience, by unifying himself and by striving for the unity of all creation. The more evidence of unity in the world, the greater is the unity of God in terms of its meaningful implication for man.

Maimonides' negative theology and positive attributes of action are but two sides of the same coin. The relational attributes are grasped with greater profundity and sought with a progressively more intense love, the higher one is on the scale of negations. This love which links the moral act with the negative attributes gave an infinite scope both to the ethical and intellectual in Judaism. The heart of the Maimonidean position is that, surely in this life, "the way" is the ethical task deepened and given infinite dimension by the intellectual negations.

V

An analysis of Maimonides' writings and personality point to one other outstanding characteristic which makes of his life an inspiring sermon for scholars and rabbis for all ages. In each of his books, Maimonides addressed himself to a vital problem confronting large segments of Jewry. His scholarship and literary activities were not a detached pursuit of intellectual curiosity. He was ever the teacher of the masses, the guide for the perplexed and the comforter of the persecuted.

If Judaism needed a defense against the Karaites, Maimonides rose to the occasion by reshaping the total lore of Judaism into a new unity. If the arguments of philosophy undermined the faith of man, Maimonides was ready with his *Guide* which addressed itself to the perplexed, to those steeped in the neo-Platonized Aristotelianism of the time. He complains of the ignorance rampant everywhere, of the neglect of the Talmud and the writings of the Geonim and so he writes his *Commentary to the Mishnah* as "a gift to students," to simplify the complex and to make Talmudic creativity available to all.

Maimonides never tires of pointing the way. He is ever the teacher giving unsparingly of his self and his genius to spread the word of the Lord. His scholarship is ever directed to the realities of life that challenged men in his days and continue to challenge men in our times. Then and now, men are faced with new philosophic trends, religious bigotry and persecution, apathy and ignorance and a lack of appreciation for the relevance of faith. Maimonides dealt with all of these problems. He brought the sum total of knowledge, "the holy and the profane" to bear upon them and in so doing was prepared to give a total human response to the problems of man. He thus revealed not only his genius, but the true dimensions of Judaism, a religious faith that continues to flower in our times and afford men positive answers to their problems. It is this revelation that gives to Maimonides the quality of timelessness and earns for him the adulation:

מִשָּׁה אִמָּת וְחִרְתָּו אִמָּת.

Albert Einstein radically changed our world. "Einstein's universe is the right one even if few people understand it," Waldemar Kaempffert titled his eulogy (*New York Times*, April 24, 1955), in which he called him "the most penetrating and fearless intellect of our time." "The universe is not given us as if it were a table or a brick," wrote Kaempffert. "It must be interpreted, meaning that we must create it. Everyone creates his own universe. The scientists, especially the mathematicians, do better than most of us because they reason more rigorously and include all known relevant facts about matter, time, motion and space into consideration."

The essence of Einstein's epochal equation is distilled in a thin book (150 pages), *The Meaning of Relativity: Third Edition, Including the Generalized Theory of Gravitation* (Princeton U. Press, 1950). Its chapters ("Space and Time in Pre-Relativity Physics," "The Theory of Special Relativity," "The General Theory of Relativity") and two appendices are utterly unintelligible to us non-scientists. In another place, however, Einstein did fling a frightful challenge at the rabbi. We quote from his "Auto-

biographical Notes" prepared for the seventh volume of *The Library of Living Philosophers* (*Albert Einstein, Philosopher-Scientist*, edited by Paul Arthur Schilpp, 1949): "Even when I was a fairly precocious young man the nothingness of the hopes and strivings which chases most men restlessly through life came to me with great force. Moreover, I soon discovered the cruelty of that chase, which in those years was much more carefully covered up by hypocrisy and glittering words than is the case today. By the mere existence of his stomach everyone was condemned to participate in that chase. Moreover, it was possible to satisfy the stomach by such participation, but not man insofar as he is a thinking and feeling being . . . As the first way out there was religion, which is implanted in every child by way of the traditional education-machine. Thus I came — despite the fact that I was the son of rather irreligious Jewish parents — to a deep religiosity, which, however, found an abrupt ending at the age of 12. Through the reading of popular scientific books I soon reached the conviction that much in the stories of the Bible could not be true. The

consequence was a positively fanatic orgy of free-thinking coupled with the impression that youth is intentionally being deceived by the state through lies; *es war ein niederschmetternder Eindruck.*"

These quotations from the greatest mind since Newton ought here be added: "Judaism seems to me to be concerned almost exclusively with the moral attitude in life and to life." "The fundamental principles of Judaism are the sanctity of life and the sanctification of life." "The Jewish God is simply a negation of superstition."

* * *

One of our most courageous colleagues was libelously attacked in the dangerous anti-Semitic newspaper *Common Sense* published in Union, N. J. The April 1, 1952 issue told its 15,000 readers: "Red Rabbi Joachim Prinz of Newark, N. J., who, not unlike Albert Einstein was expelled from Germany for Revolutionary Communist activities, is the honorary Vice-President of the American Jewish Congress." Prinz promptly demanded a retraction. Conde McGinley, editor and publisher, refused. Prinz filed suit demanding punitive damages. The trial began on March 22, 1955 before Judge Howard Ewart of the Superior Court of New Jersey in Newark. McGinley was represented by both son and former husband of Elizabeth Dilling of Chicago, notorious author of *The Red Network*. The jury was totally non-Jewish. Counsel for McGinley during the eight days of trial attempted repeatedly to introduce evidence of classical anti-Semitic character, quota-

tions from the New Testament, the Talmud, Zionist literature, etc. The presiding Judge steadfastly prevented the introduction of such data. Character witnesses for Prinz included a former Bishop of the Episcopalian Diocese of Newark and the former Governor of the State of New Jersey. Character witnesses for McGinley included apostates and Elizabeth Dilling. The Judge directed a verdict for Prinz. The jury then awarded \$5,000 compensatory damages and \$25,000 punitive damages. This was a signal victory for justice in the American Court System and a crushing blow to professional anti-Semites. (*Common Sense* in an early 1955 issue smeared 300 rabbis as linked with the "Red Front" — among them some of our most distinguished colleagues. This is the first time that a court in the United States ruled guilty of defamation someone who falsely calls another a "Red." (Report of the Commission on Law and Social Action of the American Jewish Congress — April 1955).

* * *

The *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* is a valuable monthly for all interested in the interaction of science and public affairs. A special issue, April 1955, treats of "Secrecy, Security, and Loyalty." Here is a sane enlightened presentation of one of the most vexing problems of our time. (Address subscriptions to 5734 University Ave., Chicago 37, Ill.)

* * *

The Annual Meeting of the Jewish Book Council of America, held in mid-

May, featured a remarkable address by Dr. Mordecai M. Kaplan on Maimonides. The Rambam must be seen in "the historical context of the perennial conflict between the authority of tradition and the authority of personal experience." Kaplan traced this conflict through Heraclitus, the Sophists, Plato and Aristotle, the Stoics on to Philo. With Philo the syncretism enters Judaism. Now it passes over into the early Christian churches and in the Eighth Century to Islam (Kalaam). Algazali, Alfarabi, Avicenna and Averroes precede Maimonides in this syncretistic pursuit. He injects this syncretism in the *Sefer Ha-Mada'* of the *Yad*, in his introduction to the Commentary on the Mishnah, in his preface to the final chapter of Sanhedrin, and in his *Shemona Perakim*. The "March" sets forth, in full, the methodology of the syncretism.

The permanent significance of Maimonides' contribution, according to Kaplan, is his clear evidence that Judaism has the capacity to survive transvaluation of its values, provided that its content, the Jewish peoplehood, is properly identified and fostered.

The Book Council made the following awards: Fiction, to Louis Zorn for *Blessed Is the Land*; Juvenile, to Nora Benjamin Kubie for *King Solomon's Navy*; Yiddish Poetry, to Alter Esselin for *Lieder foon a Midbarnik*; Hebrew Poetry, Gabriel Preil for *Ner Mul Kochavim*.

* * *

Our colleague Alexander Alan Steinbach has collected his prose-poems,

sonnets, and lyrics in a charming volume called *Bitter-Sweet* (Library Publishers, 1955). In his introduction to the book William W. Edel, the President of Dickinson College thus characterizes the man and his work: "In these poems and paragraphs a man with a calm mind and sensitive soul looks at the created world and finds it vocal of the Creator." Here are small samples of Steinbach's work: "Physical man lives and dies. Spiritual man lives and lives." "When I gaze on rows of tulips cupped like little pews to catch the Psalms of kneeling dew, something deep within me suddenly cries out: Amen!" In such language is prayer composed and with such pictures is sermon adorned.

* * *

Sidney E. Goldstein (whose good heart beat with a social rhythm and whose good mind illumined our family and community ways,) has died. His heritage, indeed his ethical will, is a volume, *The Synagogue and Social Welfare, a Unique Experiment (1907-1953)*, wherein he outlines for us his thinking and doing of *gemilut chasodim* in the modern *beth haknesset*. Especially precious is his final chapter on "The Synagogue and Social Ethics."

* * *

The Jewish Publication Society has collected some of the later essays of the great Louis Ginzberg in the volume *On Jewish Law and Lore*. Here we have such gems as his "An Introduction to the Palestinian Talmud," "The Significance of the Halachah for Jewish History,"

"The Codification of Jewish Law," and "The Cabala." This is a notable addition to the author's *Students, Scholars, and Saints*, and Schechter's three volumes of *Jewish Studies*. These are indispensable to the rabbi's library.

* * *

Two recent works on Yiddish stand out, one popular, the other technical. Irving Howe and Eliezer Greenberg have edited a splendid anthology of fifty-two Yiddish stories and prefixed one of the finest introductions on Yiddish literature to appear in print. *A Treasury of Yiddish Stories* (Viking) is a major contribution to the growing library of Jewish anthologies.

The technical work, edited by Uriel Weinreich of Columbia, is *The Field of Yiddish*. (Publications of Linguistic Circle of New York, 1954). This is a volume of studies on the language, the folklore, and the literature. Particularly interesting is the chapter on "Frequency of Hebraisms in Yiddish" by Yudel Mark.

* * *

In its May 16, 1955 issue, *The New Republic* presents a symposium on "Faith and Psychoanalysis," wherein such minds as William H. Roberts, Gregory Zilboorg, C. A. Jung, A. Powell Davies, Edith Weigert, Erich Fromm, and Karl Menninger speak up on sin and salvation.

* * *

Those of us who insist on giving Jewish body and flavor to our weekly

sermon and to whom the text from the Tanach is essential will find much value and constant aid in the three-volume work by Aaron Hyman, *Sefer Torah Haktuvah v'ham'surah al Torah Neviim U'Ktuvim* (Dvir, Tel Aviv, 1936). The author has collected all the rabbinic and Midrashic references on each verse of the three parts of Scripture. He includes not only the standard Talmudic literature but also the Zohar, the Responsa, Maimonides' Works, Bachya, and the medieval Midrashim. This is one of the most valuable aids to the rabbi I have seen.

* * *

The 15th volume of Menachem Kasher's comprehensive *Torah Sh'lema* which reaches "Parashat Yithro" is known to many. A rather similar work on the Psalms in three volumes has been completed by Rabbi J. A. Cohen, of blessed memory. It is entitled *Otzar Hatehillim — Halacha v'agadah* (volume available from his widow at 4702 Monticello Ave., Chicago 25). This life's work is a great help to anyone interested in teaching a full course or preaching a series of sermons on the Psalms. On Psalm I, Cohen cites twenty pages of quotations from the Talmud, then adds the material from the *Y'lamdenu*, the *Pirke Hechalot*, the *Zohar*, the *Tanchuma*, and the *Agadat Sh'muel*. The work provides a fascinating and rewarding year's personal study.

* * *

The Tercentenary has inspired two more books of value: Elma Ehrlich Levinger's beautifully produced text-

book, *Jewish Adventures in America* (Bloch); and a volume of penetrating essays *American Jewry—The Tercentenary and After*, edited by Eugene Kohn (Reconstructionist Press).

* * *

Maurice Samuel has written the best book of his career and Herman Wouk his worst. *Certain People of the Book* (Knopf) breathes thought, heart, faith, *Kavanah*. *Marjorie Morningstar* (Doubleday) aims for the dollar, reflects the contrived and the slick. The one lifts, the other depresses. Samuel and Wouk both know that the gaudy attracts. But Samuel holds his people high, Wouk shadows and mirrors them at their everyday worst.

* * *

Gilbert Murray's *Five Stages of Greek Religion* remains a living classic with as much to say today as it did when first published in 1912. Doubleday Anchor Books has released it paper-bound for 95 cents. One of the seminal studies for today's serious preacher.

* * *

For all the promises of the Tercentenary Committee, nothing has yet appeared. But Jacob R. Marcus continues plowing the field of American-Jewish History and yielding for us a good harvest. His latest is Volume II of *Memoirs of American Jews 1775-1865* (Jewish Publication Society). Among the better known figures in this basic

work are Isaac Leeser, Isaac Mayer Wise, and Simon Wolf.

* * *

Great credit is due our distinguished colleague David de Sola Pool, who, with his wife Tamar, has just issued *An Old Faith in a New World—Portrait of Shearith Israel, 1654-1954* (Columbia U. Press). Alas it costs \$15.00.

* * *

A fresh stimulating work comes from the pen of Professor Theodore F. Lentz, *Toward a Science of Peace* (Bookman), with a foreword by Julian Huxley. Lentz pleads for a more thorough exploration and utilization of the human sciences leading toward the discovery of better methods of social and economic cooperation across the globe. It is the fruit of six years of labor at the Attitude Research Laboratory in St. Louis.

* * *

Erich Fromm continues plotting the field of socially oriented psychiatry which he began with *Escape from Freedom* and *Man for Himself* with *The Sane Society* (Rinehart). He pleads for man to invest meaning and mental health in his life notwithstanding the overwhelming robotism.

* * *

Ernest Jones delivers his second great volume on the *Life and Works of Sigmund*

Freud: Years of Maturity 1901-1919 (Basic Books). It is a little difficult but very important reading.

* * *

One of the foremost Talmudists of our age is Dr. Saul Lieberman of the Jewish Theological Seminary. He has just produced the first three volumes (the whole of *Z'ra'im*) on the Tosefta. Our dependence upon Zuckerman's text is ended, and Lieberman's work will provide us with a long-needed "Rashi" to this cryptic sister of our Mishnah.

* * *

The Synagogue and Its People, by Desider Holisher (Abelard-Schuman) is a good picture-book study of the institution and the rabbi. Fine adult study material.

* * *

A new, definitive, and most readable account of the earth-shaking Dreyfus case is presented in *Captain Dreyfus* by Nicholas Holasz (Simon and Schuster). One stops to reflect on the geometrical growth of human cruelty from 1905 to 1955.

* * *

In December 1954, John J. Kane read a paper at Loyola University in Chicago before the Sixteenth Annual Convention of the American Catholic Sociological Society entitled "The Social Structure of American Catholics." Here is the

essence: Sociological study of American Catholics is relatively new; statistical research in the form of a Regular-Interval Sample from the American Catholic Who's Who of 1947-48 reveals the following occupational distribution: Clergy — 25.6%, Law — 18.1%; Education — 10.2%, Writing — 9.5%, Medicine — 5.8%, Business Executives — 1.1%, Social Scientist — 1.1%, Natural Scientist — 0.9%, All others — 27.7%. The 1953-54 Who's Who was almost identical except that "the percentage of clerics was slightly higher." There is subtle but discernible prejudice against Catholics in the business world. Kane concludes: "It seems that Catholics creep forward rather than stride forward in American society, and the position of American Catholics in the mid-twentieth century is better, but not so much better than it was a century ago. Neither is it as high as one might expect from such a sizable minority with a large educational system and reputed equality of opportunity in a democracy."

* * *

At that same Conference, Dr. Gordon C. Zahn of the Department of Sociology spoke on "Protestant Tensions and Catholic Conduct." This is an analysis of 183 letters written by Protestants to the publisher of the Blanshard volume which raised the question of the Catholic threat to America and democracy. Zahn believes that most of these "tense-Protestants" are "a bigoted minority of neurotics and psychotics." But he warns that they are highly vocal and potentially effective. It must not be ignored —

they are "danger signals" and re-evaluation of Catholic activities is advisable. "Obviously," Zahn writes, "Catholics cannot abandon their claims to being the one true Church of Christ or their moral positions on birth control, therapeutic abortion, mixed marriage promises, and the other matters of doctrine which give rise to many Protestant tensions." But Catholics, he

advises, can avoid displaying support for political personalities or issues because they are Catholic, avoid "superlative lavishness" connected with certain public ceremonies, avoid "censorship by display of power" on theatres, book-dealers, the press. In short, the Protestant does harbor a distorted image of the Catholic and the Catholic would be wise to engage in a little self-appraisal.

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

THEORY AND PRACTICE: A NOTE ON FRANZ ROSENZWEIG

(Continued from page 12)

Jewish socio-religious idealism went into the building of Palestinian settlements, that the speakers of, and writers in the Hebrew language revived much of the meaningful contents hidden in the Hebrew word, in short, that life was much profounder and richer, from Rosenzweig's own point of view than Klatzkin's theory of pure nationalism. Rosenzweig did not become a Zionist but he was able to include Zionism in his concept of a Judaism that forever must seek expression in earthly forms, in secular manifestations unafraid of the crises, and possibly tragic side-effects of a way through history.

The *Lehrhaus*, the *Beth ha-Midrash*, and what it stood for in Rosenzweig's life and thought, is not the place into which a Jew piously and sentimentally withdraws, but where, facing the sources

of his being, he reexamines his actions, reevaluates his plans and commitments and regains strength for the next things to be done.

The dialectic relationship between the principle and the practice, the divine and the human, theory and realization becomes the frame of reference of Rosenzweig's teachings and of his life as a Jew. A focus on only one of the elements leads to a serious distortion of what the man had to say to contemporary Jewry.

Only if this intellectual and religious development of Rosenzweig is clearly understood, does it make sense to scrutinize the *Star of Redemption*. Only then does the major thesis of the book — the relatedness of God, world and man — lose its undercurrent of theological obscurity and becomes an expression, or a report, of actual life.

OUR ORTHODOX COLLEAGUES

There are five major national rabbinical organizations in the United States and Canada. In addition to the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Rabbinical Assembly of America (Conservative), there are three large Orthodox rabbinical associations. They are, in order of age, the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada, the Rabbinical Council of America, and the Rabbinical Alliance of America. A few facts about each:

Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada; founded 1902; membership about 700; headquarters at 132 Nassau St., New York City. In the beginning, the members were almost without exception European-born and Yiddish-speaking. The organization claims that almost half of its present membership is American-born and English-speaking.

Rabbinical Council of America; founded 1935; membership about 600; headquarters at 331 Madison Ave., New York City. Organized by alumni of the Rabbinical Department of the Yeshiva University and of the Hebrew Theo-

logical College of Chicago. A large proportion of its present membership was trained in other Orthodox yeshivos.

Rabbinical Alliance of America; founded 1944; membership about 400; headquarters at Yeshivas Torah Vodaas, 141 South Third St., Brooklyn, N. Y. Established by alumni of this yeshiva. Most of the members are מוסמכים from Yeshivas Torah Vodaas but at least one-fourth are from other American yeshivos.

Although all three of these organizations claim to be strict followers of the established *Halacha*, there is a general feeling that the Rabbinical Council of America is less rigid in interpretations of halachic matters than either the Union of Orthodox Rabbis or the Rabbinical Alliance. The RCA has also been more lenient about admitting Orthodox rabbis who serve "deviationist" synagogues. There has been an adverse reaction to this within the RCA in recent years and its membership requirements are getting more strict. Because of differences in composition and in outlook, there has been little talk in the past about a possible merger of these three organizations. Sentiment seems to be growing

for an eventual merger of the RCA and the Rabbinical Alliance.

Since the CCAR has about 700 members and the Rabbinical Assembly about 600, it is apparent that these Orthodox rabbinical organizations have a combined manpower greater than that of the combined Conservative and Reform rabbinates. After taking into account slight overlappings in membership, it may be estimated that these five national rabbinical organizations represent a total of about 2900 rabbis.

This year's convention of the Rabbinical Council was held at the Pine View Hotel, Fallsburg, N. Y., from July 11 to 15. Among the decisions of the convention were the following: The members were called upon to seek ways and means of encouraging the Aliyah of American Orthodox rabbis to Israel in order to impress the Israelis with the fact that a synthesis of modern culture and traditionalism is possible. The Chief Rabbi of Israel, Dr. Herzog, was invited to visit the United States. A plan was approved unanimously to establish a world confederation of Orthodox rabbis. The Russian government was requested to allow a delegation of Orthodox rabbis to visit the Jews of the Soviet Union.

The convention of the Rabbinical Alliance was held at the Gan Israel Hotel and the Yeshiva of Spring Valley, N. Y., on June 28 and 29. In an attempt to combat the ever-growing popularity of the Bas Mitsva ceremony in Conservative and Reform circles, the Alliance set up a commission to explore the possibility of establishing what would be known as a Bas Torah ceremony for Orthodox girls.

At both conventions, the CCAR was roundly attacked for considering the idea that women be ordained as rabbis. To the RCA, Rabbi Henry Raphael Gold, a practicing psychoanalyst, declared that "this agitation stems from the excesses of hyper-feminism which threatens the whole fabric of American society." Before the Alliance, Rabbi Chaim U. Lipschitz, its executive secretary, assailed the proposal as "a blasphemous attempt to transform the rabbinate into a social service agency."

ORT'S SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY

From June 26 to 29, delegates from the ORT organizations of 25 countries assembled at Geneva, Switzerland, to commemorate the 75th birthday of this great international Jewish association. Heading the delegation representing the 60,000 members of the American ORT Federation was its president, Dr. William Haber, professor of economics at the University of Michigan. At the conclusion of the international meeting, Dr. Haber was elected president of World ORT and Senator Herbert H. Lehman of New York was re-elected Honorary President. In this way the gathering recognized most fittingly the dominant position of American Jewry in the planning and financing of ORT's present and future programs.

ORT was founded in Russia in 1880 for the purpose of training the lower-middle-class Jews of Russia to be farmers and skilled artisans. The name was an abbreviation of three Russian words meaning "Organization for Rehabilitation and Training." After World

War I, ORT extended its activities into all of Central and Eastern Europe. The American ORT Federation was organized in 1922 and, over the years, became World ORT's chief means of financial support. In the ten years since World War II, ORT has spent \$18,000,000 for occupational training given to 200,000 persons, including over 75,000 DPs. Of this amount, over \$13,000,000 has been contributed by American Jewry, primarily through its annual UJA campaigns.

American ORT has furnished this column with the following statement concerning present trends and future planning:

"In the immediate post-war years, greatest attention was paid to the occupational rehabilitation of refugees and DPs in Germany, Austria, and Italy. At the same time, the dislocated Jewries of Eastern Europe stood in great need of help. Since 1949 contact with the Eastern European communities has ceased. The new geography of vocational activities has shifted to Israel, North Africa, Iran and the few remaining stable communities of Western Europe. To effect this shift, it was necessary for ORT to build schools, find instructors, and develop programs in areas where it had no prior roots and, in the case of the Moslem countries, in areas which had never known organized trade schooling and occupational training. In the latter categories should also be included the extremely impoverished Jewish community of Italy, especially that in Rome. With the development of the State of Israel, the greatest opportunities as well as necessity for skilled Jewish workmen came into being. Vocational training

here takes on the special meaning of working within and for a Jewish society. Here ORT now has its greatest efflorescence and has become the foremost system of vocational training in the new state.

"In 1949 about 75% of the ORT students were adults studying a limited number of trades in short-term courses for the purpose of obtaining a job in their country of emigration. In 1954 adults constituted only 25% of the students. The balance were adolescent youths between 14 and 18 who attend full-time day-session vocational high schools at which they study not only technical subjects but a full range of academic courses.

"A notable change has taken place in the relative importance of trades. While adults in previous years tended to be attracted to traditional 'Jewish' trades such as needle-work and carpentry, the interest of the Jewish youth of today is primarily in metal work, radio, electricity, electronics, and a broad variety of skills of a more advanced technical character. Particularly noteworthy is the broadening of occupations desired by Jewish women."

LABOR ZIONIST DECLARATION

During the next few months Poale Zion, the Labor Zionist Organization of America, will be celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of its existence. A special committee was appointed some time ago by the Central Committee of the LZOA for the purpose of drawing up a statement which would "restate and redefine our basic principles in terms of the new

reality the Jewish people has entered into as a result of the emergence of the State of Israel." This committee recently issued "A Declaration of Principles of Labor Zionism." This Fall all groups affiliated with the LZOA are studying the declaration and expressing their agreement or disagreement with it. Part of the Declaration is as follows:

"Labor Zionism is based on the fundamental principle that all Jews constitute one people . . . They are . . . united by a common history, heritage and destiny, and their spiritual and cultural home is Eretz Yisrael.

" . . . The factors shaping Jewish individuality and cohesiveness include Jewish religious and secular values, the creative force of Jewish folkways and basic attitudes, and the common effort to build and strengthen the State of Israel . . .

" . . . Labor Zionism strives . . . to stimulate among the Jews of Israel a sympathetic understanding and will to cooperate in the solution of the problems confronting American Jewry in preserving and enriching its Jewish heritage; to inculcate in American Jewry the consciousness that only in the State of Israel can Jews shape their collective destiny, attain national self-realization and best extend their unique contributions to humanity; to strengthen Jewish group life in America by constant attention and devotion to Jewish education.

" . . . American Jewry has an historic part to play in the process of Kibbutz Galuyot, the Ingathering of the Exiles; and although it may take generations, perhaps centuries, to complete this process, the beginning has already been

made. Labor Zionism rededicates itself to organizing American Jewish participation in Kibbutz Galuyot by a steadily increasing Aliya to Israel.

" . . . Hebrew, the national tongue of the Jewish people, is the most important medium for the creation and transmission of Jewish cultural values . . . Labor Zionism considers Yiddish, the language of millions of Jews and the repository of some of the greatest products of Jewish creativeness, an indispensable cultural element which should be preserved . . .

"The LZOA recognizes Mapai as the political party best suited — by political experience and philosophy — to lead the State of Israel, to realize the ideal of Kibbutz Galuyot, and build Israel as a labor commonwealth . . .

" . . . Labor Zionism believes that the present circumstances require a mixed economy composed of three sectors — nationalized, cooperative and private: these to complement each other, making possible planning without regimentation and voluntary collectivism alongside individual enterprise.

"Labor Zionism, anchoring its hopes for a brighter future in the growth of democracy, is unalterably opposed to Communism and all other forms of totalitarianism . . ."

UNITED CHURCH CENTER

Plans have been completed for the erection of a 17-story, block-long building on Riverside Drive between 119th and 120th Sts., New York City, to serve as a united church center for many of the

(Continued on page 47)

AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIAL

The Audio-Visual Department of the Bureau of Jewish Education of the Los Angeles Jewish Council published a catalogue of audio-visual materials for use in the Jewish Religious School. This catalogue, "Catalogue of Audio-Visual Materials," lists films, film-strips, slides, records and tape recordings. The catalogue was prepared by Mr. Irwin Soref, the Director of the Audio-Visual Department. It is an excellent piece of work and will prove extremely useful both the person in charge of the Religious School and the individual classroom teacher. In the foreword, Dr. Samuel Dinin, the Executive Director of the Bureau states: "In preparing this catalogue, a special effort has been made to include only such materials which are likely to be of instructional value to the Jewish school and which are of good technical quality. However, because of the dearth of auditory and visual materials suitable for use in the various areas of the curriculum of the Jewish school, we have included a number of films, filmstrips, slides, and other materials which do not altogether meet our criteria. As the number and

variety of audio-visual materials prepared for the Jewish school grow, we shall make every effort to improve the quality and quantity of materials listed herein."

The catalogue is mimeographed, plastic spiral bound, with good cardboard covers. It is available from the Bureau, (590 N. Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles 4, California), for a small charge.

The Los Angeles Bureau of Jewish Education also produces a number of excellent filmstrips for the Reform Religious School. There is one on Passover, deriving its content from the Union Haggadah, one on Shavuot of excellent quality, and a fine filmstrip entitled "The Book That Cannot Be Printed," which creatively tells the story of the writing of a Torah Scroll. All Reform Religious Schools will do well to include these filmstrips in their audio-visual library.

Another indispensable aid to good classroom teaching is a wealth of flat pictures. Many schools have undertaken to create picture files cutting the pictures from Jewish calendars, magazines and discarded books. Now a new resource

exists. The Herbert B. Palmer, Associates, 8912 Burton Way, Beverly Hills, California, has gotten together a large selection of pictures from several sources that will help to illustrate Jewish History and Jewish Life. The pictures are especially good for the Bible years — particularly the period of The Patriarchs, The Judges, and The Prophets. The pictures are being used in the more progressive Jewish Religious Schools of Los Angeles with great success. The imaginative teacher uses the pictures to set up an "environment" in the classroom that stimulates the children to think in terms of the period which they are studying. The pictures are all printed in color, they are in various sizes, approximately 17 x 21 and 30 x 40 and may be purchased mounted or unmounted. The price is reasonable. For ease of handling, it is suggested that they either be purchased mounted or that they be mounted immediately after purchase. Address all inquiries to Herbert B. Palmer, Associates.

Special mention must be made of the film "Isaac and Rebecca" produced by Ben Oyserman (No. 681 UAHC catalogue 1955-56). One of the finest features of this film is the authenticity and the magnificent color of the properties used in making the film. For example, the saddle bags for the camels are so picturesque as to excite the curiosity of the "hard to reach" student.

The new UAHC Catalogue of Materials lists many fine materials for the audio-visual department. The next edition of this column will contain a full discussion of the new materials.

BOOKS

A careful perusal of *Stories about Judaism, Books I and II*, by Rabbi David Goldberg, with introductory notes and subjects for discussion by Rabbi Samuel Halevi Baron, is a disappointing experience. Quoting from the preface of Vol. I, (Page 5): "Opinions to the contrary notwithstanding, we believe it is possible as well as desirable and essential to begin teaching the evolution of the religion of Judaism — in language made carefully understandable — long before the Confirmation or post-Confirmation years. This we have undertaken to do in the present volume." Well, the contrary opinion is not washed away. A mature discussion of Judaism requires a mature mind. A student below the age of 15 or 16, the accepted age for Confirmation in most Religious Schools, is not ready to discuss religion as an abstraction. These two volumes give the reader the unmistakable impression that the authors are trying to discuss God and man through the medium of ABC blocks. The volumes are definitely not recommended for use in the Religious Schools.

Martha Marenof (18 Pinecrest Road, Newton Center, Massachusetts) has produced three new volumes for grades 6 through 9 of the Religious School. The series is called *History Through Literature* and covers the development of the Jewish People from the earliest times to the present. There is a teacher's guide and a pupil's workbook with each volume. The first volume, *The Migrations of the Jewish People* has been

received for comment. In a message to the pupil on page 13, Mrs. Marenof states, "The story is told in thirty units. Each unit contains an introduction describing a migration and readings from literature that illustrate the importance of the migration. When you complete this course of study you will have a picture in your mind of close to four thousand years of the migrations of the Jewish people. You will begin that story on a small map, and as the number of years grows and grows, the map will spread, and the picture will expand to show us the whole world as you know it today. It is an exciting picture, a big picture." The book has the advantage of covering a great deal of time, from the beginning of Jewish history to the present day, — and a great deal of space, — from Canaan in the time of Abraham, across and around the world and back to Israel in 1948. The obvious disadvantage is the attempt to cover so much in such limited time. Rabbi Dudley Weinberg and the Religious School Committee of Temple Ohabei Sholom in Brookline, Massachusetts, are given credit for the initial incentive to develop the *History Through Literature* series. Therefore comment as to the effectiveness of these texts may be obtained from Rabbi Dudley Weinberg, now of Temple Emanu-El in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Rabbis and other educators teaching Hebrew to adults will be interested in a new volume, *Modern Hebrew Grammar and Composition*, by Harry

Blumberg, Ph.D., Hebrew Publishing Company, New York 1955. The work is suitable for adults only, preferably those with college backgrounds. The inductive approach is employed. There is a marked lack in the paucity of reading material to illustrate the use of the different grammar forms and idioms. The vocabulary is good, containing primarily "active" words. The elaborate appendix contains an excellent vocabulary and grammar chart. The section on Hebrew composition contains only 9 lessons. However, it is assumed the teacher will supply additional material. This book is the best published for teaching Hebrew on the college level.

MATERIAL

A new Teacher's Record and Role Book is recommended for use in the Religious School. It is published by KTAV Publishing House, 47 Canal Street, New York 2, New York. The book contains adequate space for a listing of the student's name, age, address, parents and additional information. It also contains seating charts, a weekly attendance section in the back, and also a large section for the teacher's monthly plan.

Religious Schools will also do well to investigate the use of the "Spiral" Plan Book (#4475) that provides seating plan, program section, and an attendance book at the end.

CONCERNING THE ADVISABILITY OF
INFORMING A PATIENT OF THE
SERIOUSNESS OF HIS ILLNESS

RESPONDENTS

Dr. Hiram B. Weiss

Rabbi Israel J. Gerber

Dr. Henry D. Lederer

Rabbi Albert G. Minda

A RABBI ASKS

What does a rabbi do when he is asked by a member of his congregation regarding the advisability of telling a seriously ill patient that he has cancer? In the experience I recently had, I was not asked for advice directly but a member of the congregation put it this way: "Rabbi, do you think I did right in not telling my mother that she is dying of cancer?" My conversation with this member began after dinner one evening when I was a guest in his home. We happened to be alone and Mr. J. had asked if he might talk to me about a personal problem.

Mr. J. had told me that his mother had been ailing for some time. I had

known this previously. What I had not known until this conversation was that Mr. J. had taken his mother to the hospital about a month ago, that an exploratory operation had been held, and that the physicians had decided that the situation was so advanced that there was absolutely no hope and that it was only a matter of months or even weeks before the end.

I learned from Mr. J. that the family doctor himself had no definite opinion on the question of whether or not to tell the mother. In reply to my question, Mr. J. said that to the best of his knowledge, his mother was unaware of the diagnosis of cancer. She had been in ill health and has had many contacts with doctors and specialists. She is seventy years old.

What I wonder about is what you can do in a situation like this, when either way you feel obliged to respond to Mr. J.'s question. It does seem to touch on religious ethics, since he asked me if he "had done the right thing."

I want to add that I have been rabbi of this congregation for many years, that I know the J. family intimately. I have Mr. J.'s children in my religious school. I officiated seven years ago at the funeral of Mr. J.'s father who had died of complications following an automobile accident. Incidentally, Mr. J. is an only child.

A PHYSICIAN ANSWERS

As a young physician making rounds with one of my teachers, I noted how unsatisfactory it was to see the cancer patient each day and not to know what to do or say. Quoting an earlier physician, my older colleague said: "At times we may cure, often we can relieve, but we can always bring hope." Many cancer patients know they have the dread disease without being told; most of them know how inevitable the outcome is. Many seem to deny it in a psychological sense and hope that a new drug or a new approach might be helpful, or that perhaps the doctor is not correct in his diagnosis. One should indicate that the patient may be correct although mistaken diagnoses are not relatively infrequent with the numerous diagnostic aids now available. Certainly new drugs and methods (surgical, X-ray, and nuclear) have prolonged many lives, turning a hopeless medical problem into the brightness of life and usefulness.

As physicians we must always try "to

do something" for the patient because nothing is as hopelessly final as hearing that "nothing can be done." These are the problems of the physician which must be clarified before getting to the point where a rabbi is brought face to face with the situation. It is helpful for everyone if the rabbi has a conference with the physician to determine the nature and extent of the disease, what the patient and his family already know, and what the medical objectives are. The rabbi should also be made aware of the prognosis of the disease; what the patient and family already know; and what the medical objectives are. Many patients with cancer promptly and successfully treated will have an excellent prognosis and will have good years ahead, often living to an average or even old age. Some types of the disease may allow for several years of comfortable living before taking a turn for the worse. In the early stages, with adequate treatment, the prognosis may happily be excellent. If there has been a spread of the disease, the prognosis as to length of life may not be determined for years after the onset.

I have been impressed with the observation that patients with deep religious faith seem to take serious medical news about themselves with some degree of equanimity. Most of us do not know how we ourselves will react to such circumstances. Our response is an anxiety that all men have when they find themselves in dangerous or serious situations. No doubt the prayer for courage and understanding is to help us meet the problems of living and dying. All of us have known the older individual who has

become philosophical and who meets and accepts his problems with serenity. We have all had the problem of an inconsolable young person who has lost a dear one, or who senses that he himself is going to die.

Perhaps one role of the rabbi is to reawaken faith in a person to fortify him when he recognizes that he has a fatal illness. My own feeling is that the vast majority of patients do not really wish to know that they have cancer, although they may protest that they must know because their affairs must be put in order, or for many other reasons. I feel that reassurance and hope, with something, even though minimal to look forward to, is perhaps better for most people than a gloomy outlook and a fatal prognosis.

There are some, perhaps those with faith, who can take the diagnosis of cancer with a degree of resignation, humbleness, and understanding. I do not believe that there is any universal answer. We must feel our way with each patient and perhaps use an indefinable "intuition" in handling him. We give to each that which he needs most of hope or realization; often we can give both.

HIRAM B. WEISS
Department of Medicine
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A RABBI ANSWERS

One very important fact that the case described above does not tell us is whether Mr. J's mother inquired about her condition. The basic problem is not

whether Mr. J was remiss in not informing his mother. The problem revolves around Mrs. J herself. Does she want to know? Has she questioned her son about it? Did she inquire of the doctor the diagnosis of her case? I feel this is most important because, regardless of their age, most people prefer not to know the seriousness of their particular illness. Very often they will not even ask their doctor for the diagnosis, even though prior to undergoing their operation they categorically inform the surgeon they want him to tell them what he discovers. If the patient earnestly inquires about his condition, whether it be of family or clergy, it is his solemn right to be told. The reply should be as honest as possible and answer only the specific questions asked. No additional information should be supplied.

What then? The most advisable next step is to call in the doctor. For the primary concern of the patient at that moment is a diagnosis and discussion of the technical and long range view of the case. Any diagnosis, regardless of illness, is the responsibility of the physician and *no* one else should assume this assignment. It is medical information that is being sought and it should be given by a medical authority. At a time such as this, the patient usually seeks specific information that can be supplied only by the doctor. Should the physician attempt to push this chore onto anyone else, as is sometimes done, he is not fulfilling his obligation to his patient. This does not diminish the Rabbi's role or exclude him. His pastoral duties begin in earnest when the doctor leaves the scene.

The rabbi's problem exists, therefore,

only if Mr. J's mother did not ask her son about herself. Should the son nevertheless have volunteered it? In this instance, the rabbi could have assured Mr. J and counseled him that since his mother did not ask him about it, it was not within his province to have offered it.

We are then confronted, as rabbis, by the problem as to whether it is not required of us to enable the patient to prepare himself for the eternal sleep, to give him the opportunity to make his peace with the world, and to see his relatives and friends more often. This procedure had been practiced by our forebears as is evidenced in the *Shulhan Aruch*. The trend today, however, is away from this practice. The feeling exists that the clergy is not endowed with God-given permission to force such information upon any person in this condition.

It is not difficult to understand Mr. J's anguish and to sympathize with him. Being an only son, he undoubtedly had and still has a close association with his mother. Her impending departure is undoubtedly a difficult experience for him to bear. The possibility should, therefore, not be overlooked that in speaking to the rabbi, Mr. J was subtly hinting to him to carry the ball for him. He may have wanted to eliminate himself as the informer, because it would have caused him much anguish and he was perhaps subconsciously sparing himself a difficult ordeal.

All this brings to mind the little actual preparation given in our society to the inevitable which is part of everyone's future. While today we attempt to prepare ourselves, our children, our

friends, to cope with the many different situations to be encountered, we do not prepare ourselves for death.

RABBI ISRAEL J. GERBER
Temple Emanu-El
Dothan, Alabama

A PSYCHIATRIST ANSWERS

The described situation presents many facets of an emotionally charged rabbi-congregant relationship. In order to assay the problems and to respond constructively, one must attempt to define the dynamic exchanges taking place.

As stated, the rabbi finds himself asked for an opinion on a "personal problem" by his dinner host, who is one of the rabbi's congregants. The rabbi expresses an emotional bias when he writes "what can you do in a situation like this, when either way you feel obliged to respond to Mr. J's question?" To answer the rabbi we must conjecture as to what he means by "a situation like this." Apparently he feels we *must* respond because he "feels obliged." Must he respond because he has "known the family intimately for years" (i. e. almost feels like part of the family) or because he is under immediate debt to his host for the gifts of a dinner and hospitality. The rabbi tries to handle his own feelings of a personal obligation and guilt over hesitation to meet it in several ways: he attempts to reduce the emotional overtones by converting the problem into a quasi-intellectual one of "religious ethics" but cannot carry through on this depersonalizing because he says "it seems to touch on" (but not

really involve) "religious ethics"; secondly, he salves his own conscience by listing the many previous services he has rendered Mr. J. and his family. Is the rabbi almost plaintively asking, "Really, haven't I done enough for him. Am I actually obliged to respond to such a tough question?"

Therefore, from a psychological point of view, some of the difficulties confronting this rabbi in this situation arise from his emotional attitudes toward Mr. J. These attitudes, felt as an obligatory pressure, certainly might interfere with an objective and constructive response to Mr. J.

Turning our attentions to Mr. J. and his pregnant question "Rabbi, do you think I did right in not telling my mother that she is dying of cancer?" We may benefit by considering the following matters. Why does Mr. J. find his "not telling" his mother a personal problem leading to uneasiness about "doing right" or wrong? Is there more to this personal problem of doing right than what Mr. J. says? It is a frequent occurrence for bereaved persons or ones facing bereavement to experience consciously or to be motivated unconsciously by ambivalent feelings, mixtures of love and rage, in regard to the deceased or diseased relative. Is the increase in negative emotion toward his mother, the factor that is not "right." Being an only child, Mr. J.'s whole emotional investment in his relationship to his mother may be quite intense and contain elements of dependent yearnings for mother's attention, anger over her impending desertion through dying, guilt over such anger, guilt over her being ill, anxiety over the impending separation. It is not unlikely

that his appealing to the rabbi is a request for a father-surrogate to console, attend to, reassure, strengthen, and love him now that mother is slipping away. He wants a response on a personal level when he states this is a "personal problem."

Mr. J. seems to need the rabbi as a father-figure, personally interested in him, and allaying his uneasy feelings of anxiety and guilt. The rabbi as theologian grappling with "religious ethics" is not the person being petitioned.

If the rabbi can respond as a mature man sensing these needs, he could best help Mr. J. by hearing him out and not answering Mr. J.'s question. Any immediate and definite answer would slam the door on any opportunity for Mr. J. to ventilate his feelings centering about his mother, her illness, his apprehension of death and cancer, etc. An interested, unbiased, non-judgmental, patient listening to Mr. J. would be the proper response, the response to the whole person rather than to a question detached intellectually from the human being posing it.

DR. HENRY D. LEDERER
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University of Cincinnati

A RABBI ANSWERS

The question posed as to telling a patient that he or she is dying of cancer is part of the larger question of informing the seriously sick person that he is dying from this or any other ailment. There is no one categorical answer, it seems to me, that would apply to each and every case.

In this particular instance, we have a woman seventy years of age. Even if told of her condition, she would probably have little to do to set her "house in order." To give her this information would do little good.

In most cases (even when cancer is suspected by the patient) there is the hope that with treatment and God's help, they can "beat it." One should, therefore, think twice before destroying this last vestige of hope and the fighting spirit that results from it.

I do not think that we ought to be too free in passing death sentences on seriously sick patients. In some cases, doctors themselves admit that they are happily disappointed in their predictions.

It all adds up to this — who is your patient; what is his temperament; what are the circumstances that might make the imparting of this information imperative?

The average mature individual, though healthy and strong, realizes that death may be lurking around the next corner.

If the circumstances of the sick patient demand that his spiritual and economic house be set in order, then he should be given the opportunity to do so — at the same time, indicating that the white flag of defeat is not being raised.

All this is particularly relevant when we consider the psychology of the Jewish patient. Judaism, whilst holding forth the hope and faith in immortality, does not minimize the satisfactions of spirit and body to be achieved in life on earth. The bliss of Heaven is not quite as real and tangible to him as it may be to patients of other religious faiths.

When we find it imperative to inform the patient of the imminence of death, particularly, when he is insistent that this be given to him, then we must bring to him (if he does not already have it) the trust that the "Everlasting Arms" that hold us in life, never forsake us even in death.

RABBI ALBERT G. MINDA
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ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

(Continued from page 38)

major Protestant denominations of the United States. It will house the headquarters of the National Council of Churches of Christ in America and a large number of the governing boards and agencies of the Council's thirty constituent denominations.

The site has been donated by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. The structure is expected to cost \$14,000,000. One-quarter of the financing is expected to

come from gifts, one-quarter from investing beneficiary groups, and the rest from a 2 1/2-year amortization mortgage.

The president of the center's board of trustees has stated that "the structure has been planned to overlook the Hudson River from Morningside Heights to symbolize churches working together in the way that the United Nations building above the East River stands for international cooperation."

UNION FOR PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM:

A REPORT

The ninth International Conference of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, held in Paris June 30th through July 6th, 1955, brought together the largest gathering of delegates and accredited visitors ever to attend a World Union meeting. There was a sense of continuity at the Conference due to the presence of those who had attended through the years: The Hon. Lily H. Montagu, World President, heading the delegation from England; Rabbi Rosenberg from Tel Aviv; Prof. Assagioli from Italy; Monsieur Greilsammer and Rabbi Zaoui from Paris; Jay Taft from Melbourne; our colleague Rabbi Weiler from South Africa; Otto Frank, formerly of Amsterdam, now from Switzerland; and two score Americans, including sixteen members of the CCAR, led by Drs. Eisendrath of the Union, Glueck of the College-Institute, and Mrs. Dalsheimer and Miss Jane Evans of the Sisterhoods. Dr. Joseph Rauch of Louisville was the only delegate besides Miss Montagu who has been at every Conference since the first in 1926. Always rich in rabbinic leadership, this Conference was notable because of the presence and participation of consecrated

laymen and women, those already named, and many others.

The session opened with addresses by Dr. Glueck and Edmond Fleg. Other sessions included an address by Dr. Eisendrath, and a scholarly paper on Reform Practices by Professor Cohon of the College-Institute faculty, to mention only a few of the highlights. The Conference closed with a session devoted to the activities of the Women's and Youth Sections.

Among the progress and achievement reports, the following were of special interest.

Dr. Glueck reported on the progress of plans for work in Israel through the establishment of the graduate branch in Jerusalem. Dr. Eisendrath noted that plans for rabbinic leadership, provided through the American Committee, were being crystallized.

The paucity of rabbis and teachers for the hundreds of thousands of Jews who intend to remain in Europe was a problem which had top priority at the Conference. With funds supplied through the Claims Conference and the JDC, a modest beginning will be made this fall, with the establishment of a Seminary,

The International Institute for Jewish Studies in Paris. The Institute will provide bi-lingual training (French and the language of the student) and Rabbi Zaoui of Paris will be in charge. (The plans read much like those in Cincinnati in 1875!). With a distinguished visiting faculty recruited from the Hebrew University, men on leave, and scholars in exile, a significant start is being made.

An illuminated scroll resolution was presented to Rabbi Wice for his ten years service on behalf of the World Union. He was succeeded by Rabbi Ferdinand M. Isserman of St. Louis. Maurice Jacobs, as American treasurer, was succeeded by Mr. J. S. Ackerman of

Chicago. The following election and appointments took place:

The Hon. Lily H. Montagu, O.B.E., J.P. (London, England), President; Rev. Dr. B. R. Brickner (Cleveland, U. S.), Rev. Dr. M. N. Eisendrath (New York, U. S.), Rev. Dr. Nelson Glueck (Cincinnati, U. S.), Sir B. L. Q. Henriques, C.B.E., J.P. (London, England), Mr. J. Taft (Melbourne, Australia), Rabbi Dr. M. C. Weiler (Johannesburg, S. Africa), Vice-Presidents.

It now remains for our American colleagues who understand the scope of work and the yet unfinished tasks to rally to the support of this organization, which is the projection of our movement on the world scene.

A MISSION TO FRENCH NORTH AFRICA

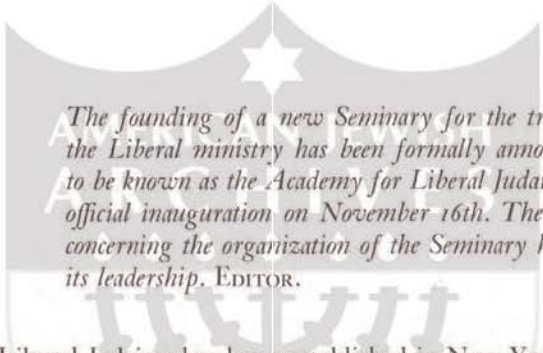
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the Jewish Agency, and I have been talking about this daily.

August 25. In a few days I will be leaving for New York. Today visited Kiryat Gat in the Lachish area. Kiryat Gat will become the central processing town for such industrial crops as cotton, sugar and peanuts. Once a gap between Gaza and a group of settlements north and south of some 23 miles, this corridor had to be closed. Now in Lachish there are 40 settlements, 17,000 irrigated acres, 2,900 farmer families, mainly North African Jews. In Lachish new settlements can be seen going up before one's eyes, men working on roads and telephone lines, on houses and irrigation projects. Tomorrow a new

group will arrive from North Africa. Homes and equipment await them. They can start on life's enterprises without delay. The turning of dead acres into thriving settlements in record time makes the Lachish development one of Israel's most thrilling accomplishments. Kiryat Gat, today, is flecked with a few shacks, a railroad spur and an unfinished road. Tomorrow this area will be turned into a city. Those of us who see the unfinished city as a link in a long chain of events that bespeak the survival and welfare of the Jew, know only too well that without our assistance the process of turning death into life and sorrow into joy will be seriously impeded.

THE FOUNDING OF A NEW SEMINARY
FOR THE TRAINING OF RABBIS FOR
THE LIBERAL MINISTRY



The founding of a new Seminary for the training of rabbis for the Liberal ministry has been formally announced. The school is to be known as the Academy for Liberal Judaism and is to have its official inauguration on November 16th. The following statement concerning the organization of the Seminary has been prepared by its leadership. EDITOR.

An Academy for Liberal Judaism has been established in New York City, with headquarters at 7 West 83rd Street. Its purpose is to make possible the training and ordination of Liberal Rabbis in a full four-year post-graduate course . . .

The Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Academy for Liberal Judaism is Mr. Jacob S. Manheimer, former President of Congregation Rodeph Sholom . . . Mr. Ira Frank, President of the Free Synagogue, New York, is Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee. Rabbi Loujs I. Newman of Congregation Rodeph Sholom is Director of the new Academy, and Rabbi David Neiman of the Community Reform Temple, Brooklyn, is its Secretary. An Advisory Committee of fifty is being named.

The Faculty of the Academy will include a group of visiting professors and instructors. This year the Faculty will be composed of the following: Professor Cyrus H. Gordon of Dropsie College, Philadelphia, who will lecture on Biblical Civilization; Professor Eugen Kullmann of the New School for Social Research, on "The Philosophy of Judah ha-Levi"; Professor Schoffman of Brooklyn College on "Modern Hebrew Language and Literature"; Dr. Shimeon Bernstein, Visiting lecturer, Dropsie College, on "Ethical Documents of Medieval Hebrew Literature"; Professor Moses Hadas of Columbia University on "The Hellenistic Experience in Judaism"; Rabbi Edward E. Klein of the Free Synagogue who will conduct a "Workshop in Practical Rabbinics"; Dr. David Neiman on Bible and Mishnaic texts; Cantor Gunter Hirschberg of Congregation Rodeph Sholom, who will teach Music and Liturgy; Professor Elizabeth F. L. Stern of the Department of Speech and Dramatics, Hunter College on "Platform De-

partment and Audience Relationship with Attention to Voice and Speech"; Mr. John Hezekiah Levy, formerly of the University of California, on "Public Speaking in its Major Aspects"; Rabbi Louis L. Newman on "Homiletics"; Mr. Max Feder, Former President of the National Association of Temple Secretaries on "Synagogue Administration." The Professor of Talmudic Literature and other members of the staff of the Academy will be announced later.

Two groups of students — one pre-Rabbinic and the other the graduate Rabbinic candidates — will begin their classroom and tutorial work in early November. The inauguration of the Academy will be signalized by a ceremonial occasion in November, to which the public will be invited.

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The Torah includes laws, yet it is not essentially law but God's instruction in His way. "A vestige of the actual speaking always adheres to the commanding word, the directing voice is always present or at least its sound is heard fading away." The conception of the law as an objective possession of Israel constantly tends to supplant the vital contact with the ever-living revelation and instruction. The struggle against this tendency runs through the whole history of Israelite-Jewish faith — from the prophet's protest against sacrifice without inner intention and the Pharisees' protest against the 'tinged-ones' whose inwardness is a pretence up till its peculiarly modern form in Hasidism, in which every action gains validity only by a specific devotion of the whole man turning immediately to God.

Today, writes Buber, "Israel and the principle of its being have come apart." Despite Israel's national home and its freedom to realize itself, the rift between the people and the faith is wider

than ever. In this breaking-up of the nation and faith the purpose of becoming a holy nation, of making real the kingship of God, is repudiated. Reform Judaism tends to look on Judaism as a religious creed, Conservative Judaism tends to look on it as a "civilization," and Orthodox Judaism as a set of religious laws. Zionists tend to look on Judaism as a national destiny and perhaps also as a culture but not as a people embodying an essential relationship to God in the life of the community. The only remedy for this splitting-apart of nation and faith, writes Buber, is a great renewal of the national faith through a decision in the soul of the individual Jew. "The task of becoming a holy nation must set itself in a new situation and a new form suitable to it." Until this new form becomes a reality, it is on the individuals who are regenerated in the crisis and who maintain themselves in *emunah* that the task will fall "of sustaining the living substance of faith through the darkness."

NOTES ON OUR CONTRIBUTORS

BARNETT ROBERT BRICKNER (HUC '19), President of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, is the spiritual leader of the Euclid Avenue Temple, Cleveland, Ohio.

MAX DAVID EICHHORN (HUC '31), is Field Secretary of the Division of Religious Activities of the National Jewish Welfare Board. Dr. Eichhorn is a Department Editor of the *Journal* of the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

HERBERT A. FRIEDMAN (JIR '44), has recently assumed the position of Executive Director of the United Jewish Appeal Organization. As one of his first official acts, he spent six weeks visiting the Jewish communities of North Africa and Israel. Formerly spiritual leader of Temple Emanu-el B'ne Jeshurun in Milwaukee, Rabbi Friedman planned his tour in order to familiarize himself with the overseas problems facing UJA leaders daily. Rabbi Friedman's visit to North Africa preceded the French-Arab violence which broke out in August. Such violence this year has resulted in the death of 11 Jews, the wounding of scores, the burning and pillaging of Jewish schools and the destruction of houses, shops and goods. The political tension as well as the economic boycott has caused severe dislocation among Morocco's Jews. We believe these excerpts, dealing largely with the Jews of North

Africa, will be of timely interest to our readers.

MAURICE FRIEDMAN has been Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, New York for the past five years. He is also Lecturer in Comparative Religion at The New School for Social Research. He has taught at the University of Chicago, Washington University, Ohio State University, and in the summer of 1955 he was Assistant Professor in the Department of Religion at Columbia University.

Dr. Friedman is author of the book *Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue*, published in England and America in 1955 — the first comprehensive and systematic study of Martin Buber's thought. He is also the translator of most of the essays in Buber's *Eclipse of God* and of Buber's *The Legend of the Baal-Shem* (Hasidic stories). Friedman's most recent work, *Pointing The Way, Collected Essays*, is due to appear shortly.

ISRAEL J. GERBER, spiritual leader of Temple Emanu-El, Dothan, Alabama, is a member of the American Psychological Association and a former member of the Board of Governors of the Institute of Pastoral Care. He is the author of the *Psychology of the Suffering Mind*, a psychological interpretation of the Book of Job, and *Man on A Pendulum*, a case study of a homo-sexual which will appear soon. He has written many

articles on the Rabbi and the Suffering Patient.

NAHUM N. GLATZER, Associate Professor of Jewish History, Brandeis University, is the author of an *Anthology of Postbiblical Literature* (1931), *Philosophy of History of the Tannaim* (1933), *Maimonides Said* (1941), *Kitzur Toldoth Yisrael*, A short history of Israel in Talmudic and Geonic times, 70-1040, (1943), *In Time and Eternity, a Jewish Reader* (1946), *The Language of Faith* (1947), *Hammer on the Rock: A Short Midrash Reader* (1948), *Franz Rosenzweig: Life and Thought* (1952). Dr. Glatzer is chief editor of Schocken Books and a contributing editor of *Judaism*. He has served on the faculty of Yeshiva University and the University of Frankfurt.

ROBERT L. KATZ (HUC '43), is Director of Admissions and Field Work at the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati. In addition, Dr. Katz serves as coordinator of the HUC Department of Human Relations on the Cincinnati campus.

HENRY D. LEDERER, Associate Professor of Psychiatry, University of Denver, Executive Director of the Central Psychiatric Clinic of Cincinnati is the author of the monograph, *How the Sick View their World*.

ALBERT M. LEWIS (HUC '39), is the spiritual leader of Temple Isaiah Israel, Los Angeles, California. He serves as an instructor in Bible and History at the California School of Hebrew Union

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EUGENE MIHALY (HUC '49), Associate Professor of Rabbinics, Hebrew Union College, is the author of *The Philosophy and Theology of Isaac Abravanel, Maimonides and Spinoza on Prophecy*. He is a frequent contributor to learned and scientific periodicals. Articles published recently are: "The Jewish Principles of Faith," "Aspects of Existentialism," "The Jewish View of Marriage," "Reform Judaism and Halacha," "Some Contemporary Trends in Theology."

ALBERT G. MINDA (HUC '19), is Rabbi of Temple Israel, Minneapolis, Minnesota. He is the author of the manual, *Ministering to Religious Needs of Jewish Patients*, and co-author of *Ten Commandments for Modern Living*.

ELY E. PILCHIK (HUC '39), is Rabbi of Temple B'nai Jeshurun, Newark, New Jersey. He is a Department Editor of the *Journal* of the Central Conference of American Rabbis and author of *Hillel (The Book Against the Sword)*.

HIRAM B. WEISS, active community leader, past chairman of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew Union College, is Instructor in Medicine, Medical School, University of Cincinnati.

DAVID H. WICE (HUC '33), is Rabbi of Congregation Rodeph Shalom of Philadelphia. He has served as the American Director for the World Union for Progressive Judaism for the past ten years.

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